

THE CAPE COLOURED WOMAN: -

Within an industrial community and at home.

T H E S I S

SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE.

by

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October, 1950.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

I would like to acknowledge gratefully the valuable guidance and kind interest of Professor E. Batson, Department of Social Science, University of Cape Town who directed this investigation.

I am indebted to Mr. M. Cassell, Director and General Manager of Ackermans Ltd. Cape Town, whose sympathetic understanding obtained the permission for me to make use of the data available to me in my capacity as Personnel-Welfare Officer of Ackermans Factory.

My thanks are due to the workers of this factory, who have patiently and good-naturedly allowed me to inundate them with questions, and had made me welcome when I intruded into their homes.

The Toni Saphra Bursary, administered by the Union of Jewish Women of South Africa had been awarded to me for two successive years. I was extremely appreciative of this financial assistance and the generosity of spirit which makes this award independent of creed or colour.

Acknowledgement is due to the National Council for Social Research which awarded me a travelling allowance in form of an ad hoc grant for two successive years.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Head and staff of the Photographic Department, Jagger Library, U.C.T., who have advised and assisted me in the lay-out of the pictorial representation of certain data and have reproduced it most effectively.

INTRODUCTION.

The raison d'etre of this thesis.

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THE RAISON D'ETRE OF THIS THESIS.

1. BACKGROUND :

The plan to write a thesis on "The Cape Coloured woman" was conceived at the beginning of my appointment as Personnel-Welfare Officer in a Clothing Factory in Cape Town three and a half years ago.

. As a newly-fledged social worker specialised in "Personnel Management and Welfare", I was offered the position as Welfare Officer in a factory, which, prior to my engagement, did not have a post of this description.

Not only had a demand to be created, or an unknown demand to be filled, but I was also confronted by a completely new type of people, in a setting unknown to my previous experience.

It was the setting in which I found myself, linked with the training in Personnel Management I had received, which developed a curiosity as to hows' and whys' which had to be satisfied.

As an Austrian by birth, with all my schooling completed in Vienna, the racial problems of my adopted country never formed the natural background to my early youth. Though 14 formative years of my life had been lived in the Transvaal and Natal, the "Colour question" had never constituted a problem tinged with personal emotions.

I do not know if this background is an advantage or a disadvantage when analysing a community of Coloured people, but unknown to myself it might have influenced my approach and findings - and therefore it must be stated.

The community which I have tried to describe and analyse in the following pages is for me not only a community of people and relationships outside myself,

but/.....

but I have been an active participant in its development and growth. I am part of it, and it has become a part of myself.

To be participant and observer in one person might, on the one hand, allow bias to distort facts, on the other, it might make for greater penetration into, and therefore understanding of the living organism a community represents.

I have strived towards impartiality under the expert guidance and supervision of Professor Batson, U.C.T., Cape Town. I sincerely hope to have achieved it as far as it is possible.

In my capacity as Welfare Officer I was soon confronted by some of the workers with their domestic problems, which "overshadowed" their working efficiency. Though many of these problems had their roots in economic difficulties, I could not but note that something deeper, specific to this group of people, was involved.

By trial and error in my dealings, be it with the individual or the group, I soon discovered that this factory-group, which to the untrained eye seemed one cohesive whole, in reality comprised two distinct cultural groups; the Cape Coloured, and the Cape Malays - each group with a different attitude and approach to problems confronting them in equal measure.

Therefore, I realised, the remedies to be prescribed would have to be of different natures as well.

But this was not my only task. In my double capacity as Personnel and Welfare Officer I had not only to increase the well-being of the individual, but try also to improve the efficiency of the group. A more stable labour force with the minimum of absenteeism was the aim.

How could that be effectively achieved without even

knowing/.....

knowing the rudiments of what made this particular community "tick" ? Industrial psychology, and training in the problems of Personnel Management offered a theoretical basis. But was this sufficient for the practical approach when dealing with a specific community ?

It did not seem so to me. The next step, then, was to find out how others had dealt with this problem.

I read extensively on what had been written on the Cape Coloured, historical, social, and economic. But let it I.D. du Plessis's "The Cape Malays," J.S. Marais's "The Cape Coloured People", Government Reports, such as the Report of the Cape Flat Commission, the annual reports of the Coloured Advisory Council, the publications of the Institute of Race Relations, or Cruse's "Die opheffing van die Kleurlingsbevolking," it gave me a general outline only with which to tackle my specific problem.

The nearest approach to my problems I found in Erika Theron's Master's thesis: "Fabriekswerksters in Kaapstad - ('n Sosiologiese Studie van 540 Blanke en Kleurling-Fabriekswerksters)."

Erika Theron, in this pioneering work on the industrial worker in Cape Town, composed her picture on a large canvas. She visited 165 factories and the homes of 5.3 per cent of her subjects. This furnished extremely interesting material on the industrial population of Cape Town, its working conditions and home background.

This very extensive study had to exclude the investigation into the specific problems created within an industrial community.

Having had no personal contact with workers and having had a number of interviews, Erika Theron mentions that she had to fight continuously against suspicious attitudes and "dressed up" information.

The specific problems I encountered in my work dealing with two cultural groups within one community made it advisable for me to concentrate on an intensive, rather than an extensive study.

Being a social worker dealing with welfare matters made me a trusted and accepted member of that community, which eased my task considerably.

Questions which had to be answered in order to fulfil effectively the demands my job made upon me were the following:

1. Why was there a split between the Coloured and Malay groups within the factory ?
 - (a) What was the reason for this division ?
 - (b) Did this division affect working efficiency ?
 - (c) If this was the case could anything be done to overcome this breach ?
2. What was the relationship within each group ?
 - (a) Was there a specific social structure noticeable within each group ?
 - (b) If this was the case, on what premise was it based ?
 - (c) If a definite pattern of class distinctions within each group was found, how then did it effect this group and the working community as a whole ?
3. Did the fact that 90 per cent of the working community consisted of women affect the answers to the previous questions in any way ?

In the course of my duties I soon found out that the split between the Coloured and Malay sections was based on socio-religious differences; that it did effect working efficiency detrimentally and that this breach between the two sections could possibly be overcome by fostering a community spirit by joint activities.

I soon realised also that there were definite class

distinctions/.....

distinctions within each group which did not have an adverse affect on the factory as a working unit. These class distinctions were not founded on the economic structure on which working efficiency was based, but seemed to have their roots outside the factory.

In my capacity as social worker it soon impressed itself upon me that women at work are never far away from home. Their domestic problems, their emotional attachment are of major importance to them and determine and influence their working life.

In order to answer satisfactorily the questions which had arisen in the course of my duties I realised that not only the structure of the working community would have to be analysed, but the worker would also have to be traced to her home, and her home surroundings investigated.

This then gave me the raison d'être for embarking upon this thesis.

2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS :

After consultation with Professor Batson it was decided that I should make a thorough analysis of the factory as a social organisation. Within this setting I could then analyse the social structure of the two Coloured groups represented therein and their participation in its activities.

As the cultural background of these two groups resulted in different behaviour and attitudes within the working community those would have to be described.

To get at the root of the differences the homes of the workers would have to be visited and biographical material collected.

The biographical material, then, should give a picture of the larger social frame within which the Coloured and

Malay/.....

Malay communities live - and which in turn influences their behaviour pattern noticeable in the factory community.

3. METHOD OF APPROACH :

I composed a questionnaire, dealing with -

(a) the worker in the factory and

(b) the worker at home,

which was purely to act as a guide for myself in what information I was to seek in informal interviews.

Having worked for over a year within this community, I had learned already that the workers feared and were suspicious of any written statements they had to make, or that were made on their behalf. While they were not only willing but eager to talk about themselves, their families and their circumstances when questioned sympathetically, they closed up immediately when they thought that statements were taken down in writing.

They did not mind my "writing a book about them", as I had explained my interest in their affairs, as long as they as individuals could remain anonymous.

This wish I have respected throughout this investigation, and no individual biography, or budget has been used. All biographies and budgets are the result of composite pictures constructed out of information gained within each social class.

Information on the factory structure and the workers within this structure was gained in the course of my duties as Personnel-Welfare Officer. Absentee records, records as to labour turn-over, accidents, sickness rate, etc., have to be kept up-to-date and are analysed by me regularly. My duties to create and organise social and educational activities, to supervise health and welfare amenities

keep/.....

keep me in close daily contact with the workers.

Sick visiting gives me access to the workers homes, trying to help them overcome their difficulties makes me welcome. Financial aid, administered by me, gives me the right to ask questions.

Additionally, I organise and attend many social functions. I have been invited to many weddings, and twenty-first birthdays. I have to go to funerals, attend police enquiries, visit hospitals.

In connection with family problems I had to seek help or advice or merely information from ministers of the Church, from doctors, lawyers, teachers, social workers, Government officials and business men, both European and non-European.

All this gave me the opportunity to get acquainted with the way of life of both Coloured groups, their interests and attitudes within their social setting, and its repercussions within the factory community.

I also made an intensive study of the working efficiency and home background of 100 women selected according to the method of controlled samples. I visited the homes of these 100 women, I got to know their families and collected biographical material.

In the course of my factory duties approximately 15 to 20 workers seek interviews with me each day. In addition to this, I speak daily to a number of workers at their machines, and several times a day to supervisors of the different sections. One afternoon a week is spent sick visiting. Three to five workers are visited in their homes on these occasions.

In the first year of this investigation, I spent every weekend and one evening a week visiting different families.

In the second year I also paid a number of visits

during/.....

during weekends and evenings, but generally concentrated more on attending social functions.

The data I gained in this way has been recorded in the following pages.

RECORD FORM:**A. The Worker within the Factory.**

Clock No. _____ Name _____ Dept: _____ Occupation: _____

Started work: _____ Present Wage: _____ Max. Wage: _____ on _____

Previous Occupations: _____

Absence from: _____ to _____ days p. annum _____ Reasons: _____

Date of Birth: _____ s.m.w.d.sep.Rel. _____ Educ. Standard _____

Efficiency Rating _____

Distance to work: _____ Fare: _____ Food at work _____

Activities within Factory:

1. Voluntary contributor to:	Amount per week	Compulsory
a) Holiday Saving Fund	-----	Trade Union
b) Worker's Sick Fund	-----	Industrial
		Council.
c) Xmas Fund (Children)	-----	Sick Fund
d) FOSA	-----	Unemployment
e) Various collections	-----	Personal Tax
	-----	Income Tax

TOTAL: _____

2. Active Participant in: (at any time during one year).

a) First Aid Classes	From _____ to _____	Dipl. yes: no
b) Home Nursing	From _____ to _____	" yes: no
c) Lunch time sewing	regularly - sometimes - never	
d) Physical Culture Classes	" " "	
e) Attend lectures, bioscope	" " "	
f) Serving on any Committee		
(i) Sick Fund	yes - no	
(ii) Kitchen		
(iii) Forewoman		
(iv) Shopsteward		
(v) FOSA		

3. Beneficiary of: (over one year)**Amount per annum**

a) Workers Sick Fund	
b) Union " "	
c) Union Doctors " Yes - No	
d) Workmen's Compens. ...	
e) Holiday Saving ...	
f) FOSA ...	
g) Collection ...	

4. How does the worker spend her Rest-periods? (10 a.m., 3.30 p.m. (1 - 2 p.m.))**5. Conclusions: Own Observations - result of interviews etc.**

- a) Social Status of worker within Factor.
b) Attitude to (i) management
(ii) non-European Supervisor
(iii) co-workers.
c) Type of work in factory & do they form

RECORD FORM:

B. The Worker and her Family.

(To be used as guide for collecting biographical material)

Address: _____

Type of Area _____ Type of Dwelling _____

Furniture: _____

Condition of dwelling: (cleanliness, state of repair etc.

I The Household - at time of investigation (member working at factory marked by asterik).

- | | <u>age</u> | <u>occupation</u> | <u>school</u> | <u>St.</u> | <u>Wage</u> |
|---|------------|-------------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. Head of household | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Wife | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Children of marriage living in house | | | | | |
| a) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| b) | | | | | |
| c) etc. | | | | | |
| 4. Other members of family (grandparents, aunts, uncles etc. | | | | | |
| a) | | | | | |
| b) | | | | | |
| etc. | | | | | |
| 5. Children of former marriage or alliance of husband or wife | | | | | |
| a) | | | | | |
| b) etc. | | | | | |
| 6. Foster children | | | | | |
| a) | | | | | |
| b) etc. | | | | | |
| 7. Boarders. | | | | | |
| 8. Lodgers | | | | | |

II: Antecedents of Householder, wife and Factory worker back to grandparents of father, wherever possible - see BI.

Economic position of household

<u>III: Members contributing to expenses</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source</u>
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____

Expenditure:

- a) Household necessities
(enumerated according to P.D.L. principle (C.T.Social Survey)
- b) Other expenditure such as Hire Purchase goods
contribution to clubs etc.

IV. Members of the Family - members of or voluntary contributors to.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Life Insurance | <u>Monthly payments:</u> |
| b) "Lodges" (Sick Funds) | a) Hire Purchase |
| c) Burial Society | b) Lay by |
| d) Church Clubs | c) Debts |
| e) Sport Clubs | d) Any other |
| f) any other | |

RECORD FORM B (Contd:)

V. Active participants in:

- a) recreational activities (sport, inc. hiking, camping etc.)
- b) educational " (evening classes, training for trade etc.)
- c) social "
 - (i) social work ... (e.g. V.A.D., FOSA, Sunday school teaching etc.)
 - (ii) social gatherings (entertaining, dances, parties, gambling, etc.)
 - (iii) cultural - active interest in art, literature, dancing (i.e. Eoan group)

VI: "Morbid features" of family life:

- 1. Illness - permanent disabilities, periodic disabilities.
- 2. Delinquency
- 3. Abnormal behaviour traits - heavy drinking, gambling, sexual irregularities.

VII: The Factory Worker within the family circle - her position and duties.

- a) Income: contribution household: pocketmoney.
Distribution of pocketmoney.
- b) Household duties: - general
duties before coming to work
duties when coming home
over week-ends.
- c) Privileges - (may entertain visitors etc.)
- d) Attitude of worker to household
Attitude of household to worker

VIII: Accord and discord within the family circle-
Attachment to each other.

IX. Social status of the family within their community
attitude of the family towards the community
attitude of the community towards the family.

(This information is gained by analysing III, IV, V
VI, interviews with members of the family and
others who have contact with family. (e.g. friends,
neighbours, ministers, teachers, etc.).

Steps taken to choose a group of women-workers who will be representative of the whole factory community, as to Race, Age, Wage, Occupation and residential Areas from which they come.

1. I took the number of women workers employed by Ackermans Factory, Cape Town, on 1.4.1949 as fixed basis for the figures arrived at below. As our labour-turnover is very low the number of women employed in the different groups will not change very much during the following year.

2. The wages paid at that date are also taken as basis.

3. Number of women at work on 1.4.1949..... 220.
of which are Coloured.... 155; Malay.... 65.

4. I then divided this number into the following age-groups:

T O T A L F A C T O R Y:

GROUP I	- born between Jan. 1887 - Dec. 1908	(40 +)	No. 13
GROUP II	- " " " 1909 - " 1918	(31-40)	No. 32
GROUP III	- " " " 1919 - " 1928	(21-30)	No. 112
GROUP IV	- " " " 1929 - 1933	(15-20)	No. 63

TOTAL NUMBER WOMEN EMPLOYED..... 220.

5. The age groups were then subdivided into Coloured - Malay

T O T A L F A C T O R Y:

GROUP I	- 40+	: Coloured: 9 ; - Malay: 4
GROUP II	- 31-40	: Coloured: 17 ; - Malay: 15
GROUP III	- 21-30	: Coloured: 82 ; - Malay: 30
GROUP IV	- 15-20	: Coloured: 47 ; - Malay: 16

ALL GROUPS: TOTAL: Coloured: 155 ; - Malay: 65

6. a) I require approximately 100 women for the purposes of the investigation at a ratio of Coloured and Malay as shown within the factory.
- b) The sample group should also show the same ratio of age and race groups as represented in the factory.
- c) All wage groups should be represented.
- d) All occupations should be represented.
- e) Residential Areas, in which the workers live should also be taken into consideration to get a representative picture of the Coloured and Malay community within the Factory.

7. a) To allow for "wastage" I decided to take 120 women in my group to be investigated and arrived at the following figures:

b)	<u>"S A M P L E G R O U P":</u>	<u>N U M B E R S:</u>
GROUP I	- 40 + ; Coloured: 5 ; Malays: 3 ;	TOTAL: 8
GROUP II	- 31 - 40 ; Coloured: 11 ; Malays: 8 ;	TOTAL: 19
GROUP III	- 21 - 30 ; Coloured: 41 ; Malays: 19 ;	TOTAL: 60
GROUP IV	- 15 - 20 ; Coloured: 25 ; Malays: 8 ;	TOTAL: 33
<u>T O T A L N O:</u>		Coloured: 82 ; Malays: 38 ; TOTAL: 120

- c) To be able to have all wage groups represented in the sample group I compiled a table of 'ages and incomes' of the whole factory, divided into Departments.
 - d) To survey the position of occupations within the factory I compiled lists of occupations and wages in the different Departments of the factory.
 - e) I then 'zoned' the workers and made a list of Residential areas from which our workers come and their number residing in each district. For further reference I worked out the monthly cost of their transport to work.
8. To arrive at the actual 'sample group' I took all Personal Cards (see sample) which are normally kept in alphabetical order according to Departments, and divided them:-
- a) into Coloured and Malay
 - b) subdivided the cards into age-groups;
 - c) picked at random half the required number for each group;
 - d) checked up on the wages and occupations represented in this group;
 - e) re-ordered the remaining Personal Cards into wage, instead of age-groups. Took another third of the required number to make up the still missing wage and occupational groups in the 'sample-group'.
 - f) Put the Personal Cards I had arrived at in my sample group into order of Residential Areas of the whole factory.
 - g) Added to my number those cards of workers who lived in areas I still wanted to be represented.
9. These steps (8(a)-(g)) I took separately for the Coloured and Malay Groups. I tried to avoid members of the same family in my sample group. This was particularly difficult for the Malay-group, as there was less choice to satisfy all demands. In the end I found myself with six more Malays in my sample-group than I had originally intended to have. This brought my 'sample group' to 126, at which I left it at the moment.
10. Originally, according to the ratio represented I wanted the following number of workers in my age-groups; (in brackets is the number which I have actually chosen):-
- | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|----------|------|
| GROUP I | - 40 +; | Col: 4 | (5); | Malay: 3 | (3); | TOTAL 7 | (8) |
| GROUP II | - 31-40; | Col: 11 | (11); | Malay: 7 | (8); | TOTAL 18 | (19) |
| GROUP III | - 21-30; | Col: 45 | (47); | Malay: 17 | (24) | TOTAL 62 | (65) |
| GROUP IV | - 15-20; | Col: 24 | (25); | Malay: 9 | (9) | TOTAL 33 | (34) |
| <hr/> | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL: ALL GROUPS: Col: 84 (82); Malay: 36 (44) TOTAL 120(126) | | | | | | | |
11. Of the workers chosen I made two lists, one for Coloured, one for Malays with all particulars. I also filled in a Personal Card for each worker in my sample Group, taking all details from my factory records.
- The sample group arrived at in the fashion described above, recorded on lists and Personal Cards represent the group of workers whose home background and efficiency standard at work I intend investigating.

PART I.

THE WORKER WITHIN THE FACTORY.

CHAPTER I.

The Factory as a Manufacturing Organisation.

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THE FACTORY AS A MANUFACTURING ORGANISATION.

1. THE SETTING :

The setting is a Clothing Factory in Salt River, C.P. The factory is easily accessible from all parts of Cape Town and its suburbs, as it stands on the main road, the main artery from which industrial, business and residential areas spread out.

Buses pass the factory every few minutes, Salt River Station is not far away.

The Building itself stands at a corner, offering its new facade to the main road. It appears to be a single-storey Building only, but when one turns to the left from the main road into a little side street, one realises that the Factory is built on a slope. A large basement floor when coming in at the front entrance develops into a ground floor with a large yard and outside buildings from the side street.

Offices, Despatch Department, Storerooms are in the upper part of the building which is comparatively new. One workshop with 30 workers is also in that part of the building.

The factory proper consists of one large Floor holding all types of sewing machines, steam presses, cutting tables, etc. Here 250 workers spend eight and a half hours daily.

This part of the building is much older than the upper part and as a result the Workshop is not constructed according to the latest ideas in factory planning. Although there

are/.....

are large windows on the three sides of the walls, the space in the middle of the floor is dark and requires artificial illumination.

There is no modern ventilation system to suck in used air, and to distribute fresh air. At one side of the Floor steam presses are operating, and though the steam exhaust pipes end outside in the yard, there is always a certain amount of moisture in the atmosphere. The floor of the Workshop is of stone.

There is sufficient space available to allow for ample room between the benches and individual workers.

On this Floor the Shirt and Clothing Sections are placed.

THE LAY-OUT OF THE FACTORY.

At the back of the main Floor is the Factory Manager's Office, the Sick Room, and on a platform, overlooking the Floor and the Sick Room, the Personnel Officer's Office.

The main entrance and exit to and from the Factory faces the yard, where the time-clerk's desk is placed. The time-clocks are near the entrance and the workers have to file past to stamp their clockcards, when entering or leaving the Workshop in the morning, at lunch-time, and in the evening. Built alongside the yard, a later addition to the Factory, are the Cloakrooms and the Canteen.

FACTORY PRODUCTION :

The Factory produces for its own Departmental Stores a variety of men's and boy's clothing and underwear. The Clothing Section, with approximately 110 workers, manufactures men's and boy's suits, sports jackets and flannels, shorts, raincoats, etc., according to the seasonal demands of the Stores.

In the Shirt Section all types of shirts and pyjamas are made, while the Underwear Section produces all types

of men's and boy's underwear.

The type of garment produced depends on the sales demands of the Stores, and as these change continuously, no long term production planning can be made, and Management and Workers have to be fairly versatile. This differs from usual factory procedure where one type of garment is mass-produced over a long period and hardly any change-overs take place in working procedure.

About 30 workers in the Shirt Section, and about 40 in the Clothing Section are working at a speed dictated by the conveyor-belt along which they are sitting. The work in each section is very specialised, and besides a few operations, which need very little training, such as the cleaning (cutting threads off) of a garment, the workers are not interchangeable; that is, if a girl starts work in the Shirt Section of the factory, it is to be expected that she will work all her life with "Shirts."

3. THE HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY :

The fate of the factory is closely linked up with that of the Departmental Stores. The Directors of the concern have the say about the life and death of the factory. The link between them and the factory is the General Manager, who is also one of the Directors. He visits the factory regularly, has to approve the employment of Office and Factory staff. (On the staff is anybody who is paid monthly, in contrast to the workers who are paid weekly). The Factory Staff consists of the Factory Manager, Departmental Managers and the Personnel Welfare Officer.

The Factory Manager is in charge of production and is in direct contact with the Departmental Managers, and has the last say in the "hiring and firing" of the workers. The Departmental Managers are at the same time the Head-cutters

for their Section, and are responsible for the quantity and quality of the work of their Sections.

They give their directions to the Foremen and Supervisors who again pass them on to the workers concerned. The Supervisors are responsible for the quality and quantity of work produced by their particular sub-section, and the discipline of the workers under them.

The Personnel-welfare Officer, as lies in the nature of her work, is slightly outside this "production hierarchy". She takes her orders from the Factory Manager, but is directly responsible to the General Manager. On the other hand, any and every worker has direct access to her, without having to give reasons for the interview to Supervisor or Manager.

4. THE HIERARCHY OF WORK :

The highest paid job in the factory, as far as the workers are concerned, demanding the greatest amount of skill, is that of the Cutter. This job and those of the Presser, Shaper, Layer-up, are the exclusive preserves of men. The next is that of the Machinist.

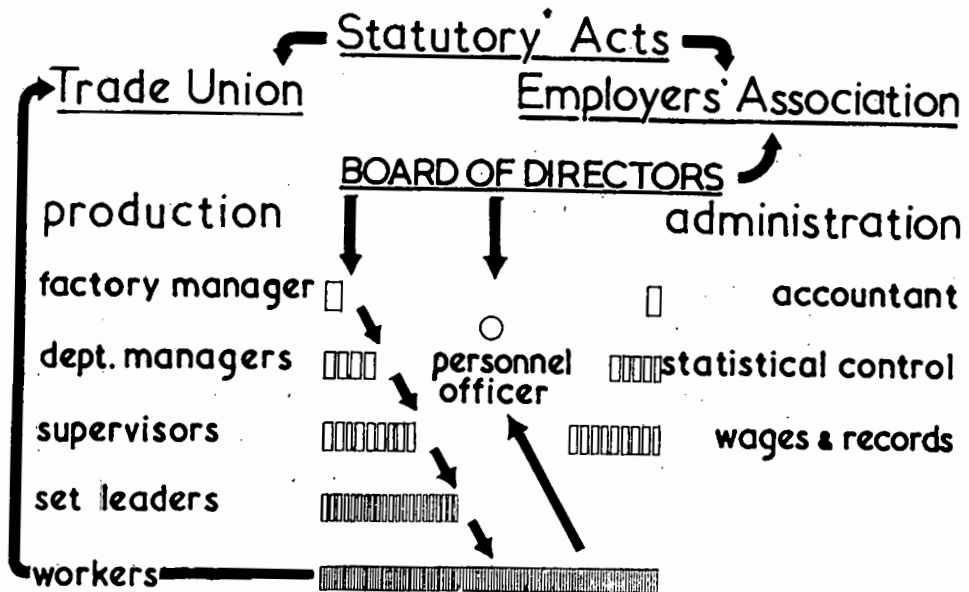
The male Machinists get as top-wages, that is after a training period of three years, £4. 12. 6. a week (excluding C.O.I. allowance), while women, after the same period of training, and very often doing the same operation, receive as top-wages £3. 0. 0. a week. There are a few operations connected with the production of a jacket which are traditionally only done by male (Malay) Machinists.

But besides these few operations, women have in the male Machinists place to a great extent, as it is more economical for the employer to engage female labour. In our factory there are only 30 men employed out of 250 workers. "Machinist" is an overall term, which covers actually many degrees and types of skill. The demands on a top-hand

machinist/.....

GRAPHIC SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE

THE HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY:



THE HIERARCHY OF WORK:

	REMUNERATION
factory manager	monthly salary
pattern maker	monthly salary
cutter	£6.0.0 weekly male
supervisor	£3.13.0 " female
layer-up / presser	£4.12.6 " male
machinist / ironer / examiner	£3.0.0 " female
/marker / bobbin-girl cleaner / sloper / folder	£2.0.6 " female

the wages enumerated are maximum wages
exclusive cost of living allowance.

machinist are naturally much higher as far as speed and quality of work are concerned than on a beginner who earns £1. 5. 0. a week.

Specialisation : The top-hand machinists in are divided into those who work patent-machines, those who achieve a high speed and work on the "belt", and those who are very accurate and do work where quality of work is the main consideration. The specialisation goes so far, that a Collar-Machinist in the Shirt Department, who makes some part of a collar, will be no good on the conveyor belt of the same Department. To interchange workers would lose too much time in re-training them, therefore they remain as a rule where they were put at the beginning of their training.

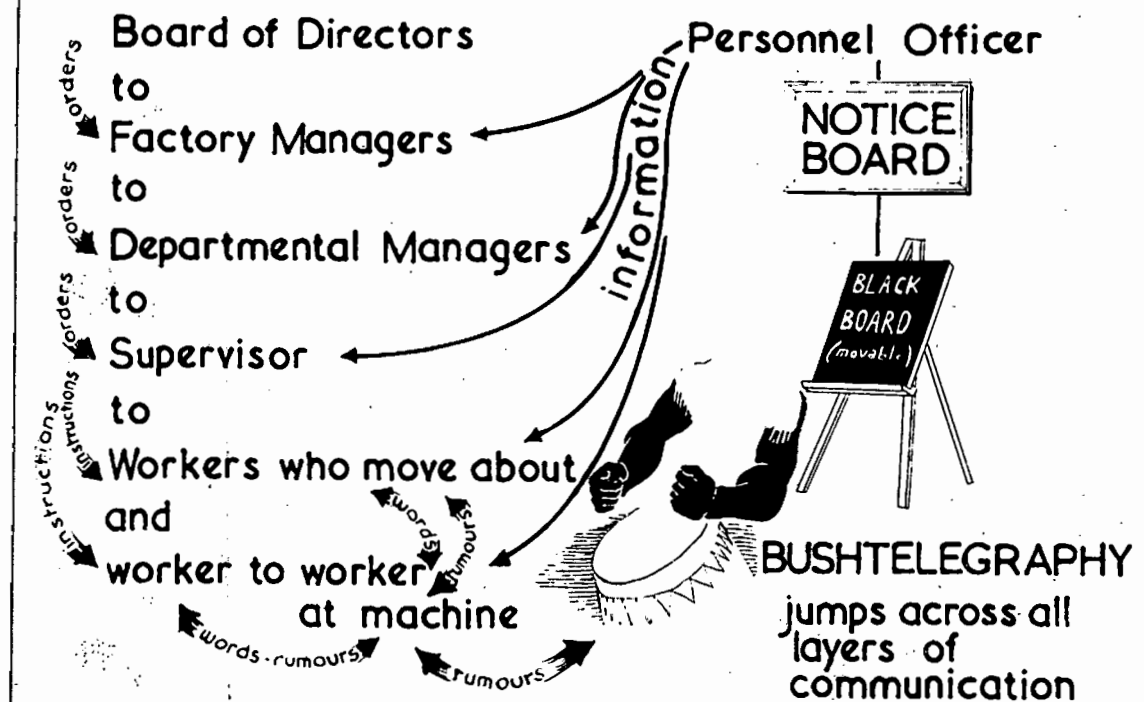
These considerations make it so important for the factory to have a low labour turnover and a low absentee rate. It is the training of the new worker, even if it is a qualified worker already, which makes it expensive to replace a "leaver", and an "absentee" is not just a worker absent, but one specialised in a particular operation, difficult to replace for that day's production.

Other top-hands, that is those who after three years training get the top-rate wage as laid down by the Industrial Council Agreement, are the Ironers, Examiners (who examine the garment at different stages of its production for faults), Folders, etc. The wage-ceiling of the Cleaners, Markers, Bobbin-girls (those who wind up bobbins on a machine) after three years is £2. 0. 6. a week.

It is the aspiration of every newcomer to be classified as a machinist, as she will not only have the best possible pay after her training period but also the best chances of employment, once she leaves one job to seek another. Amongst

machinists/.....

LINE OF COMMUNICATION



machinists again, much coveted are operations on certain patent machines as they again carry better chances of employment than others.

5. LINE OF COMMUNICATION :

Anything which has to be communicated to all workers will be put on the blackboard which stands at the exit door. If any urgent message has to be given, the blackboard will be carried around the floor by one of the Natives who constantly spray and sweep between work benches. Notices can be pinned on a notice board. Anything concerned with production will be told to the Supervisor by her Departmental Manager, or directly by the Factory Manager. The Supervisor then will give the necessary information to the workers concerned.

The Welfare Officer walks through the whole factory at least once a day. She talks to all Supervisors and gives them a chance to speak of their difficulties connected with their work, or of any personal troubles they, or any of the workers on their bench, might wish to discuss. Individual workers also call her to their machines, if they want anything.

In reverse, the Welfare Officer in her turn hands out all information she wants to have spread. Every worker has direct access to the Welfare Officer and can see her in her office either at tea breaks or at lunch time. Any wage complaints or queries are taken to the Factory Manager or the Welfare Officer.

Members of the Office Staff come to the factory once a week on Fridays, pay the workers at their machines, and collect money for the "Holiday Saving Fund."

There is one direct link between the Office Staff and the factory. Every worker's output is "booked" on specially designed cards, for which one Supervisor in each Section is

responsible/.....

responsible and these have to be taken up to the office once a day.

Bush Telegraphy : Officially the workers are told very little, "unofficially" they know in an incredibly short time pretty well everything that is going on or going to happen - but very often in a badly garbled fashion. There is definitely a form of bush telegraphy in existence. If a stranger enters the Manager's Office, a description of him, the possible purpose of his visit will be whispered from machine to machine, from one corner of the factory to the other, before he has even had a chance to sit down. Most operations done by the experienced worker need little concentration, and the mind is free to wander.

Every worker is doing the same, or very similar operations daily. They each do only a very small part of a garment, such as portion of a cuff, a collar, a pocket, etc. If the worker is taken away from a particular job, she will as a rule not take kindly to it. Habit is stronger than boredom. She would have to struggle with a new set of movements, her speed would decrease, she would have to hurry to keep abreast of her work, it would tire and irritate her. Only very few workers are keen to be moved about, to learn different operations, different machines. They definitely represent the elite, and are the potential Forewomen and leaders of their group:

6. WORKING CONDITIONS :

The working conditions in the factory are satisfactory. There is ample space, good light, good ventilation, and working benches and chairs, built according to factory regulations, are comfortable.

There is no danger to health attached to the work. Materials might sometimes be awkward to work with, but no

unhealthy/.....

unhealthy fumes or particles can be breathed in. The accident rate is extremely low and consists as a rule of only minor mishaps, such as a needle through a finger, a burn, etc. The only dangerous machines are the electrically operated cutting machines, which are worked by highly experienced men.

7. INDUSTRIAL LEGISLATION APPLICABLE TO THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY :

Up to now I have spoken only of the worker in connection with her work, taking the production process as the basic structure into which the individual worker has to fit to the best of her ability. Now there remains to be considered the facilities offered to the worker to enable her to adapt herself to the conditions of work within her particular industry. For this purpose a frame-work has been created, which safeguards the rights of Management and workers alike.

- (a) The regulations under the Factory Act lay down definite rules in connection with :
 - (i) Available space, light, ventilation, sitting accommodation, safety measures, cloakrooms, washing facilities and First Aid equipment. A Factory Inspector of the Department of Labour will inspect the premises at irregular intervals and check up on existing conditions, demanding alterations wherever necessary. Any worker has the right to lodge a complaint to the Factory Inspector at any time.
 - (ii) Any pregnant woman in employment for a stated period, who attends a free clinic and stops work one month before her confinement, and stays away for two further months is entitled to a Loan/Grant of 25/- a week for 12 weeks.
- (b) Under the Workman's Compensation Act any accident occurring in the course of duty on the factory premises entitles a worker to compensation. In the case of minor accidents, where the worker remains at work, he gets free medical treatment, and compensation for lost working hours.
- (c) Under the Unemployment Benefit Act, the worker is entitled to unemployment benefits for a stated period if he is being retrenched and no other job can be found for him.
- (d) Under the Industrial Conciliation Act an agreement was made between the Cape Clothing Manufacturers' Association/.....

Association and the Garment Workers' Union, the Clothing Industry's official Trade Union, laying down wages, cost of living allowances, hours of work, duration of annual leave, paid public holidays, etc.

Under the Industrial Council Agreement, a Sick Fund was established, which makes provisions for the payment of doctors and pays out benefits to employees during periods of absence from work owing to sickness. The Government/Employer/Employee are contributors to this Fund.

Workers Representation : The Garment Workers Union of the Cape Peninsula is registered as a Trade Union. The Union adheres to the "closed shop" principle, that is, no worker, who is not at the same time a member of the Garment Workers Union is allowed employment in a Clothing Factory. The factory workers elect shop stewards, who represent their point of view at the Union's meetings.

PART I.

THE WORKER WITHIN THE FACTORY.

CHAPTER II.

The Factory as a Social Organisation.

Section A:

COMMUNITY LIFE IN THE FACTORY.

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COMMUNITY LIFE IN THE FACTORY.

"Unlike the pattern of an association, that of a community is usually unplanned, determined by the forces which are generated wherever people in any numbers are thrown in close relationship."

McIver "Society"

I. Community Sentiment.

Community life in a factory can only develop within the limits enforced upon it by economic considerations which brought this particular type of people together

Community life in a factory is unplanned. It is not a part of the production plan - which is to produce for profit. The aggregate of people which form this community is not casual as they have to satisfy definite demands:

- (i) They have to be at an appointed place
Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.
- (ii) They have to be proficient in definitely laid down duties.
- (iii) They have to do a "fair day's work" for definitely laid down remuneration.

Do these demands made upon prospective employees attract people of similar education and skills, similar economic needs?

If this is the case, it should, by the mere fact of being a common-interest group, develop a strong community spirit

Has this actually happened in the particular factory described in the previous chapter?

A community develops a community spirit, a "community sentiment" as McIver calls it. The "we-sentiment of interest."

This statement applies to the community under

review as far as big issues are at stake. Thus, if the economic interest of all workers is threatened by a reduction in wages, by increased demands, etc., the community will unite in an effort to protect their joint and individual interests. But in the daily, every day life of this community, it will be divided into many groups. Into small units, which will be dictated by other laws than those of economic self-interest.

How and why are these cliques formed? Are they just part of factory life, or do they penetrate into the private, after-working-hour life of the worker?

McIver in his analysis of community sentiments states in his chapter on "Differences antagonistic to the sense of community:

A type of difference which always threatens solidarity is that which is expressed in race consciousness Another important though diminishing danger to solidarity arises from the contact within a community of different strongly dogmatic religions."

The truth of this statement is very evident in the community under review. Right through the factory, that is through all its three working sections goes the big dividing line of Christian and Mohammedan, that is in this case of Coloured and Malay.

There exists a constant latent antagonism between those two groups. This is bridged over by joined interests at times, but more often interferes with the smooth running of the community as a whole.

2. The split within the community.

This split of Malay - Coloured affects all levels of working solidarity. Certain occupations within the factory are the preserve of one or the other group, and will be jealously guarded as such.

The section which manufactures Boy's and Men's

Clothing will have Malay Supervisors, who will try their best, and usually succeed, in filling vacancies with Malay men or girls. Pressers, Ironers, Tailors will be Malays. But if one bench should acquire at some time or other a Coloured Set Leader, that is a girl who is in charge of that bench of 12 or 14 workers, she will try her utmost to replace "her" Set with Coloured girls.

Then again the workers in the Underwear Section feel themselves very superior to all other Sections in the factory. Whether the cause for this lies in the type of work being done, which requires the working of a great number of Patent Machines, or the fact that this Section is separated from the rest of the factory, I do not know. I only know that "Underwear" will always demand to be treated differently to "Clothing" or "Shirts," and will not mix with the other workers.

The Shirt Section has about two-thirds Coloured workers, and one-third Malay, while the ratio in the Clothing Section is the reverse.

Some operations in all sections are always more coveted than others, though the wage scale might be the same. The reason for this is twofold. These operations, usually on some Patent Machine might demand more skill, and therefore carry greater prestige, and also this type of worker is more in demand, and will rarely have difficulties in finding new employment, when she "wants a change," or is forced into one. One of these operations in the Shirt Section is that of a "Double Closer" that is, making double seam when closing a shirt sleeve.

For years there has been a silent underground battle going on to break the "Double Closer monopoly," which the Malays acquired at some stage or other. This monopoly was forcibly broken by the Management one day when at the feast of Eid-ul-Fitr which marks the end of Ramadan no Malay came to work, and production suffered a "bottleneck," as no Double Closer was at work.

Coloured Supervisors, on the other hand, play exactly the same game. The "Cleaner" is the "lowest form of life" in a factory. If she is not given a chance at a machine at some time or other, her wage will never get higher than Rs. 2. 6. a week, and it will be very difficult for her to find a job, once she has lost hers. The poor little Cleaner who happens to be a Malay under a Coloured Supervisor will rarely get that chance at the machine, if there should not be interference from "above."

All these things cause constant friction in the daily life of the factory. Grievances, personal, or general, will be harboured for years on end by the individual, or a group, and will be brought up again and again at the smallest provocation.

3. Influence of Supervisors:

Looking at the list of workers of our factory arranged in alphabetical order, the first thing that strikes one is the repetition of family names. Three "Abdullah's", four "Thomas's", etc. The reason for this is the employment policy of the Management.

If a vacancy occurs in one particular section, the Supervisor will be told to ask the workers if they know of anybody who could fill the job. Soon sisters, mothers, daughters of one or the other of the workers will turn up at the door, and if their qualifications are satisfactory, they will be given preference to "strangers." It is not unusual to find four "Semenars" absent one morning, as the same family disaster, or festivity has befallen them all.

The actual employment is done by the Factory Manager, who has been told by the Departmental Manager what is

needed. But in reality the Supervisor of that particular section will have seen to it that on the particular day, when a vacancy is to be filled, the "right" applicant is at the door. It will also rest with the Supervisor to suggest to the Manager transfers of workers from one operation to another, or possible promotions.

This system gives the Supervisor a comparatively great deal of power within the factory community. The workers realise this and have their methods, well adapted to the personality of a particular Supervisor to keep them "sweet", as it is called. To the worker herself, her Set leader or Supervisor is much more important, than the Manager.

It rests with the Supervisor to make the daily life of the worker pleasant or unbearable, to allow a certain amount of personal freedom, or stick to the letter of the rules.

A quick cigarette smoked in the cloakroom, when there is no official "break", a seam done on the machine for a garment of one's own, when one is ahead with one's work, a visit to the Medical Room, if one does not feel well. To all these little things the Supervisor can close an eye. These little things will make all the difference to the individual of having had a nice day at work, or having groaned under the burden of a heavy day.

Obviously, a system like this might easily be open to abuse, and it rests completely with the personality and integrity of the Supervisor what she demands of her workers in exchange for the little liberties she permits.

The majority of the Supervisors have a great sense of responsibility towards their work and workers, but also a strong feeling for "importance" of their position.

The worker who plays up to that, and stresses the status and standing of her Supervisor, and at the same time is a polite, quick and obliging person, will go a long way towards being allowed privileges.

But there are also a few Supervisors who abuse their position and favour their workers according to the "favours" they receive in form of little presents from them.

This attitude of "favours" is not restricted to the non-European group, but goes right through the factory, penetrating all levels of authority. "If you do me a favour, I will do you one . . . I will lay up the material in such an economic way, that some remnants are left over, which will be cut into a garment. If you will do the sewing we can each have one for our kids . . ."

Along these lines, in many ways, the old-fashioned barter-system is being practiced only that skills, and not goods are being bartered.

Nobody is the poorer for it, as the organisation is too big and impersonal to notice the difference, but a few individuals have pooled their resources and profited by the result, but they have not only profited in the economic sense.

These human touches within an inhuman, impersonal structure, knit the community closer together, give a feeling of "belonging", of being an accepted part of a whole. This has been practiced for so many generations, that "favours" have become a "right", which would be fiercely defended, if ever challenged.

4. Types of Relationship within the factory community:

When analysing the social life in the factory it has to be divided into three parts:

- (ii) The social contacts which are kept up while working, that is while sitting at the machine, the cleaning table, etc. These have to be limited to the physically nearest neighbours. They find further channels of communication through those workers who have to walk about in the course of their duties. These are supervisors, mechanics, sweepers, or 'generals', that is, young girls who exchange bobbins, carry bundles of work, etc.

- (i) The social life during breaks, that is morning and afternoon for ten minutes, and at lunch time for one hour. Here friends can get together and do things according to their own tastes, as far as the limited time allows.

- (iii) As part of factory life, the office factory life must be considered in so far as it might affect friendships within the factory. It might also be of interest to follow up whether friendships developed in the factory are carried over into the home.

Social life and working life inside and outside the factory are inseparably interwoven. A good day at work will make troubles at home easier to bear. Difficulties at home will reflect on the working capacity of the worker. She will be irritable, tired, distracted and her work will suffer should she not find a sympathetic ear or be able to turn for practical advice to solve her dilemma, a vicious circle will have started, which is difficult to break. It might within a short time change a good worker into an unsatisfactory one, who will be in danger of losing her job.

5. The problems created by a female labour force.

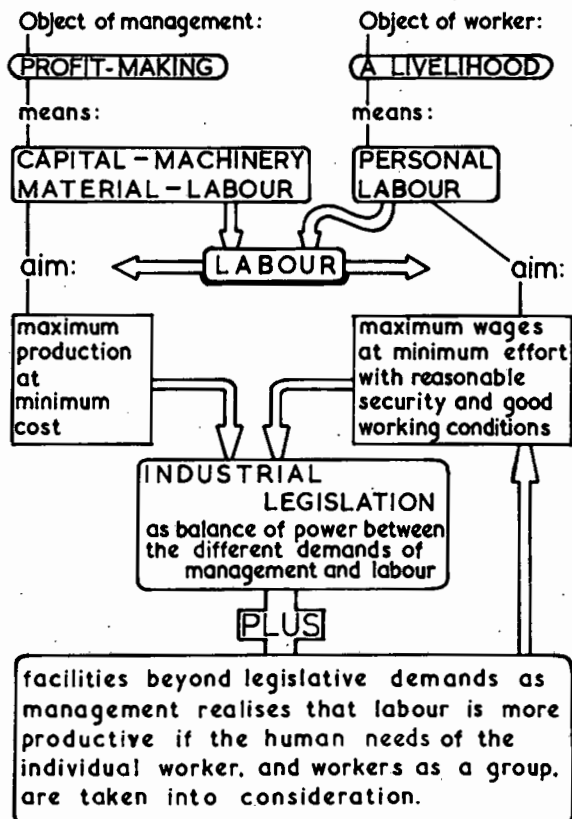
This statement applies particularly strongly to an industrial community where there is mainly a female labour force. Women of all races, religions, or cultural levels are bound by the same laws of nature.

Periodicity, is one of them, which not only indisposes a woman physically with monthly regularity, but it

CHAPTER II Section A
Graphic Summary (a)

AIMS AND OBJECT OF MANAGEMENT AND
WORKER AS A WORKING COMMUNITY

a compromise



changes her reactions, it affects her emotional life. Even the fiercest feminist, today, will, I hope, have developed far enough along the road of emancipation, that she need not pretend any more that women are equal to men, in the sense of being the same. They might be equals, in the sense that different qualities specific to men and women are equal in their value. But the stress on what is important in one's life is placed differently with women to that of men.

The average woman is irrevocably bound to her emotional life and its satisfaction, which lies within the boundaries of her home. The more "intellectual", civilised, a woman becomes, the more blurred the issue. But in the community under review there can be no doubt, that the women who represent 9/10th of its labour force, do not look upon their job as their vocation, but as a means to implement the family income. But the moment a close member of the family falls ill, economic considerations will be forgotten and domestic duties, which fill an emotional need, will take their place.

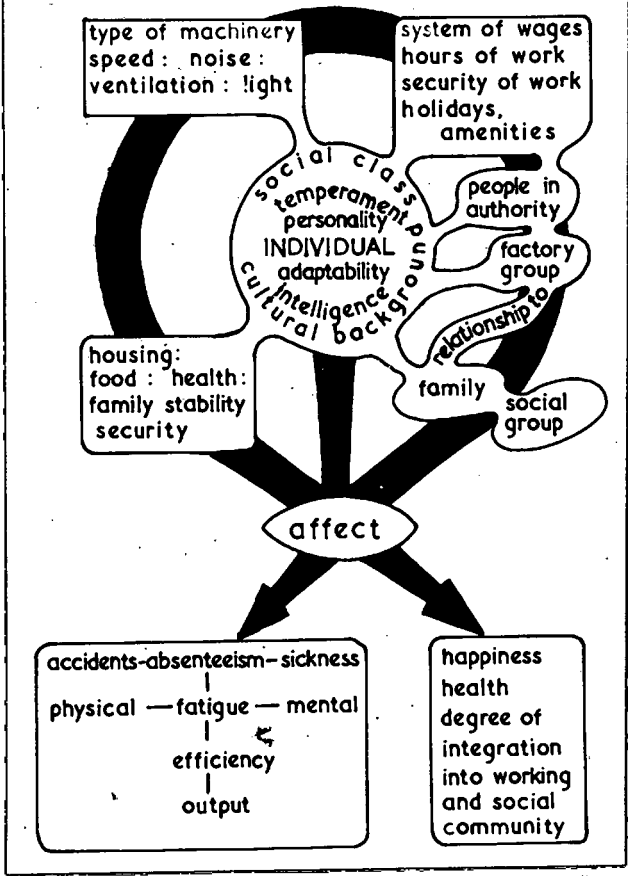
Production planning, when dealing with a female labour force, has to take into consideration, the age-old cycle in a woman's life - courtship - marriage - childbirth. During courtship the most efficient woman worker will slacken in her work - marriage will mean a couple of days or weeks of leave - childbirth will keep her away from work for at least three months. After that it will mean an increased rate in absenteeism, as domestic problems will have become of greater importance than the weekly wage envelope.

6. The Human Factor in Industry:

The human factor penetrates and destroys the most

Graphic Summary (b)

THE HUMAN FACTOR IN INDUSTRY
the interrelation of worker and work



scientifically worked out production plans. Rational man for many decades tried to ignore it and tried to put Man, Machine, Material into the same straightjacket cut according to a pattern of economic principles only.

The position of the Personnel Officer, the Welfare Officer, was created as the missing link, to adjust human needs to the Management's demands. His task was to find outlets for these human needs in such a way, that they would least disturb the Management's planning.

That is where "organised community life" enters the picture.

Elton Mayo in "The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilisation" states:

" . . . There cannot be co-operation without organisation. Any industrial organisation is at once a way of working which must be technically expert and effective - and also a way of living for many people . . . One should create a framework under which the perennial social instinct of men can develop."

According to Elton Mayo's findings the best way of balancing human needs with industrial demands is:

1. To create co-operation by organisation.
2. To satisfy the need for emotional release.
3. To recognise the importance of the working group.

In an industrial concern it would be the task of the Personnel Officer to put these "categorical imperatives" into practice.

7. Co-operation by organisation:

How could this be achieved in an industrial community like the one under review? And what would be the result of such efforts?

To create co-operation by organisation common objectives have to be found which cut across the differences caused by religious, cultural, educational and social factors.

Common objectives can be summed up under the five headings:

- I. Security and mutual aid.
- II. Health.
- III. Education.
- IV. Recreation.
- V. Charity.

I. Security.

(A) That security which is achieved by industrial legislation, and the existence of a Trade Union.

The protection of the worker by Industrial Legislation and Trade Union is taken for granted and has not been created by a special effort of this particular factory community. It only plays a role in factory life when grievances are felt in connection with wage demands, dismissal, or difficult working conditions.

Particular to this factory community actually, is a grievance of long standing against their Union, which is the result of some disagreement between Union members in the factory with some of the Union's Officials many years ago. Some of these members were expelled from the Union, but remained at work in our factory, in spite of the "Closed Shop" principle. Most of the workers in the factory either stand behind those expelled members, though they themselves belong to the Union, or they have not sufficient interest to take part in Union activities.

As a result there are never sufficient candidates

available to be elected as Shop Stewards. According to the size of the factory there should be four Shop Stewards representing the factory, but there is only one Representative.

Very rarely do individual workers bring any complaints to the Union.

(B) Security by common effort - specific to the community under review.

(i) The workers "Mutual Aid and Benefit Fund."

The workers are its sole contributors. Money is deducted weekly from each worker's wage, the amount to be deducted having been decided at a general meeting.

The funds are used to:

- (a) supply dental and oculist's requirements;
- (b) to alleviate distress in a family, caused by prolonged illness of a worker, or a member of his/her family, or by employment;
- (c) to advance loans to workers.

In an annual general election seven workers are elected to the committee by majority vote.

(ii) Holiday Saving Fund: The wage clerks collect weekly contributions to this fund. The amounts paid in vary, and only about thirty per cent of the workers avail themselves of this opportunity to save money for the annual holiday. All monies are paid out at the end of the year, when the factory closes down for its three weeks annual holiday.

II. Health:

- (a) Free medical supplies are at the disposal of the workers. Some are distributed in

First Aid Boxes throughout the factory,

others are available in the surgery.

Workers trained as V.A.D's are appointed in rotation to attend to minor ailments or injuries.

- (b) All workers and members of the staff are X-rayed annually, advantage is taken of the Mass Radiology Service offered free by the Municipal Authorities.

III. Education:

(a) Film shows are given periodically during lunch hour. The films usually are shorts dealing with matters of health. Walt Disney Cartoons dealing with particular diseases, questions of hygiene, etc., are very popular. Occasionally, travel films are shown. About 150 workers at a time attend these shows.

(b) Lectures: Talks on questions of health, hygiene, on hire purchase, social legislation, or any specific problems brought up by any of the workers are given to small groups. These talks are usually organised in courses of four to six lectures held once a week on one subject matter. Approximately four such Courses are given annually.

(c) Courses given by the Red Cross: Approximately twice a year a group of twelve to sixteen workers attend classes given on the factory premises by a member of the Red Cross. Each Course lasts over nine weeks and exams have to be passed.

Workers who have attended these Classes have formed a Factory Detachment. The Detachment has to attend Parades, hold functions and help in Hospitals and at

public gatherings.

(d) Literature: Pamphlets and posters are distributed in cloakrooms and workshop dealing with matters of health, hygiene and accident prevention. A notice board in a prominent position is being used as "wall newspaper". Cuttings relevant to some subject in which the workers might be interested are put up, notifications of meetings, social functions, etc., are put on the board.

(e) Committees: Different committees have been appointed by the workers to deal with matters concerning welfare or work, such as "Kitchen Committee," "Supervisors Committee," "Children's Fund" etc. These committees are usually held in the form of tea parties (during lunch hour) under the Chairmanship of the Personnel Officer.

IV. Recreation:

A number of functions enumerated under other headings already, such as film shows might also come under this heading.

(a) During the winter months only are held:

- (i) Physical Culture Classes once a week (approximately 40 participate).
- (ii) Netball teams play twice weekly, and have occasional matches with other factories on Saturday afternoons.
- (iii) Ping-Pong is played all the year round.

(b) Occasional dances are held on Saturday evenings in aid of some charitable organisation.

V. Charity:

(a) Children's Christmas Fund: This fund was started by a factory manager many years ago. Though

this particular manager has left, the fund goes on. Workers contribute 3d. per week over the whole year. Out of this money material is bought, and a team of 20 women set to work six months daily through their lunch-hour to complete about 200 garments for boys and girls up to the age of 12.

On Dingaan's Day every year a Christmas party is given in a church hall to 200 Coloured children. The children are the poorest of different schools selected by their principals.

Each child is given a garment, sweets, fruit, ice cream and cold drinks, while they are entertained by "factory talent" on the stage and by community singing.

(b) Friends of the Sick Association (Cape F.O.S.A.):

This association is patterned on the same principle as F.O.S.A., Durban, which aims at spreading knowledge about the incidence and prevention of tuberculosis among the poorer sections of a community, and at the same time gives financial assistance to T.B. sufferers and their families. With the help of Paul Sykes, the Founder of this Movement, the writer with a group of helpers started its first Care Committee in the factory under review. The organisation is built on the principle of self-help.

The efforts described above then represent the sum total of trying to create co-operation by organisation.

8. Mutual Aid: The binding factor:

What are the results of these efforts? Has it created a "framework under which the perennial social instinct of men can develop?" Has a basis been found where religious and social differences are forgotten in the striving towards a common aim?

Most successful in ironing out differences are all recreational activities, and those which do not benefit the individual directly; that is, charitable efforts on the part of the worker. The moment self-interest is involved, each religious group accuses the other of trying to gain power, to practice favouritism - and not unjustly so.

But in all activities it is the Coloured section which participates most energetically, while the Malay girls are more the interested onlookers, such as in netball, ping-pong, physical culture. On committees Malay men will be elected, together with Coloured women, but there is not one Malay woman on any of the committees.

The only exceptions are efforts at mutual aid. Malay and Coloured alike contribute towards the children's Christmas fund, Malay women and Coloured alike sacrifice many of their lunch-hours to sew garments for poor children. Malay and Coloured, men and women will prepare the "treat", and entertain their young guests. Malay and Coloured children alike are invited to the party and given presents.

This is rather odd, when one considers the religious background and meaning Christmas has, that this so very Christian feast is the common meeting ground for goodwill shown by Christians and Mohammedans alike.

F.O.S.A.: Most successful of all organised efforts towards co-operation and mutual understanding and respect proved to be the work of the "Friends," of F.O.S.A.

The annual X-rays, the showing of films dealing with tuberculosis, the finding of T.B. within the factory community had made the workers "T.B. conscious." Once the impetus was given by showing that ignorance and misery could be fought by common effort, the response was

astounding.

Every single member in the factory voted for regular contributions towards F.O.S.A. Malay and Coloured alike attended lectures and took over families in whose home they became a Friend.

The principle on which F.O.S.A. is built is not to give money indiscriminately, but to supply whatever goods or services might be needed. In weekly meetings the Friends discussed the needs of the families under their care, and jointly it was decided in what ways help should be given.

Where there was a sick woman in the house, the Friend would do the shopping for the family. If it was found that clothing was needed, an appeal was put on the blackboard in the factory. There was always a response to such appeals. Repairing of clothing was done by the Friend before she brought them to "her" family.

Though the Malay Friends looked after Malay families, and the Coloured, after Coloured, there was never a question of favouring one section more than the other. Unselfishness, doing a good deed for its own sake without personal reward, proved to be the one common denominator, where class or caste differences were completely forgotten.

Social standing: Not so on other committees where personal gain could be derived.

The most difficult fund to administer proved to be the Sick and Benefit Fund. Though the committee is elected by majority vote, the manner in which that majority is arrived at is not above reproach. To be on that committee does not only mean kudos, but also means power. To get on to the committee potential members will do a spot of electioneering, pressure groups are formed, intrigues spun, so that when it comes to the actual election

the ground has been prepared.

Workers who want financial assistance from the fund have to put their case to the Secretary, who in turn submit it to the committee. The personal circumstances of the worker are then discussed in the most minute detail.

It is astonishing how much is known about each worker, but always only by that member on the committee, who belongs to the Department in which the applicant works. As a result much favouritism slips in. If the applicant happens not to be liked by the committee member representing her Department, her case will be interpreted in an unfavourable light.

Rather astonishing to me was how the social position of the applicant is often a deciding factor in the amount and nature of help given. There was one case, for instance, of a woman worker, one belonging to the "upper" class, who was sick for several weeks. She employs a servant. She applied for help to be able to keep on her servant. The committee members viewed that a reasonable request.

The reasoning was, that to have to dismiss the servant would mean a lowering of her status, which could only be looked upon as a disaster. She was granted a fairly high sum of money, while another worker who belonged to the lowest status group, got a very much smaller grant, though she was really in distress.

Cases are supposed to be discussed "in camera" and treated as strictly confidential, but I have not known of one case yet, which remained a secret to the rest of the community. Not only that, but it is always known exactly by everybody, how every member of the committee has voted.

This does not necessarily mean that the members on the

committee are misusing the trust put in them. More likely the beneficiary herself will spread her case, or by attacking a committee member find out in a roundabout way, what had happened at meetings.

Then, also, the fact that so many factory workers are related to each other, plays a big part in this system of telegraphy, where there are no known lines of communication, and the smallest item of news is known immediately to all concerned or unconcerned.

One is often tempted to think, when again and again items of news, even on highest managerial level leaks out, that there is, if not a community spirit, but some such ghostly quality, as a "communal spirit," which prevades all and everything.

Health: Matters dealing with health are the next biggest factor to unite in the factor. The surgery, with its clean-sheeted bed, always ready to receive a tired body, the medical cupboard filled with patent medicines, plaster, bandages, etc., has great powers of attraction.

A white pill, an evil tasting concoction, a neat plaster or bandage can not only heal the pain, but give occasion to a little chat, a relaxation from monotonous routine, and in that way supply a mental stimulus as well as a physical relief. But it has also been definitely proved after careful analysing of the medical room's daily log-book, that little remedies have often helped to avoid serious disabilities.

Three years ago, when there was no surgery, and only first aid equipment was kept in First Aid Boxes all over the factory, the incidence of pin-pricks, scratches and cuts turning septic was very high. Sore throats developed into tonsillitis, an upset digestion into gastritis.

The resistance of the average worker is so low, often the home conditions so difficult, that if a small imbalance is not taken care of immediately, it develops into serious trouble.

Until the surgery was properly organised, and factory workers trained in First Aid and Home Nursing, the writer acted as "nurse". This proved to be a shortcut towards gaining the confidence and trust of the workers, and has been the foundation of all later work.

Once an aspirin has relieved a headache one has qualified to solve all other human problems, and advice is sought on relieving the pain of a mother who is suffering from cancer to dealing with a husband who comes home drunk every night.

But as the writer's aim was, from the very beginning, not to make herself indispensable, but the community self-supporting, she gradually handed over the duties of administering to the sick to those workers who had received training under the guidance of the Red Cross, and had proven themselves capable to handle responsibility.

This step has shown very gratifying results in two ways.

Out of the mass of 300 workers, 30 lost their anonymity and developed capabilities which had not had sufficient outlet in routine work. They had found a channel through which they could develop their personality. At the same time by helping their own people within the community, they were able to knit the community closer together.

Out of these surgery activities developed the very active Red Cross Detachment, the first Factory Detachment in the Cape attempted by the Red Cross. Here again, as with the Sick Fund and F.O.S.A. an activity which had its

roots within the factory community, filling a need, has spread beyond the boundaries of that particular community.

Members of the Detachment, in their spare time, help in Hospitals, act as V.A.D's at gatherings, and educate their own families towards a better understanding of the need for hygiene, the treatment of ailments. They have become an asset to the Coloured community as a whole. How strongly this is felt, one realises when one visits their homes, and finds certificates of proficiency framed on walls in prominent positions.

Responsibility: Committee work is greatly loved by the more active members of the factory community. To be on a committee, to attend a meeting and discuss in greatest detail the most minute problems with a great deal of eloquence seem to give a great satisfaction to the individual. It also adds prestige to the standing of the individual within the community.

This attitude of putting great importance on small matters, and of feeling important when sharing small responsibilities is very understandable, when one realises how very narrow the margin of authority a worker can gain within a community of that description.

The whole horizon is narrow, the perspective at which matters are viewed has to be in a ratio fitting into that orbit. The results seem sometimes ludicrous to the outsider, but definitely "create a frame-work under which the perennial social instinct of men can develop."

I have stated that it is the Coloured Section which participates most actively in all social activities which have developed within the factory community.

This can only be understood if one realises the different class structure on which the Malay and Coloured

groups are based, respectively.

Therefore it will be necessary to take each group separately and:

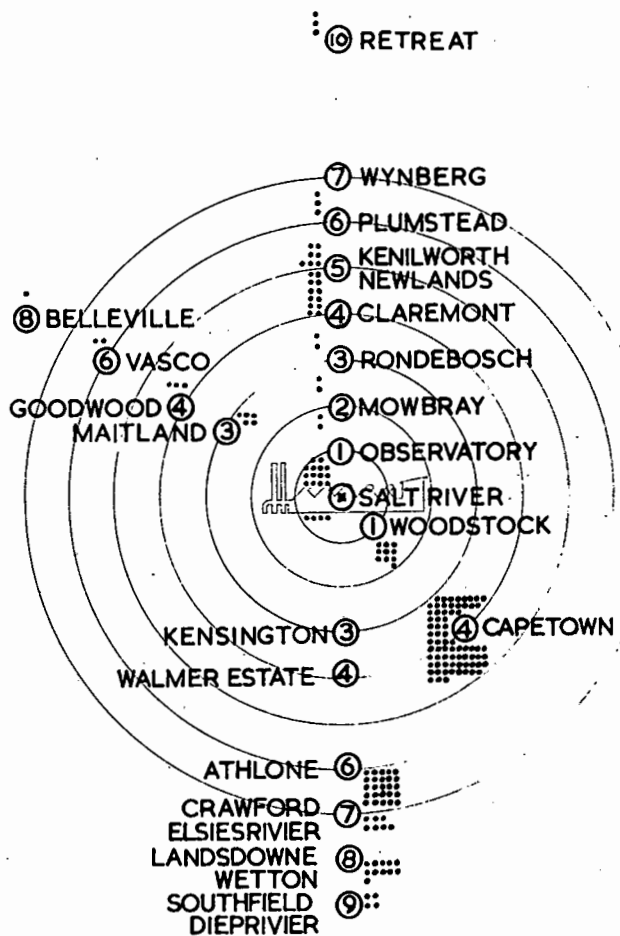
- (a) observe the social system prevailing in each group;
- (b) find the basis on which these social systems are built.

These findings should explain the attitude of each group towards the other. It should also explain the pattern into which the social life within the factory community has shaped.

CHAPTER II Section A
Distance from Work
WORKING PLACE: SALT RIVER

	area	no. of workers	distance from factory	transport per person per month
i	Salt River	18	under 1 mile	-
ii	Woodstock	10	1+	10/7
	Observatory	2	1+	10/7
	Mowbray	2	1+	10/7
iii	Rondebosch	2	3+	10/7
	Maitland	5	3-	10/7
	Kensington	3	3-	14/3
iv	Capetown	72	4+-	10/7
	Walmer Estate	2	4	10/7
	Claremont	8	4+	16/2
	Goodwood	3	4+	14/9
v	Newlands	7	5	14/-
	Kenilworth	1	5+	22/6
vi	Plumstead	3	6+	22/6
	Athlone	25	6+	18/2
	Vasco	2	6+	15/8
vii	Wynberg	27	7+	22/6
	Crawford	3	7+	18/1
	Elsiesrivier	4	7+	20/9
i-vii		199	1 to 7	10/7 to 22/6
viii	Landsdowne	10	8+	23/3
	Belville	1	8+	20/-
	Wetton	3	8+	21/-
ix	Southfield	2	9	22/4
	Dieprivier	2	9+	26/2
x	Retreat	3	10+	22/8
		220		

DISTANCE FROM WORK



PART 1.

THE WORKER WITHIN THE FACTORY.

CHAPTER II - The Factory as a Social Organisation

Section B:

The Coloured Group.

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	(a) Analysis of its two sections	
	(b) Position and attitudes.	
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Can any common denominator be found for these 16 women, which might throw light on the fact, that they, and no others, out of 220 women employed in the factory are holding positions of authority?

(a) It was found that all 16 women came from "good" homes. That is, their families live in an atmosphere of economic security which enabled them to keep up a fairly high standard of living. The home life was pleasant, and the families were of good standing within their local community.

Twelve out of the 16 women were of the ages 21 - 25, and only four between the ages 45 - 50.

The older women had been with the firm 12 years and longer, while the younger ones had been five years longer.

All had good educational qualifications, ranging from Standard V to teachers qualifications, which were held by two of the women concerned.

All are very keen to "educate themselves" wherever and however opportunity arises.

Only four women out of the 16 are married, of which two are newly-married, and have no children yet, while the others have already adult children.

Four out of the 16 women are very light skinned, and could easily pass as Europeans.

The outstanding factor among this group of women then seem to be:

The high standing of their families within the Coloured community outside the factory, which is based on:

- (a) economic security expressed in a high standard of living;
- (b) stable family life;

(c) good educational qualifications.

This home background creates personalities, which make for reliable, intelligent workers. They make good leaders, who demand and receive respect, and influence the others. They will be elected on to committees, and will be spokesmen for the others whenever necessary.

These 16 women belong to the highest status group within the factory, which carries great prestige.

There are others, who by similar family background, and educational qualifications belong also to this group. Some of them are too young to hold positions of responsibility. Others again are not good "mixers" and not interested in community functions.

All in all about 36 women, that is, 25 per cent of the workers in the factory belong to this Upper Class group.

They will "keep themselves to themselves". At tea breaks and at lunch breaks they will only mix with their own group socially. They might mix with others, wherever they are the organisers or leaders of some function, but the class distinction can always be felt. The other workers will be politely ignored. Two women of the same age might sit next to each other at the machine. The one belonging to the higher strata will be known to the other by her surname. The upper class woman might, or might not know her neighbour's Christian name, but certainly not her surname.

2. THE MIDDLE CLASS GROUP:

The second group I would like to call the "Middle Class". It is the largest section with approximately 50 per cent of the workers.

Here, too the key to their position in the factory can only be found once one has analysed their home

background.

It was seen that the upper class group had attained a certain educational level based on a secure economic background. This had given them a recognized social standing within their community.

The Middle Class is constantly striving for more and more, but it is eluding them as poverty at one time or another interferes with the individual's aspirations.

The budget of a Middle Class family is usually very precarious balance, and can easily be overthrown when one member of the family becomes unemployed or ill.

(a) Position and Attitude: This group of people have great admiration for those who have achieved economic stability. Economic stability which enabled them to give their children a good education, and to hold positions of responsibility.

They make good "followers." Particularly the group of young unmarried women will take active part in social functions organized by their leaders or the Welfare Council. They will always try to "better" themselves.

But in this Middle Class group there is a large section which is overburdened with domestic duties and difficulties. Young mothers who have to work to supplement the family income. Middle aged women who are widows or whose husbands are ill or unemployed.

They would like to participate in the social life of the community, but they have not got much time or energy to spare.

This group of women will only know those women who also work in their section, that is, Shirts, Clothing, Underwear. They will often know each other's Christian names only, though young girls have to address married women by their surname.

The Upper Class woman will have leisure during her lunch hour, as she has either a relative at home, who is not working and can look after the house, or she might employ a servant for this purpose.

Not so the Middle Class woman. She will do her shopping during lunch hour, or if she lives near the factory, she might go home and do some housework.

3. THE LOWER CLASS:

The Lower Class, to which I reckon only 15 per cent of our Coloured workers belong, falls really into two groups.

(a) The group has the strong urge to go up in their world to live as decently as possible in spite of all odds being against it. They fight against poverty continuously although it intrudes at every step, and is an obstacle towards every aim.

An over-crowded home, malnourished, inadequately dressed children, ill health seem to defeat every effort. In spite of this, good manners are taught to children, respect is shown and felt towards those who are better educated and better off than they themselves are.

To have and hold a job is looked upon as the greatest blessing and the first step towards progress.

But there is the other half of this "lower class" group. They may live under exactly the same circumstances as those described above, may have the same family income, or lack of income, but they have given up the unequal struggle against poverty. They pretend not to care for social niceties any longer. All they want is to live as well as possible, but by what means they achieve it has become immaterial to them. They know they will not be

accepted by the others, and they pretend, even to themselves, that they don't want to be accepted.

They have become the out-casts of their group, and derive a certain pride in that, and a great deal of freedom of action

They live for the day, and have no fear of tomorrow, as it can hardly be worse than today. They are the potential, or actual female skolly, the "amateur prostitute" or the bad element.

(b) The Lower Class groups have very little chance to participate in the social life of the factory.

The "respectable" group, those who still hope to improve their own position, or that of their children will be mainly concerned with "making ends meet." They will "make an extra penny" by running errands for the other workers at lunch-hour. They are shy and awkward and live in awe of their "superiors" - their "superiors" being all other workers bar the "outcasts."

I cannot but feel that the other social groups in the factory rather like this timid little group who look up at them with such admiration, and can easily be bullied. It gives them an added feeling of importance.

On the other hand the Upper Class Groups will justify their behaviour by helping those who are in distress. But they will do so with gestures of charitable superiority. This, incidentally, is accepted as the right attitude by the recipients of largesse.

The other half of the Lower Class section are mischiefmakers in the factory. If they are young women of doubtful virtue, they will be closely watched by the community, so that they cannot influence the young girls of good homes. They are the floating population of the

factory, and will never long remain in one job.

Production planning cannot take into consideration social distinctions among its workers.

A girl of the lowest social standing within the Coloured community, of a "bad" home, might easily sit on the machine next to a girl who has passed matric and comes of a "strict" home. In spite of the physical proximity of their respective working places, these girls will never mix socially, once the factory hooter has broken up working discipline.

4. SOCIAL CLASS AND ATTITUDE TO SEX.

The difference in the behaviour pattern of social classes represented in the factory is most noticeable in the attitude taken towards questions concerning sex.

In the Upper Class it will hardly ever happen that a girl falls pregnant without being married. I only know of one case in three years. This was treated as an absolute family disaster. The parents of the girl were in despair.

The father threw the girl out of his house, and a married sister had to come to her rescue. The girl got married four months before her baby was born. But only when her child was one year old, and the couple had proved their worth was a family reunion affected.

In the case of a Middle Class family pregnancies of unmarried girls will happen more often, but the reaction of the parents will not be quite so drastic. The girl will most probably get a hiding, the man be made to marry her. Once they are married the incident will be forgotten.

In the respectable Lower Class group the girl will be frightened to tell her parents, but mainly on account of

the economic problem arising. She will not be able for some time to add her wages to the already minute family income. She might or might not get married, but either way will be an added burden to the respective households. But nobody will view the event as a particular social disgrace.

In the case of an "outcast" family, it will be taken for granted that it must happen sometime. The girl might be scolded for her stupidity, but as long as she is healthy, and might be able to get some money from the man to support the child, nobody will really care.

But to whoever it happens within the factory community there are about 6 cases of illegitimate births a year it is a most welcome and inexhaustible topic of conversation. But there will also be spontaneous sympathy and financial help forthcoming, wherever a worker, for whatever reason, is in distress.

PART I.

THE WORKER WITHIN THE FACTORY.

The Factory as a Social Organisation.

CHAPTER II.

The Cape Malay Group:

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CHAPTER II.

THE CAPE MALAY GROUP.

" . . . The Cape Malays form by far the larger section of the local Muslims, who can roughly be divided into two groups, the Cape Malays - about 35,000 - whose home language is Afrikaans, and the Indians - about 5,000 - who speak their own language as well as English. For both groups Arabic is the language of the Mosque, supplemented by Afrikaans in the case of the Cape Malays, and Urdu in the case of the Indians. Practically all Cape Muslims belong to the Sunni sect.

The Cape Malay group consists of many racial elements, Javanese, Arabs, Indians, Ceyloneses, Chinese and Europeans have mixed with Negro and Coloured - and to a lesser extent Hindu - to produce the community they form today. I mention only some of the constituents of which this race is compounded.

A mixed community, constantly re-enforced by various elements, linked by one bond - religion"

I. D. du Plessis: The Cape Malays.

I. Introduction.

The factory community with which we are concerned holds only Cape Malays, and no Indians. There are 64 women and about 30 men who belong to this group.

As Dr. du Plessis states in his book, it is "a mixed community, constantly re-enforced by various elements, linked by one bond - religion "

A. J. Arberry and Rom Landau in their book, "Islam today," say:

"Mohammedanism is essentially a practical religion. It lays down distinct standards for legal, social, political conduct, and regulates the life of a Muslim as father, husband, son, guiding him through the entire labyrinth of his economic and personal activities."

One is constantly reminded of this fact, when one is in daily contact with a small group of Cape Malays. They remain a distinct community within a community, in spite of

the overpowering pressure of living within an industrial community based on Western European principles.

2. Religious principles of the Muslims.

To understand at all the attitude of this group and their reaction towards their surroundings, one has to consider their religious principles on which the Muslim Faith is built.

Levonian in his "Moslem Mentality" enumerates the principles which influence a Muslim's life:

"The Medressah (Muslim school of religion) had established a divine science based on the peculiar interpretation of the Hadith (Muslim traditions)."

The main lines of mentality are:

- I. "Truth cannot be discovered by reason but by tradition.
- II. Life must be administered, not through human principles discovered by human intellect, but by the divine laws which are unchangeable.
- III. The world is passing, the next is everlasting.
- IV. To ascribe everything to fate and destiny.
- V. To reject the national life and to remain bound by religious traditions.
- VI. To pay absolute homage to a spiritual lead."

The Muslim law lays down that:

"A man may have four wives and concubines. A man may divorce his wife, but a woman may never divorce her husband."

- I. D. du Plessis points out in his book that

"An indication of the main features of Mohammedan ritual will help to understand local practices.

The Arabic word "Islam" means "surrender" (to God), and all Muslims (followers of Islam) must surrender themselves to the five articles of faith:

- I. There is no deity but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet.

2. Religious practices at set times (Selah).
3. A religious tax (Zaka).
4. Fasts, especially Ramadan.
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hadj).

Prayers are said five times a day. Ablutions must be performed in a prescribed way. "

3. Effect on Factory Life:

How do these principles to which the followers of Mohammed have to submit affect the daily life of the factory community? How does it affect the relationship of Coloured and Malay within that community?

These are the first questions which will have to be answered.

I have stated before that there exists a constant antagonism between those two groups, which very often interferes with the smooth running of the community as a whole.

Let me quote an example which will prove this point:

In my capacity as Welfare Officer I was keen to improve the standard of health among our workers. Analysis of absentee records and investigations into the food habits of our employees proved that malnutrition was a big factor in retarding working ability, causing unnecessary fatigue and debility. I suggested to the Management that the introduction of a soup kitchen would demand only a small financial outlay. This would be amply recompensed by increased energy of the worker, which would benefit his working capacity.

I was told to go ahead with the plan.

There was already a canteen in existence which supplied teas and coffees at nominal charges, and a body of workers representing the different Departments, the

"Kitchen Committee" was keeping an eye on its activities.

I called a meeting of this committee and told them that we would soon be able to supply a good, strong broth at lunchtime. This would be a nice addition to their sandwiches.

"Well" said the Mohammedan members of the Committee, "would there be meat in it?"

I assured them there would.

"But would it be slaughtered in the right way?"

I asked the Christian members of the committee if they minded having the meat supplied by a Malay butcher. They did not mind.

"But," said the Malays, "would the soup be cooked by a Malay?"

That could also be arranged, I thought.

"And would all the necessary spices be added to make the soup palatable?" demanded the Malay members.

"No," said the Christians, they would not be prepared to eat soup seasoned with spices.

"No," said the Malays, they would not be prepared to eat a soup without spices.

"Could we then have two soup kitchens?" I was asked.

"Double expense," roared the Management, "out of the question, either everyone will eat this soup, or nobody will get it."

Nobody ever got it. The workers still chew their dry sandwiches and go without a hot meal all day long.

Once a year the working efficiency of the Malay section is impaired by their strict adherence to "Ramadan."

During this period, which lasts one lunar month, neither food nor drink may pass a Muslim's lips from dawn to dusk. In spite of fasting the women have still to work their eight and a half hours a day at the machine.

THE POSITION OF THE MALAY WOMAN WITHIN HER COMMUNITY:

The examples quoted above effect the life of the whole factory community, men and women alike. But to understand why the Malay woman takes such a passive part in the social life of the factory community one has to realise the position she holds within the Malay community as a whole.

The Malay woman of today, be she 15 or 50 years of age, working in a factory, or at home, is brought up strictly in accordance with the principles laid down in the Koran.

Even if she is not kept in "Purdah", that is, hidden from the sight of strangers at home, she is very much kept in a mental purdah - a mental Purdah which curtains her off from all knowledge European education might imbue in her.

It will be shown that the education standard among the Malay women in the factory is very much lower than that of the Coloured of the same age groups. While the stress is laid on school education among the Coloured group, religious education takes its place among the Malay section.

The Coloured girl might attend evening classes to achieve a higher school standard. The Malay girl will also attend classes - only these classes will have been organised by the Muslim community, and will deal purely with modes of behaviour as demanded by religious tradition.

The Coloured girl will go to the nearest school in her district, the Malay girl will listen to instructions given to her by the Imam's wife.

She will be taught Arabic prayers. She will become accomplished in sewing and embroidery, in cooking and baking. She will be taught how to behave at festive occasions, what prayers are to be said on what occasions, what ablutions to be performed, and in what way.

Altogether stress will be laid on "how" and to ask "why" will not be encouraged. Tradition is the foundation of all Muslim education.

From the very beginning it will be instilled in the Malay girl that her ultimate aim must be to produce children, to bear sons. Man is the Master, and the woman has to submit. But the more children she bears, the older she becomes, the more reverence is due to her within her family circle.

In the Malay community, more than anywhere else the woman is an integral part of a family structure and cannot be viewed as a single unit.

5 SOCIAL CIRCLES OF MALAY WOMEN REPRESENTED IN THE FACTORY:

"Mohammedanism lays down distinctive standards for legal, social, political conduct . . ."

Social classes within the Muslim community are based on religious considerations and these coincide with economic wealth.

In practice this means that, while a Coloured girl, or young woman of a good family might have to work to implement the family income, a Malay girl of good family will stay at home. In the first case "good family" is not synonymous with well-to-do family while in the other economic wealth and social class are closely correlated.

A Malay girl of Middle Class family might go to work until she gets married. This will only be taken as means to an end. The purpose will be to contribute towards the expenses of an elaborate wedding, and towards the gradual purchase of a dowry.

Only about ten out of the 64 Malay women employed at the factory come from that class. They are all between the ages of 17 and 25. All other age groups of Malay women in the factory come of poor families or are the

flots Broken up homes

This also means that while the social structure of the Coloured woman within the factory appears to be fairly representative of the social structure of the whole Coloured community of an industrial city, that of the Malay community is not. The Malay woman of a better class home will remain at home, and will never become an industrial worker.

Social Classes: While there are at least four distinct social classes among the Coloured community within the factory there are only three among the Malays, and those are blurred, and often melt into one.

The reason for that is the veneration and authority which is due to and inspired by age, according to the ethical code of the Mohammedan. A young girl of whatever social strata has to show respect towards a woman older than herself, of whatever family she might be.

The social grouping within the group is more determined by age than class. The poor Malay woman who works in the factory side by side with the young Malay girl, will be a guest at that girl's wedding. The Malay woman realises that she belongs to a different social strata than the parents of the girl, but according to Malay custom, poor and rich alike have to share the enjoyment of a feast.

When analysing the social classes which exist in the Cape Coloured community, I stressed two points:

- (i) that the better the education the higher the prestige of an individual or a group;
- (ii) that the lighter the skin colour the more advantages are offered to the individual to attain a higher degree of education;
- (iii) that economic consideration as to the status of a person is only of secondary importance

This explains why the Coloured women between the ages of 20 and 35 were the most active in taking a lead

working either in our, or in any other factory, while four out of the six wives of the Coloured men are in employment.

While there is a great deal of friction between the Malay and Coloured men, the Malay men will flirt with equally great pleasure with a Coloured girl as with a Malay girl. Coloured women will watch developments with great disfavour, while the Malay woman will be a slightly malicious, but amiable observer. Not so when a Coloured man get involved with a Malay girl. Then everybody will be equally disapproving.

This attitude has its foundation in the fact that the religious importance of the woman is very small among the Mohammedans. It is a "masculine" religion, only men have a soul and can pass on tradition, women are only tools.

Women proselytes are easily made, as long as a girl will accept instructions by the Imam's wife, she will be accepted into the Malay community. Not so with a Malay girl who becomes a Christian to please her Coloured lover. She will be an outcast in both communities.

How very much the woman is only treated as the "means to an end," that is, to bear children, is illustrated in the following problem which was put to me in my capacity as Welfare Officer.

A young Malay girl stayed away from work. Rumour had it that she was pregnant. She had been away for some time when into my office walked two women swathed in black, with black yashmaks covering their faces. They sat down, crying bitterly. Gradually they sobbed out their story.

They were the mother and elder sister of the absent girl. She was pregnant, and they said one of our men, a Malay was the father, and he was already married. They had approached him to support the girl, and he had refused to do so. I promised to talk to the man and see what I could

do for her.

After the woman had left I called in the man and cautiously approached him, stating that I had been informed that he might be the father of the child to be born. Was that correct?

"Yes, certainly, who else should it have been?" said the man full of indignation.

I was taken aback. I had expected denials and insinuations as to the virtue of the girl in general, as men in similar situations had reacted previously, to wriggle out of responsibility.

"And", said he, I told her parents I am prepared to marry her."

"But Abdullah, you are married already," I was shocked.

"I am a Muslim. I can have two wives, can't I?"

That aspect of the case I had forgotten.

"I have spoken to my parents and my wife and they are prepared to take her into the family, but we are not good enough for them." This was said full of injured dignity.

"They want the money and my son. Who is going to work for me when I am old? If I am not good enough for their daughter, they can keep her, but I want my son. I am only going to pay her if I can have him."

This was too much for my Western mind. An unborn child of unknown sex already visualised as wage-earning male in a dim future, while apparently no one cared for the fate of the woman concerned.

Weakly I promised to put the case to the girl's mother, who was to come to see me the following day.

I found that the man had put the position correctly to me. The girl's parents did not approve of their daughter being a second wife, as that was below her social standing. They wanted the unborn child to support their old age one day, and they wanted the man to pay for it without having any risk, whether or not he had a son or child.

Nobody seemed interested in the girl's wishes, though I understood that she loved the man and was quite willing to become his second wife and bear him a son. My upbringing and ethical code made it impossible for me to follow their reasoning. I gave up and told them to settle the case themselves.

Later I heard that the parents of the girl preferred to carry the immediate financial loss for the sake of the future investment. Ethical considerations such as the happiness of the individual or moral obligations towards a mother

and child, or even the rights of father, are sentiments of the Occident, and have no room in the practical philosophy of the Orient.

Incidentally, the girl did give birth to a son.

7. EDUCATION AND AUTHORITY:

Eighty five per cent of the Malay women are of low social standing within their community and a high proportion of this 85 per cent live below the poverty datum line. As it has been stated before the women do not attain any position of authority within the factory.

There is only Malay woman who was made a Supervisor by the Management many years ago. She is near or over 60, has been with the firm over 30 years, and has become an institution, where one cannot query "how" or "why" any longer. She is illiterate, knows her job inside out, is feared and loved by her girls, does not know what justice or fair play mean, goes always the way of least resistance and in spite of all this is a rather loveable character. A born boss, completely unselfconscious, she will keep an audience entranced by an impromptu performance of dancing or dramatic interpretation of a situation. One will completely forget that one is watching an old toothless woman.

Members of her family, a son, a daughter, two grandchildren, and a few nephews and nieces are dotted all over the factory. They live in holy terror of their elder, but will come to her with every grievance and whether right or wrong, it will be taken up and the issue fought to the bitter end.

All other Malay women live in comparatively anonymity within the factory community, taking a passive part in its social life. They will only come to life by supporting their male spokesman, when an issue is at stake which

concerns the Malay community, such as the incident of trying to introduce a soup kitchen as was described before.

Another instance where an improvement was boycotted by the Malay community, and could therefore not be put into practice, also concerned canteen matters.

It is the custom at tea breaks for the workers to queue up outside the canteen hatches with their own glasses, to be filled with either tea, coffee or milk, in exchange for coupons.

I noticed that the glasses were not always clean, and that the pouring out of beverages took up too much time of the precious ten minutes break. I therefore persuaded the Management to buy cups, so that the drinks could be poured out before the break started.

The first day this was introduced a great muddle was caused by workers refusing to take the filled cups, but wanting their own glasses filled. I called a meeting of the Kitchen Committee asking them for their co-operation.

The Malay men on the committee voiced their people's protest against this innovation. It could not be accepted by the Malay community.

I wanted to know why. "after all you save your own glasses and you get served quicker."

"It might be the case," replied the Malays, "but", said one, bending towards me confidentially, and whispering in a shocked voice "they dip pig into their cups."

"They do what? . . ."

"The Christians dip pig sandwiches into their cups, then another time we get them and it makes us unclean."

It was of no avail assuring them that even if "pig" sandwiches were dipped into the coffee, cups would be washed before the next person would drink out of them.

The innovation was boycotted, and all the nice green, white and blue bakelite cups had to be into a cupboard. Dirty glasses are handed in again over the counter to be filled in cumbersome manner, wasting precious resting time.

It has been mentioned before that the only communal efforts where complete co-operation between Coloured and Malay are achieved, are charitable enterprises. This too,

has its root in the Muslim religion, where it is laid down that by helping others, one helps oneself towards a better life after death. The poorest woman, therefore, will be glad of the opportunity to do a good deed, even if it is sewing a frock which will be given to a child as a Christmas present.

The majority of the Malay women in the factory have neither the education, the health, nor the peace of mind which comes of a happy home, to participate in social activities.

8. RELIGION AND INCOME:

It has been said that they live on or below the Poverty Datum Line. The reason for that is not only a small income, but, according to the Western European mind, a maldistribution of income.

Not so for the Malay of Mohammedan faith. "First things first," will mean that religious obligations will have to be satisfied first before everything else can be considered. In practice this means that a person of small income will first put aside a sum of money to pay her religious tax, *zaka*. Next she has to save for the day when a member of the family gets married, to be able to have a wedding according to religious traditions.

Only then can the immediate needs be considered. And here again, food will not be purchased in accordance with dietary needs, but in accordance with food habits which, acquired many centuries ago, might have been adequate to that particular way of living and climate, are carried over into a climate and way of living foreign to the Mohammedan ancestors, and accordingly unsuitable.

A great number of Malay women in the factory are malnourished and therefore an easy prey to diseases, have

no resistance, and small ailments turn into serious illness. Though the adherence to Muslim tradition might give them a feeling of pride, it will impair their health.

9. RELIGION AND SEX:

It has been said that Mohammedanism is a "masculine" religion, giving the woman only that importance which is due to her as the vessel necessary to bring the next generation into the world. As the potency of men is greater than the capability of women to bear children, he may have "four wives and concubines" whose duty it will be to bear him children. This attitude has developed a sex morale which is completely contraire to that of the monogamous races.

Here again, this attitude might have been justified in an age, under circumstances complete different to these under which a Malay woman of the CBO has to live as part of an industrial civilisation which is built on Christian principles.

Although a Malay man of today, living in Cape Town might not have "four wives and concubines," as he cannot afford it, his sex morale will be patterned on the same principles. A woman exists for one purpose only, and therefore one has a right to follow one's instincts. He might marry her according to Muslim laws - very rarely will women of the lower social strata of the Malay community be married according to civil law as well - but "a man may divorce his wife, but a woman may never divorce her husband."

This principle is very hard on the woman of the Twentieth Century, living within an industrial civilisation.

As a result of this basic attitude of men towards women, the Malay woman working in a factory, that is, a

woman of low social standing, will have a very hard life. She has been trained from early childhood that she is inferior to man and has to submit to his wishes.

A man will marry her according to Muslim law. She will have a child by him, which in the eyes of civil law is illegitimate. After some time the man might get attracted by another woman, and, as he cannot afford to keep two wives, will leave her to follow his impulse.

Neither he, nor the woman concerned will view this behaviour as immoral. It is his right. If he can afford it, he will give his first wife some financial help towards bringing up their child. As a rule the wife will go back to her family. Very often the man will not contribute towards the child's upkeep. The woman then will appeal to the civil court and claim the right to alimony.

To protect the woman, who has been caught in a net, knotted by the clash of two different cultures, civil law recognises the common law wife - the woman who has lived with a man without being legally married to him - and allows her to sue the man for alimony.

The colourful Muslim wedding ends in the drab surroundings of the "non-support office."

Muslim mentality and its imprint on factory life, can be noted in many instances.

A woman gave notice. She had been with the firm for many years and was an excellent worker. I asked her why she wanted to leave, and tried to persuade her to stay on. After several chats, and a visit to her home, a small room in which she lived with her two children, the story was pieced together.

She had been married according to Muslim law ten years, but her husband had never lived permanently with her. He had another wife and several children, with whom he lived in a small house. It was not quite clear from the story whether it was a question of policy or just housing shortage which had kept the two families with one head separated.

Whatever the case was, the woman I interviewed thought it quite natural and did not feel slighted, that her husband only came to visit her occasionally. He paid her rent, and supported her children. Now the other wife was very sick, and would be ill for some time. Doctor's bills had to be met, household and children were neglected. The husband felt the economic burden of running two households, and the inconvenience of an unkept house.

He therefore suggested that his "room wife" should give up her job and her room, and join the family circle. By that move he would save rent, and acquire a housekeeper who would care for all the children and the sick wife. Both women were agreeable to the suggestion, and accepted it as the only right thing to be done under the circumstances. The factory lost a good worker, but Mohammedanism and its practice of polygamy proved to be eminently suitable to solve a domestic problem.

10. RELIGION AND EDUCATION:

It is very difficult to overcome the fatalistic attitude of the Muslim towards infectious diseases, as was shown in the battle against tuberculosis. Another continuous battle has to be waged to educate the Malay to the Western conception of hygiene and cleanliness. The Coloured worker in the factory maintains that the Malays are "dirty", and this attitude towards certain Malay customs causes constant friction between the two sections.

The Muslim law lays down very definite rules as to the manner and method of ablutions, which all have religious significance. These laws are particularly strict for women, and concerning women, as they are classed as "unclean" at certain periods of their life. But, according to Western ideas of cleanliness, many of these ablutions, which have to be performed in a certain manner to certain prayers, have more symbolic than hygienic value.

But not only that, customs which might have been most suitable and effective in their time, brought into the cloakroom of a modern factory, cause havoc with its plumbing system and results in unpleasantness and misunderstandings between the two religious groups.

Small happenings are of great importance in a community of this type. Anything that is different to one's own customs is usually regarded as inferior. Therefore this question of cleanliness, based on a fundamental difference of two cultures, is one of the main stumbling-blocks towards the understanding and respecting of the other religious group.

The Malay allows himself to be educated up to a point where no religious principles are involved. As an example:

The workers are frequently shown films on hygiene and health. Most successful are the films with a clear and simple message pictured in amusing fashion. There is, for instance, the story of the dirty and the clean family as told by Walt Disney in colourful animated drawings.

The dirty family, who never wash, spit on the floor and never clean their house; whose members are constantly ill and get poorer and more dejected looking by the minute, in contrast to their clean neighbours, who have clean habits and scrub and polish all the time, getting bigger and stronger and more prosperous.

After the show one of our elderly Malay women came to me and said that from now on, she would see that her little grandchild Fatima, who was living with her, would always wash her hands before having a meal. Would that make her grow?

"It would definitely help to keep her well," I assured her diplomatically.

II. RELIGION AND CUSTOMS:

Twice a year nearly all the Malay men and some of the women come late to work. Then we know that a ship with pilgrims to Mecca is either leaving Cape Town, or pilgrims are returning from Mecca.

The ultimate aim in the life of every Malay is to make this Pilgrimage to Mecca, to become a Hadji, the most honoured member of the Malay community. Today approximately £500 is needed to make this journey. This money is saved over years, often at the cost of the health of the whole family, by eating too little, working too hard and living

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in overcrowded homes.

But when one of the factory workers comes back from Mecca, he will visit the factory in his pilgrim's clothes, a lovely blue silk gown, a white pleated silk shirt, a colourful turban around his head. All work slows down, and whoever can, Coloured and European alike, will crowd around the figure who seems to have stepped out of "A Thousand and One Nights."

The same man will come to work the following day, sitting at the machine in shirt sleeves and one can hardly believe it is the same person. And then, at the tea break, he will most probably come to the Personnel Officer to ask for a loan, to tide him over until he gets his wage envelope at the end of his first working week. He will most possibly have spent every penny he ever possessed. He will be behind in his rent, and Personal Tax will have accumulated to an imposing fine.

The fairytale figure is transformed into a poverty-stricken industrial worker . . .

The most striking example of the parallel cultures being infused into one person, having to accept two ways of living, thinking and feeling, is the factory worker, who while learning how to use an electric cutting machine, has also been trained to prove his Faith in Allah by submitting himself to incredible physical hardships.

The worker who will make a great fuss when he scratches his finger with a needle, will the same night with the greatest nonchalance stick skewers through his cheeks, hammer his arm with razorsharp sabres, and swallow glowing coals. That is, if he has been trained from early childhood to be a disciple of a Khalif.

It is the most shattering experience to find "Abdullah", who punches his clockcard with

greatest regularity at 8 a.m. every day, who behaves and looks like any industrial worker anywhere in the world, who is a member of a trade union, and collects his weekly wage envelope, performing feats of physical endurance "of an evening."

One day Abdullah came to me and invited me to attend a "Khalifa" his group was giving to an European audience in order to raise funds for an ambulance for his St. John's detachment.

I had seen Abdullah on several occasions in his smart St. John's uniform. I had seen him administering First Aid in a most effective manner, conversant with and adhering to all principles of modern medicine. He had helped me to convince his fellow Muslims that contagious diseases should be fought, and not left to the will of Allah alone. I had accepted him as an "enlightened" Muslim, whose life was dictated by the same rational laws, as I believed mine to be dictated by.

The greater was the shock, when this same Abdullah bared his chest on a lighted stage, and swaying to the rhythm of beating drums, and the chanting of prayers hit his body and arms with thin-edged swords, allowed skewers to be stuck through his cheeks, and thus horribly scuffed walk off the stage, to present himself to the audience to prove that no tricks were involved.

He was not even under a trance. Very proud and erect he walked through the gaping and nearly fainting audience. After the skewers were removed, he came down again, and held out his arms, his cheeks for inspection. No blood was drawn, only pin points showed on his cheeks where the fairly wide blades had penetrated.

"How can you stand it, Abdullah," I gasped.

"You must have Faith and think only of Allah, and nothing will happen to you", he assured me with sincere simplicity.

He told me then, that at one of the performances which they gave occasionally for charity had not concentrated on prayer, but was filled with Vanity at being in front of a large audience. His body control to translate the happening into "European" terms deserted him, he severed his wrist when hitting it with the sword and before help could come, he had bled to death.

Mind over matter - philosophers argue the point, medical science cautiously considers its limited possibilities . . . the Cape Malay lives it, proves it, takes it for granted and hardly thinks twice about it.

With new reverence I watched Abdullah at work the following day. But he was just, as always, a slightly grubby, sulky factory worker,

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who had obviously had a late night. Still, this experience gave me my first inkling of understanding this strange mixture of humility and pride one feels in the behaviour of a Malay towards the European, and the attitude of superiority the Malay worker often displays towards his Coloured fellow-worker, in spite of his obvious educational inferiority.

When looking across the factory floor, one can pick out the Malay worker at a glance. Though the Malay woman or girl will wear European clothes at work, she will always have her hair covered by a doek or wear a yashmak, which, like a visor, is pushed down while working and pulled up to cover the mouth, when going out. These yashmaks are in all colours of delicate material and give a splash of life to otherwise dreary surroundings. The red and black fez of the men complete the picture.

In spite of racial intermixture over generations, the Malay woman and girl is of a much more slender build than the average Coloured girl. Large black eyes, almond shaped, high cheekbones, light ivory skin colour, finely chiselled bone structure is often to be found among them, which gives their faces a dignity and repose which seems incongruous in the surroundings of electric machines and conveyor belts.

The young Malay girl seems more conscious of her appearance, with stress on femininity, than her Coloured contemporary. She will always be made up, will wear the best nylon stockings and trip around on most dainty, but impractical high-heeled shoes. The Coloured girl will very rarely use make-up at work, and will usually wear "sensible" low-heeled shoes.

CONCLUSIONS:

The Malay woman hardly participates in the social life of the factory. Her religion does not allow her to do so. She will be a passive onlooker at all functions.

Not one girl is a member of the netball team, the Red Cross Detachment. She will not attend a factory dance, though the Malay men will appear in full force, leaving their wives at home. At tea breaks or lunch time the young Malay girls will share one table, the older women another, irrespective of the sections in which they work, or their social background.

The Coloured woman will only mix with her "Class" of whatever age, and usually only knows and be friendly with workers of the section in which she happens to be working. Though there is no active expression of social life among the Malay women, there is definitely a greater solidarity among them, than among the Coloured section of the community.

To be able to really understand the attitude of these two groups towards the other, and among themselves in their daily life at work, one has to follow them to their homes. One has to see the woman worker against the background of her family circle, to be able to find out what influences have been shaping her and in what way they find their expression within the factory community.

At this stage I would like again to stress the point that women more than men are family-bound, the focus of their life rests within the family. The community life of a factory, which consist mainly of women workers is not really dictated by these women alone, but each and everyone of them is an expression of her family life.

She carries the burden or the pleasure of her home life with her, and can never separate herself from it.

The man, being with a family of his own, or still part of the parental home, will be influenced by his background, but at work he will be an entity in himself. The woman's entity is not the "I" but the "us". To

understand her life, her attitude at work one must see her at home, the only surrounding which is "natural" to her.

PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION
OF SOCIAL CLASSES AMONGST
THE COLOURED AND MALAY GROUPS
WITHIN THE FACTORY COMMUNITY

symbols represent:



UPPER-CLASS
Coloured



MIDDLE-CLASS
Coloured



MIDDLE-CLASS
Malay



LOWER-CLASS
Coloured



LOWER-CLASS
Malay



Lower-LOWER-CLASS
Coloured



Lower-LOWER-CLASS
Malay



GENERAL CLASS
Coloured



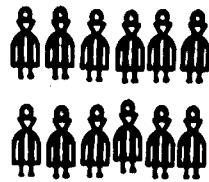
GENERAL CLASS
Malay

in each case the number of workers in the Malay group has been multiplied by $2\frac{1}{2}$ to bring it up to the same denominator of coloured workers.

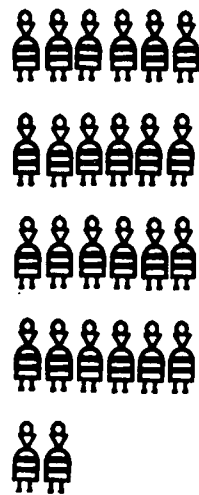
THE DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL CLASSES WITHIN THE FACTORY COMMUNITY

THE COLOURED GROUP

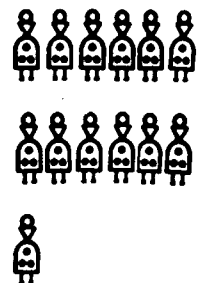
THE MALAY GROUP



UPPER-CLASS



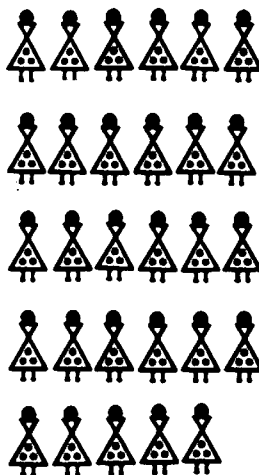
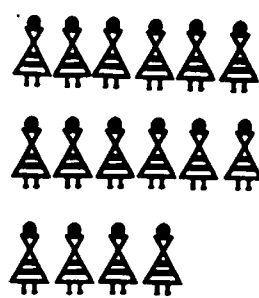
Middle-Class



Lower-Class



Lower
Lower-Class



= 3 workers



= 3 workers

SOCIAL CLASS AND AGE GROUP

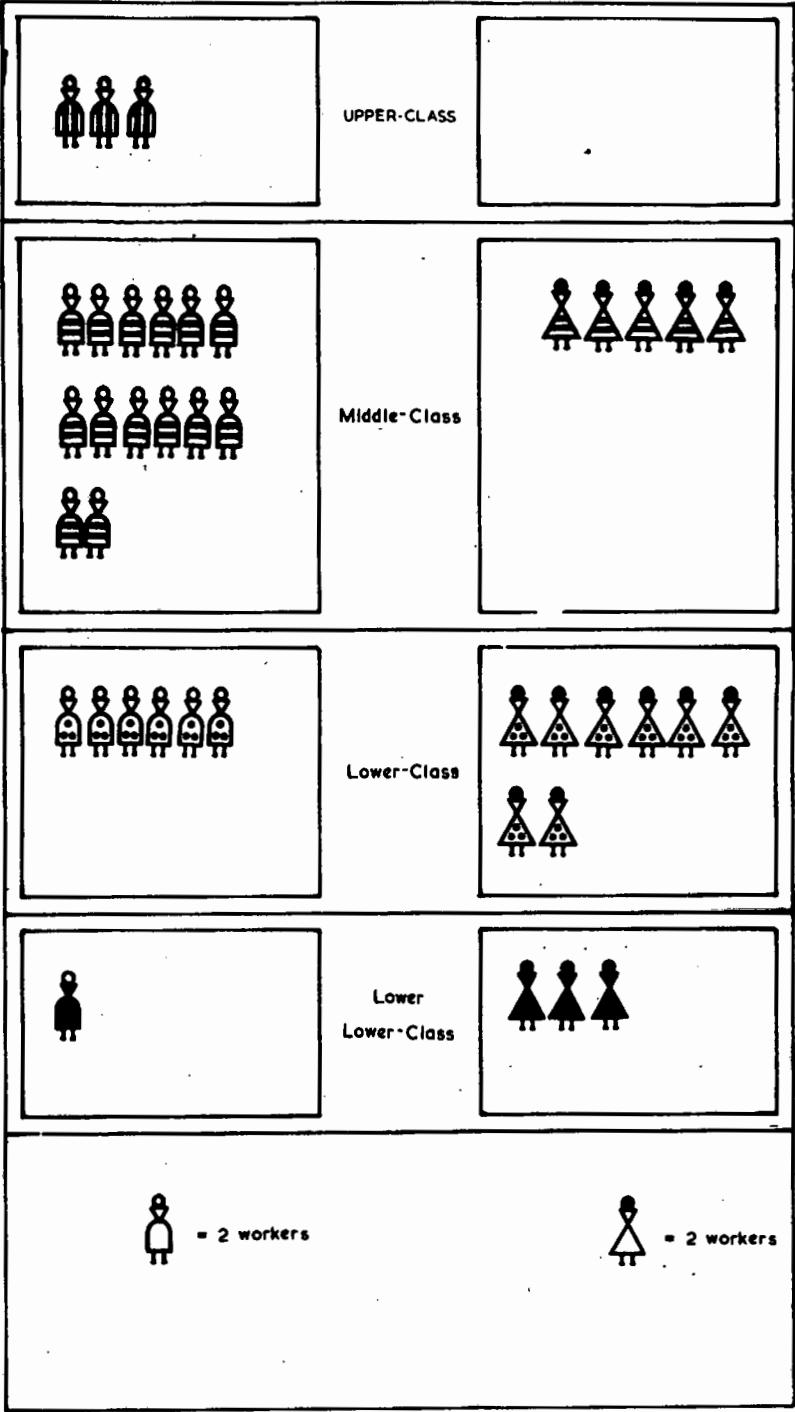
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AGE

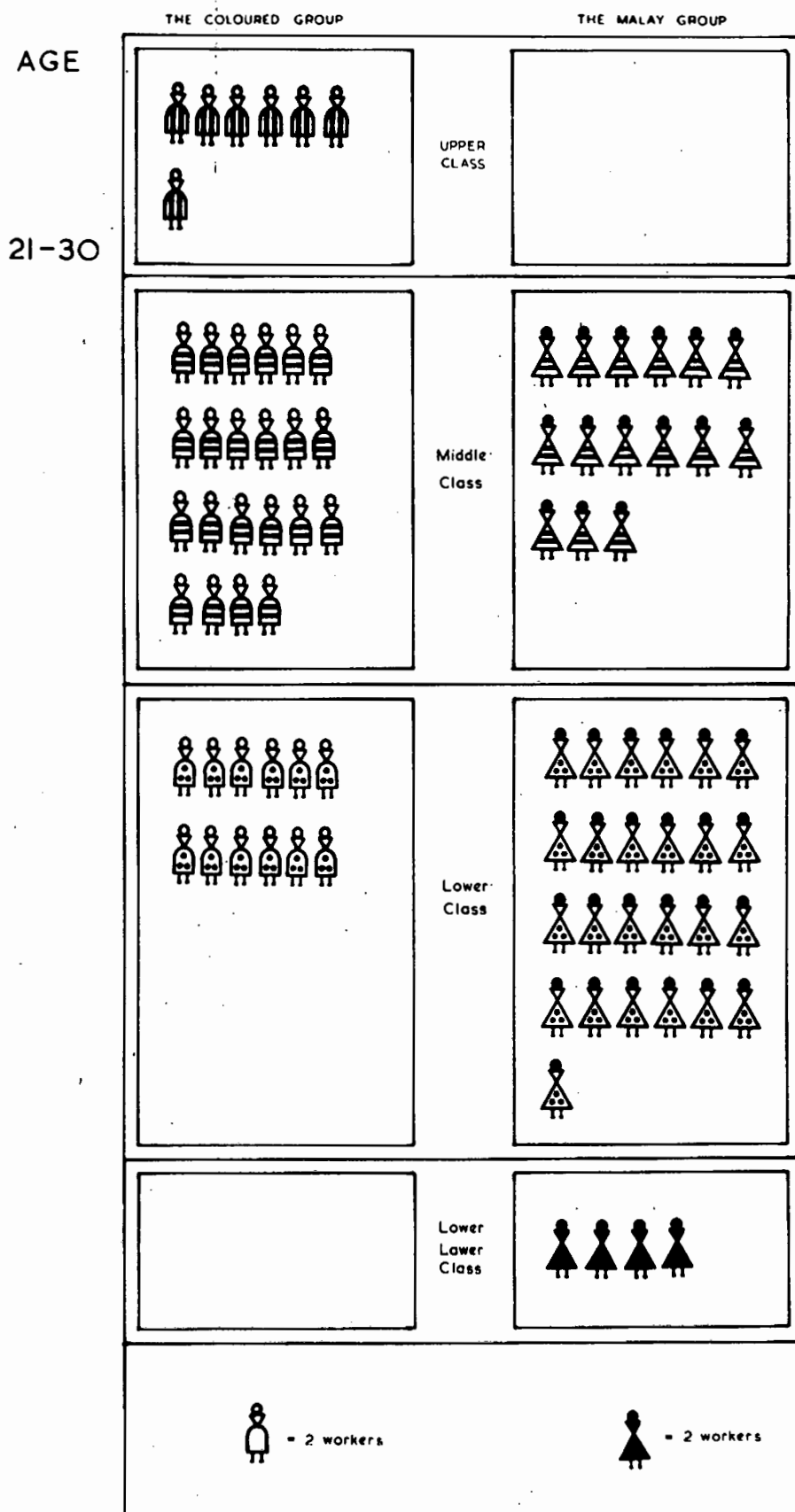
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THE COLOURED GROUP

THE MALAY GROUP

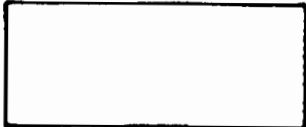
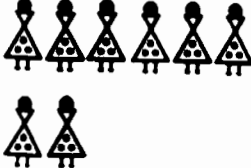


AGE GROUP AND SOCIAL CLASS

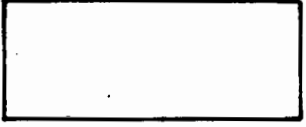
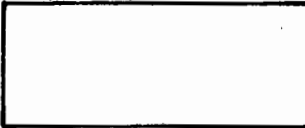
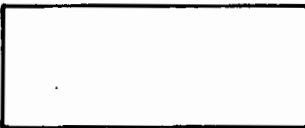


AGE GROUP AND SOCIAL CLASS

iiC

AGE	THE COLOURED GROUP		THE MALAY GROUP	
	31-40		UPPER-CLASS	
			Middle-Class	
			Lower-Class	
			Lower Lower-Class	

iiD

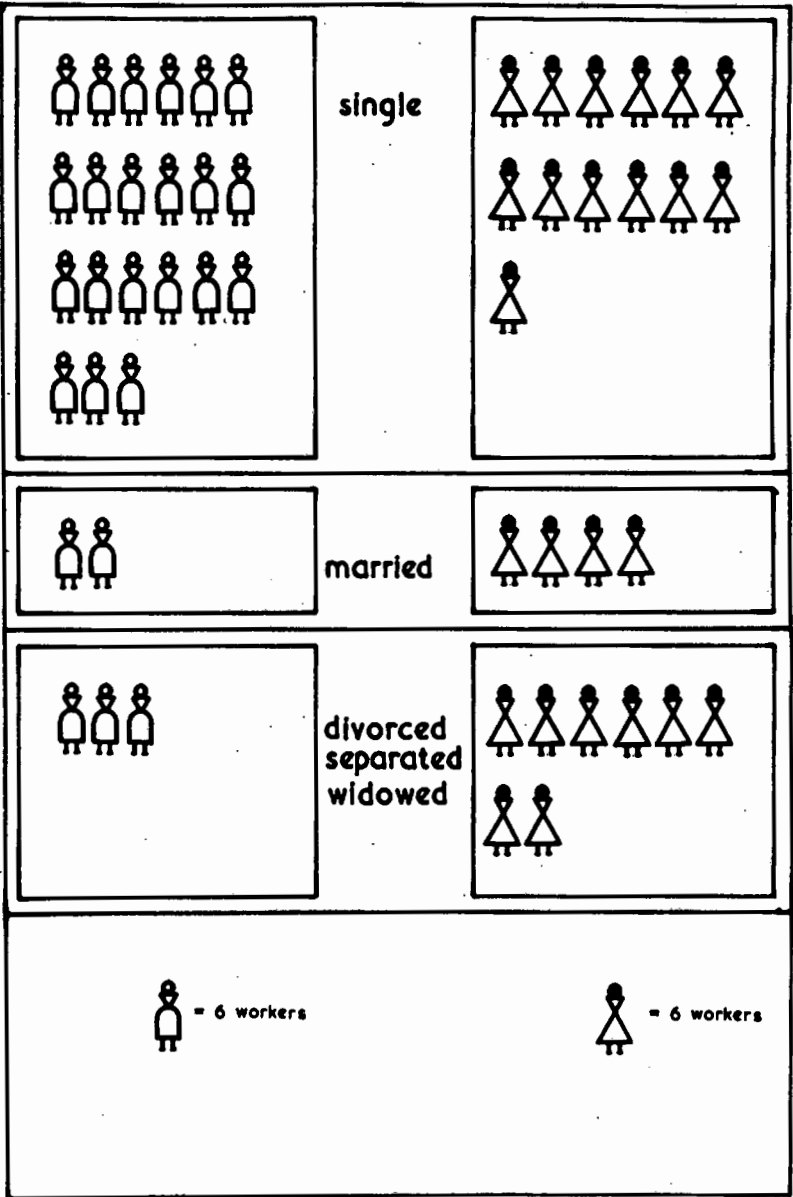
AGE	41-50		UPPER-CLASS	
			Middle-Class	
			Lower-Class	
			Lower Lower-Class	
	 = 2 workers  = 2 workers			

MARITAL STATUS OF WOMEN WORKERS

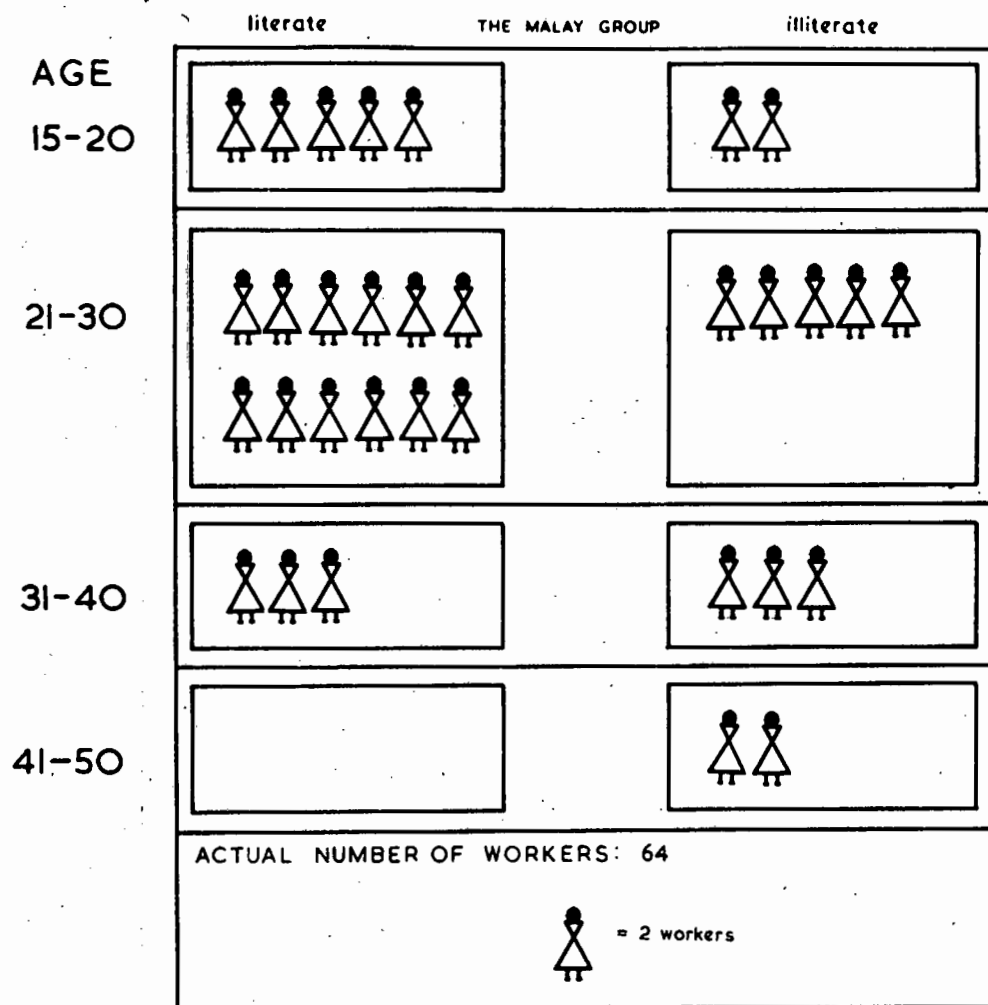


THE COLOURED GROUP

THE MALAY GROUP



AGE-GROUP AND LITERACY



THE COLOURED GROUP

ACTUAL NUMBER OF WORKERS: 156

there is no illiteracy in this group

PART II.

THE WOMAN WORKER AT HOME.

CHAPTER III : The Coloured Woman at Home.

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first of all like to have a look at the districts in which they live, and see if within those districts there is a differentiation noticeable as to Coloured and Malay, and if among the Coloured the different social classes live in different residential areas or not.

2. SOCIAL CLASS AND RESIDENTIAL AREA.

When zoning the residential areas from which our workers come, noting not only the districts from which they came, but also the number of Coloured and Malay living in each district, it was soon clear that there are some areas where Malays are prevalent, and some where there are Coloureds in greater numbers. But only when I started visiting their homes on different days of the week, and at all hours of the day and evening, did I gradually realise the difference in atmosphere in these different districts; not only in different districts, but even in different streets of the same district.

I found, as the Table compiled from the workers home addresses, as shown in the factory records, had already revealed to me that there are areas where Coloured are predominant, others where they are mixed in apparently equal proportions, and then again areas where there are mainly Malays.

But not only that, it was soon noticeable that there are definitely poor class, and better class areas, and that where there is a mixed population of Coloured and Malay, the Coloured group is that of the poorer classes. The life in the street is already an indication as to the social class living in that particular area.

District Six, an address with a stigma attached to it through newspaper reports of violence and sudden death, will never be named thus by its inhabitants. A worker living

in/.....

in the heart of that district, in any one of these narrow cobble-stoned streets winding up the mountain, off Hanover Street, its main artery, will always say, when asked where she lives: "I live in Cape Town." The Malay quarters leaning against Signal Hill on the other side of Town, are already outside the centre of the City.

"Cape Town": District Six - narrow streets, rows and rows of dilapidated semi-detached houses, with an occasional double-storeyed house. No front gardens, no yards. Washing hung across the street, fluttering out of windows, even sometimes lying on the pavement. During day-time women in doorways, feeding their babies, chatting to each other, children sitting, standing, playing everywhere. Hardly any men about. Only in Hanover Street, where there are shops, cinemas, tea-rooms, men are lounging at corners in doorways, jumping buses for a "free ride".

After dark the picture has changed. There are hardly any women about, men, youths are clustered together at corners. Women keep indoors, or hurry along anxiously looking round.

Saturday is shopping day. The contents of Friday's wage envelope have to be disposed of. Hanover Street is a hive of activity. Heavy traffic weaving its way through the much too narrow, winding street, just by a miracle avoiding hitting pedestrians, who insist on exchanging prolonged greetings in the middle of the road. A motorist's nightmare come to life . . .

Sunday is different. In spite of the dirty streets, the shabby houses, there is an air of festivity. Women and children in their Sunday best, with hats and handbags go to church. Men sit in the sun against the wall, reading a newspaper, talking.

Cape/.....

"Cape town", District Six, the home of the poorer class Coloured, and all classes of Malays. The area where some streets have a sinister reputation, even some houses. The headquarters of gangs. People living in District Six, or visiting their friends, will keep a respectful distance, rather make a detour, than pass through one of the streets, where a particular gang "hangs out".

But just a couple of minutes walk, past Hanover Street, up towards de Waal Drive, the atmosphere has changed again. This part, Walmer Estate, has neat little houses with front gardens and backyards, and, the sign of well-being and respectability, the stoep with its dangerously polished red stone floor. The mountain is at the back, the harbour to its feet. The streets are clean, well-kept, and empty. No washing displays its ragged condition, very few children are playing in the street. Life is being lived indoors, a dignified respectability surrounds the home of the well-to-do Coloured Community of this area. There is a sprinkling of Malays, and a great number of Europeans living in these parts.

Suburbs. Going straight down the hill from Walmer Estate, you come down to Sir Lowry Road, which changes its name into Victoria Road later on, and is the straight Main Road leading out of town and going on and on cutting the Southern suburbs in half, leaving Cape Town behind, crossing the Cape Flats, and falling into the sea somewhere past Simonstown.

Along the Main Road, just below Walmer Estate, there is Woodstock, and you come to Salt River, Observatory, through densely populated areas right up to Wynberg. All along this line to the left, towards and past the railway line, the Coloured population lives, intermixed with Europeans, and a small number of Malays. The nearer to town, the

more/.....

more "blummy" the area, the more South, the better the class. Branching off the Main Road near town is the Lower Main Road, branching off again into Voortrekker Road, past Matland into the built-up Cape Flats area.

Woodstock and Salt River are the shopping centres of the working population, who are bunched together in factories along the road, and also a residential area of mixed groups.

Near the railway line in Woodstock, there are streets which are worse than some of the overcrowded streets of District Six.

Then again there are streets with rows and rows of semi-detached houses, with small - very small - front gardens, where the respectable Coloured middle class live and quite a number of Europeans. The further South you go along the main road, the fewer Coloured families, and the more European homes are to be found.

Lynberg is rather a strange suburb. To the left of the Main Road are the homes of many Coloured families of good class houses standing in a piece of ground, well-kept, with flower-filled front gardens, an atmosphere of a good middle class, stable community. To the right of the Main Road, up the mountain, towards Constantia there are the stately homes of the very elite of the European population, intermingled with shacks of poor class Coloured homes. But these shacks stand proudly in a piece of ground, enlivened by fowls, dogs and cats, which give the whole area a countryfied air.

Cape Flats : Quite different again is it when you turn sharply from the Main Road at Nowbray and get into the Cape Flats, to Lansdowne, Athlone, Crawford. In the midst of sand dunes, residential areas have sprung up. Municipal housing schemes have become reality in some parts, and blocks of flats are followed by rows and rows of semi-detached

houses/.....

houses, some along macadamised roads, others along lanes. All houses have a fresh clean look about them. They are separated from the road by little hedges and by flower beds.

Many parts of this very big area have a companionable atmosphere. There is a feeling of space, roads are wide, the houses not too close together, but close enough to take a friendly interest in one's neighbours. On summer evenings, when the light only fades after eight at night, and it has become pleasant and cool, the streets become promenades where the youths wander up and down, still under parental supervision from the window.

Where the noise of radio, of gramophone music comes out from every house and mingles pleasantly with the chatter of human voices. Brown skinned, attractively dressed girls, cleanly scrubbed boys - it somehow has the atmosphere of an Italian village. It is far from Cape Town, bus and train service is bad, therefore these areas had to develop into little self-contained communities, where one goes out to earn one's living, but seeks one's pleasures at home.

The picture is not so ideal in winter, during the rainy season, when there is no shelter anywhere and the sand gets soggy, and you have to trek ten, twenty minutes through slush and dirt to get to the nearest bus or train.

In these areas the poorer and middle classes of the Coloured community live, with small pockets of Malay communities, clustered around a Mosque, or living in the flats of the Municipal buildings.

Isies River, another district in the midst of sand dunes, is the home of the poorer Coloured and Malays. Besides the one Main Road, all other streets are streets in name only, but actually sand paths, where you sink ankle-deep in sand when approaching any of the small brick-built houses, or

corrugated/.....

corrugated iron shacks. Here again fowls, dogs and children are happily intermingled, with an occasional goat, or even a cow or horse towering above them.

Similar to this area is Uetrech, one of the outposts in the Flats, from which the Coloured population flocks into town to work. Here too, poverty and comparative wealth can be seen cheek to cheek expressed in Heath Robinson contraptions of sacking and corrugated iron, in which human beings are living next to well-built, fair-sized, cleanly painted brick houses. Fowls do not see the difference between mud-floors inside or outside of the hut, and rather share the crowded space under the roof with the family. If you happen to be visiting in the neat brick house next door, you might look up from the cup of tea you are drinking decorously in the sitting room, right into the eyes of a cow, who pushes her face through the window to participate in the tea-party. The atmosphere is distinctly "country", in whatever home you happen to be.

But in whatever area, in whatever home, one thing they all have in common, be it a crowded room in the worst slum area, or in a roomy house at Lyberg, that is, the shining cleanliness of the home, and the love of flowers, even if it is only a small bunch of basil in a glass, wedged in between the primus stove and the bed.

3. SOCIAL CLASS AND PRESTIGE.

Having taken a glance at the different areas in which Cape Town's Coloured workers live, and discovered that, in spite of housing shortage and limited possibilities of movement, there does exist a certain amount of segregation of religious groups and social classes, I would now like to enter their homes in order to find out if there is a difference in the way of living among the different social classes, a

difference/.....

Wedding-groups, and an occasional print of Victorian type. Stiffly starched spotlessly clean curtains will complete the picture of a home, where the stress is laid not so much on comfort, as on nearly aseptic cleanliness and priness. The only relieving feature, the touch of warmth and luxury, will be the vases of flowers, artistically arranged, everywhere in the house.

Why this nearly overstressing of cleanliness, this insistence on impractical, expensive furniture, this waste of valuable room-space? The answer to this can only be found, when one remembers the definition given for "status" by McIver, and enlarges on this definition by adding the economic aspect, the expression of status by material possessions, as stressed by Max Weber.

McIver says :

"By status we mean here the social position which determines for his possessor, apart from his personal attributes or social service, a degree of respect, prestige, influence."

And Max Weber :

"Class as the community of those who have as a group the same lot in life, or the same life chances, as determined typically by material possessions, rank or station, and cultural factors."

If one remembers that the "Lebensraum" in which the Coloured have to live, their "Life chances" as Weber calls it are very limited, and have to fit into a pattern moulded by European usages, one will realise, that one of the few ways Coloured families can express their social status, is by possessing and displaying expensive furniture. To possess a piano, a radiogram, a chesterfield suite is not a sign of inane spending, but the outer expression of the social standing of a family, it is a symbol - a question of prestige.

(b) Cleanliness : The stress on cleanliness, the nearly over-zealous washing, scrubbing and polishing which

goes/.....

goes on daily - and with renewed vigour over the weekend - is the other barrier which separates the respectable from the doubtful family.

The spotless house or room, the highly polished furniture will be the only difference by which a housewife can express her respectability in contrast to the neighbour in the same tenement house. A building where every room holds a large family, where the building itself is dilapidated, the street dirty, staircases and lavatories in a disgusting state.

Innumerable buckets of water will be carried up a steep staircase from the one and only water-tap. All free time after a hard day at the factory will be spent in a constant battle against filth and vermin. Filth and vermin which are inevitable under slum conditions.

(c) Manners : The third facet in this expression of prestige and respectability is a non-material one - the importance of manners.

To have good manners, to be polite to one's elders, not to question but to accept, only to speak when one is spoken to, to obey rulings, even if one does not approve of them, is, particularly for a young girl, the mark of a good home, the stamp of being "reared right".

The same attitude is displayed by the older woman towards authority, towards the European. To say "yes", if one feels the other person would like to hear "yes" as an answer is not hypocrisy, but politeness, a form of good manners which has been instilled into the Coloured over generations.

It is also, naturally, the way of the least resistance, which is of great importance, when one lives in a society bristling with difficulties, with problems, one does not

understand/.....

understand half the time.

4. BIOGRAPHIES : "THE IDEAL FAMILY" : Composite pictures.

Now I would like to go from the general to the particular and trace some of the workers back to their homes, and find out how they live, once they have left the factory premises.

Out of the biographical material I have selected I would like to describe a number of families whom I think are representative of their particular social group.

The pictures drawn do not represent the genuine life history or family composition of any particular family. It is, in each case, a composite picture of one "type" of family.

I would like to choose my subjects according to the age groups into which I have divided the group of workers.

(1) FRANCIS : She is 19 years of age and has been at the factory since her 16th year. Her elder sister was also at the factory, until she got married. Francis is a qualified machinist, earns £4. 1. 0. a week. She is well-spoken and well-liked, participates actively in many factory functions. She was instrumental in getting a netball team going and is a member of the Red Cross Detachment.

Her family lives in one of the pleasant looking single-storeyed houses in Wynberg to the left of the railway line. Her mother loves gardening, and the little front garden is a mass of dahlias during the season, and the stoep is enclosed by evergreen plants with red splashes of poinsettias.

Francis's father is a music teacher. A little brass plaque announces that fact outside the door, giving all his qualifications. He has pupils at home, and it is one of the few homes where a telephone is to be found. It is a

five/.....

five-roomed house with a large kitchen and a piece of ground at the back. There are a couple of vegetable patches, flower beds and a fowl-run.

The two front rooms are "Father's study," and a sitting-room-cum-dining-room furnished in the conventional manner, except that the piano is in father's room as part of his stock-in-trade.

The son, aged 17, sleeps on a divan in father's room. He is very light skinned, passes as European and is apprenticed to an engineering firm.

Francis and her younger sister, who has just started work in a factory, share one room. "Granny," a tiny apple-checked old lady, who draws the old age pension of a European (and presumably is one), has a small backroom to herself while the parents bedroom is the fifth room in the house.

One daughter is married to a school teacher, and lives nearby.

Francis and the other children give all their money to their mother, who in turn gives them pocket money, according to their age more than according to their earnings. Francis gets ten shillings a week pocket money, while her younger sister gets only five shillings.

Francis is a very busy young woman. Besides the 42 hours a week she sits at the factory machine, she also does her own sewing, and some for her family and friends. She gets paid for this, and has just finished paying-off on a little machine with an electric motor, which it has been her dream for a long time to possess.

But this does not absolve her from doing a great deal of housework as well. She and her sister do the washing-up at night. They have to keep their own room tidy, and help

with/.....

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with/.....

the ground has been prepared.

Workers who want financial assistance from the fund have to put their case to the Secretary, who in turn submit it to the committee. The personal circumstances of the worker are then discussed in the most minute detail.

It is astonishing how much is known about each worker, but always only by that member on the committee, who belongs to the Department in which the applicant works. As a result much favouritism slips in. If the applicant happens not to be liked by the committee member representing her Department, her case will be interpreted in an unfavourable light.

Rather astonishing to me was how the social position of the applicant is often a deciding factor in the amount and nature of help given. There was one case, for instance, of a woman worker, one belonging to the "upper" class, who was sick for several weeks. She employs a servant. She applied for help to be able to keep on her servant. The committee members viewed that a reasonable request.

The reasoning was, that to have to dismiss the servant would mean a lowering of her status, which could only be looked upon as a disaster. She was granted a fairly high sum of money, while another worker who belonged to the lowest status group, got a very much smaller grant, though she was really in distress.

Cases are supposed to be discussed "in camera" and treated as strictly confidential, but I have not known of one case yet, which remained a secret to the rest of the community. Not only that, but it is always known exactly by everybody, how every member of the committee has voted.

This does not necessarily mean that the members on the

society. some money is left "to put away" to cover annual expenses, such as Personal or Income Tax, and for difficult times.

It is a happy home. a hard-working family, who do not find any hardship in it, but enjoy living and a modest prosperity and their good standing within their community.

(ii) ALICE: I would like to contrast Francis with Alice, who sits next to her at the machine in the Factory. Alice is also 19 years of age. She, too, lives with her parents, and earns £4. 1. 0. a week as a qualified machinist.

In appearance both girls are attractive, though Alice is slightly darker skinned than Francis, and more expensively dressed. She wears thin nylon stockings and expensive high-heeled shoes, to Francis's more sturdy and practical footwear. She has some traces of make-up, while Francis spurns powder and lipstick.

Alice has one sister and one brother working at the factory as well. All three are good workers, but do not participate in any of the social activities in the factory.

One day Alice's sister gave notice. She was expecting a baby. Her fiancé was at sea, so she told me, but she expected him back, and hoped to get married before the baby was due to be born. I had heard gossip already about this girl's pregnancy, and was not unduly surprised. But I was pleased to hear the tongues were not only used maliciously, but also to induce the girl's "bench-mates" to make a contribution towards a wedding present, as the girl was badly off.

A few weeks later, on a Monday, Alice did not turn up to work. Bush telegraphy had it that Alice had come home from work on Friday, complained of pains, and that very

night/.....

night had given birth to a premature baby, to the great surprise of the family, who had not even known that she was pregnant. Nor for once, had anybody had an inkling of it at the factory.

That was not all, the brother, who suffered from Asthma, had had a bad attack, and could not come to work either. Within a couple of weeks a family income of £12.10.0 a week, had been reduced to zero. In addition to the doctor's expenses had been incurred, and the babies had been born.

I decided to investigate the position. The family lived at Elsie's River, way beyond the horizon. It had to be reached over sand dunes, and some more sand dunes, squawking through fences, accosted by donkeys and goats, falling over children and fowls. A structure consisting of corrugated iron, packing cases and some sacking, defying all laws of gravitation in its skew appearance, was pointed out to me as Miller's home. It seemed so tiny and fragile, that I did not know how to get in. Some sacking was pushed aside, and I was invited in by an elderly, bedraggled looking woman, Miller's mother.

The inside was as astonishing as the outside. There was a mud floor and mud walls, separated spaces, which might have been enough for one room, into a series of cubicle-like holes. There were four of these. There was hardly any light, and definitely no air at all. If there were windows anywhere, they were nailed up with packing casing. Three cubicles held a bed each, with no doors in between, and some sacking on the floor. The fourth one had a dining-room table and held two chairs. The house must have been built around this table, it could never have got in otherwise.

On each of the beds was one member of the factory. Sam, the boy, was lying in bed, wheezing badly. In the next cubicle Marie was sitting, feeding her strapping son. Alice,

incongruously/.....

inconspicuously dressed in a black silk skirt and a white blouse was sitting on the next bed. Behind her, under sacking, a shoe box stuck out.

Yes, she did have a baby last week, she admitted half embarrassed half proud. It was a seven month baby, and the tiniest the midwife had ever seen.

"As it . . . I hesitated.

"Oh, yes, it was alive."

She reached behind her, dragged the shoe box out of the sacking, and there, packed in cottonwool, was the most wizened creature I have ever seen. Somehow, it seemed to be the spirit of this tiny, wizened house come to life.

It was all a bit frightening. Would the father of the child help her? Alice shrugged her shoulders. Apparently she wasn't on speaking terms with him. And Maria's husband? He hadn't materialised either. Any money? Well there was none. Nobody could remember when the father had last worked.

The old woman spoke up. The children wouldn't listen to her. They only gave her £1 each out of the joint-income of £12. 10. 0 a week, for board and lodging. The rest they spent on themselves. Now that all three were incapable of working, there was no food in the house and the rent, doctor and midwife had to be paid.

Later on I found out that the girls were in debt everywhere. An irate shopkeeper claimed £20 for clothing Alice had bought. She had also borrowed money in the factory in spite of knowing that she was pregnant.

The background: The father was an unskilled labourer, who drank, whenever he could lay hands on money. The parents had continuous fights. From what source their income came before the children were old enough to earn a living I could not discover. The children had no respect for their parents. They battled along, as well as they could, the only thing

they/. . . .

they could understand was immediate pleasure as security. saving, had been an unknown factor in their life.

Francis - Alice - both Coloured girls, both factory workers, both 19 years of age, living with their parents. Similar in appearance, sitting side by side at the machine - but worlds apart.

(iii) ANN : Of the same social strata as Francis, only a few years older is Ann. Another girl whose family has been of good standing, and has been living in comparative economic security for several generations already.

Her father, a coachman, owned his own cab and horses. He died, when Ann was still very young, but left the family well provided for. There were several properties belonging to him, and his wife unexpectedly developed shrewd business capabilities, and administered the estate so well, that the family even today, is still living in one of their own houses, while some others bring in rent.

Ann is the youngest of the four children, three daughters and one son. Only one daughter is married, the others are still living at home. Bob, the eldest, is a traffic constable. Elizabeth comes next, she is a dressmaker, and employed at one of the most elegant "couturières", creating model gowns behind the scenes.

Ann was to look after mother, but the most rebellious of them all, got her own way and was allowed to work at the factory, until her forthcoming marriage.

The mother is a true matriarch. She rules them all with a rod of iron, and is held in great awe by her children and her sons-in-law, present and future. All financial arrangements are left to her. The wage envelopes have to be handed in intact, and she decides on the amount of pocket

money/.....

money every one of her grown up children is to have including the six-foot tall son, aged 28. She decides how much is to be spent on clothing and all other personal necessities.

Once Ann broke her glasses, after she had just had a new pair made. She was terrified to tell her mother and implored me to come home with her and explain to her mother how it had happened.

The family live in a beautifully furnished six-roomed house. They employ a maid, an elderly Coloured woman, who lives nearby. The house stands in a big piece of ground surrounded by a high wall. There is a rose garden, and a rockery, a little fish pond, and a lovely lawn.

The children will never address their mother directly, but always speak in the third person, be it in English or in Afrikaans. The mother prefers sneaking Afrikaans while the children among themselves speak mostly English. Once the mother went on a holiday. It was a big event. It was decided that one could not trust a train compartment to hold congenial company for mother. After long deliberations it was decided to hire a car, to take her the 100 miles to her destination, which was the farm of a brother.

Ann asked me to add a few lines to a letter she had written to her mother, and to read the description she had given her of a dance we had just held at the factory. The whole letter was written in the third person. "I hope that mother is enjoying herself. We all pray that, if God spares us, our dear mother will come back to us in good health."

Ann is engaged to a Coloured lad, who is mate on a Norwegian cargo boat. The marriage has been held up, as Ann's mother refuses to give her consent, until Ann's "young man" is prepared to settle ashore. Now he is on his last

trip/....

-8-

trip, and when he comes back it has been arranged by the old lady for him to join a firm of s, with whom she seems to have some mysterious pull.

The wedding has been fixed for the end of the year. Judging by Ann's twenty-first birthday party, it is going to be a big affair. I was a guest at the party some years back. A big public hall had been hired for that purpose, a band engaged, and 300 guests entertained.

But only at family occasions is lavishness shown. Otherwise the family live in great simplicity. Though there is a maid for rough work, the two daughters have to do the cooking in turn, and the washing-up in the evening. The old lady has not been very well for some time, and cannot do any housework any longer.

The family has a great circle of friends, and there is hardly an evening without some guests. They are all very musical. Ann has got a lovely voice, her brother plays the piano and they arrange little concerts. It is one of the few homes in which I have noticed a collection of classical records, a few operas, and many Crook and Tauber song records. Fred, the son is a great reader. He is particularly interested in Africana and has all the latest books on South African affairs, from "When Smuts goes" to "Great South African Criminals."

Ann is a member of the Eoan Group, and takes part in some of their productions. She only goes to bioscopes when there is a "good" film on and only to the "Avalon", one of the few well-built bioscopes for non-Europeans. She is never allowed to go out unescorted.

Ann is dark skinned, while all other members of the family are very light-skinned. I think, though I would

never/.....

never dare to ask that her sister passes as a European at her place of work. How bitterly a dark skin is felt only came out once in a conversation with Ann

She invited me to her home. It was the first time I was to come. I hesitated, not quite sure if I was free that particular evening, but Ann took it immediately as my hesitating to visit a Coloured family, and said :

"You needn't worry, whenever Europeans come to see us, I stay in the kitchen. The others all look white."

At work Ann is one of our Supervisors. She is known to be reliable, straight, and "stands up for her girls." She has been elected the workers' representative on many committees, and is also a shop steward. But she is only on "home-visiting" terms with one or two other girls in the factory, who come from similar homes as Ann's. She will always try to help the less fortunate members of the factory community, but she would not mix socially with them.

(iv) MAGGIE Ann's family life I would like to contrast with Maggie's home, who is of the same age as Ann, but not so fortunate in the economic circumstances at home.

Maggie lives with her parents, and her younger sister, who still goes to school, in a small house at Athlone. Her father was a driver, but has always been troubled with his eyes, and is totally blind today. For many years already, he has never been able to keep in steady employment, as eye-strain forces him to stop work for increasing stretches of time. Today he receives an invalidity pension, but that only amounts to £2.15. - a month.

The family lives in a small two-roomed house, for which they pay 17/6d. a week. It has a little front garden with two tiny but fertile flower beds. There is a

small/.....

small yard with a couple of fowls; a tiny kitchen with a water-tap. Everything is well-ordered on a minute scale. One room is the bedroom, where four beds stand in an orderly row, filling the room to capacity, with a wardrobe separating the parents and daughters "bedrooms." The front room, which one enters straight from the garden, holds one occasional table, a few chairs, a settee and another small table. The mantelpiece is crowded out with family photos, mostly wedding groups. Mrs. M. had six children, of which two died, and two have left home to get married.

At present Maggie is the only wage-earner in the family, with an income of £4. 1. 0. a week. But there is no feeling of poverty about the home, but an atmosphere of real hard work. The little girl helps a nearby grocer after school, and brings a few pence home. Mrs. M. looks after some neighbour's children, while the family is at work, and does some shopping and cooking for them, for which she gets 15/- a week. The old man helps wherever he can.

Life in this household goes according to a strict routine, laid down and imposed by "mother". Maggie only gets 5/- a week pocket money out of her wages. The little girl gets 6d., though she earns about 10/- a week. Washing, cleaning, scrubbing, polishing fills a great deal of the spare time of the two daughters. They are not allowed to go out during the week. By 9 o'clock at night, lights are turned off and everybody has to be in bed.

The family are members of one of these missions which have sprung up in great numbers among the Coloured population in the Cape. Prayer meetings are held regularly, visiting the sick and bringing them comfort by praying and singing hymns are part of the self-imposed duties of its members.

Sunday/.....

Sunday is "church-day" and the day when the dead are remembered by putting flowers on the family's graves. Mrs. M. hardly misses a Sunday, and one of her children, married or single, or the husband will accompany her. This is always quite a social event, and on the way back, friends will be visited, or invited for a cup of tea. This is the only type of outing Mrs. M. knows.

Maggie is allowed more active pleasures. One of her great pleasures is her bicycle. She, and one or two girl friends get together, take some sandwiches along, and go on a day's ride somewhere in the Peninsula. Maggie loves the Constantia valley, and that is one of their favourite rides. Sometimes they make up a party and go up the mountain.

Saturday night is the only evening Maggie is allowed to go out. Somebody is always having a twenty-first birthday, or getting married, or some other family function is being held, and Maggie usually has two or three invitations to choose from, though she herself cannot entertain. She is a very attractive, well-mannered girl, and equally well-liked by the young and older generations.

Maggie loves reading, though she does not get much time to do so. If she is not busy with household chores, there is always a jersey to knit, stockings to mend, or some other odd job to be done. She would have loved to go on at school, but as the family was very badly off, she had to leave with her junior certificate. She loves reading English classics. Jane Austen is one of her favourites, and one of her dreams is to see a Shakespearian play performed on the stage one day.

Life was often much harder for the family, than it is at present.

Mrs. M. told me how, for a long time, they all had to live in a stable, attached to a house in the Flats, as her

husband/.....

husband was ill, the children small, and there was hardly any income. She told me of her struggle to bring up her children respectably, and that is why she had been, and still was so strict with them.

Maggie herself told me, how on wet, cold winter days she had to walk across muddy sand dunes and slushy fields barefoot to go to school. She carried her shoes in her hand and was only allowed to put them on when going into a room. Once she got a severe hiding from her mother, because, scared of the cold wet walk ahead, she had put on her shoes before getting to school.

Her mother's reasoning was that Maggie came from a respectable good family, therefore she could not be seen in school barefoot like a poor child. On the other hand there was no money to replace shoes once they had been spoiled, therefore they had to be looked after, and only used indoors.

Prestige before Health - Maggie today is still fighting tuberculosis she contracted several years ago.

(v) ROSE : Not always does strict upbringing produce straight-laced children. Not even economic security can make up for the bad example a parent might set. This can be seen in the case of Rose, who is 26, with already 2 illegitimate children to "her credit". Her father is a carpenter and earns £8. 10. -- a week. He is a violent man, who loves drinking and women. His wife is a gentle little woman, who is in the last stages of tuberculosis, and has been bedridden for many months.

Rose is the eldest of five children, all girls, one more attractive than the next, in a delicate, mournful way. Large black eyes in thin, finely chiseled faces, slim, graceful moving figures. Three of the girls are working in our factory.

Beating/.....

Beating up the daughters is one of "father's" weekly pleasures. They are not allowed "boy friends," they have to be at home in the evening. The weekly wage envelope of the three girls is £10. 17. -. One daughter is married and has left home, one stays at home to run the house. The family lives at Claremont, in one of the semi-detached little houses, which stand row after row in side streets off the Main Road.

Rose is the rebel in this household of gentle women, suppressed by one forceful male. She has run away from home several times, has lived with more men than one, but has always been drawn back to her home by love for her mother. Once she nearly killed her father, when he attacked her mother in one of his drunken fits. Now there is a sort of armed peace in the house. Her children are living with her married sister, for which she pays her a weekly sum.

Rose is an intelligent girl, an excellent worker, who can do any job given to her in an efficient, skilful manner. She is not a good mixer, and keeps very much to herself. She cannot take criticism, immediately feels herself unjustly treated; and will pick a quarrel easily. She protects and mothers her sisters in a rough domineering manner. Her supervisor says of her : "Rose is a good girl, but she will be naughty !" I wonder what would have become of Rose with a different father

(vi) GENERAL: LIFE OF A YOUNG MARRIED WOMAN :

The life of a young married woman without children, of good family is similar to the life of an unmarried young woman, only that the dependance on parents has shifted to a dependance on parents-in-law. With the housing shortage at its worst, it is nearly impossible for a young couple to find/.....

find a place of their own. Usually the young man brings his bride to his parents' home.

Somehow a room will be found for them by some member of the family being evicted into the dining-room or kitchen. A bedroom suite of shiny mahogany or walnut will be bought - and the new life can begin. The girl will be pining for her own people, and rather than stay at home, which is a strange place to her, she will carry on at the factory, though she might not need to do so from an economic point of view. That is, until she is expecting a baby.

Then new efforts will be made to find a home. If it is successful, she will look after her child and not go back to work, but if she has to remain with her in-laws, she will most probably return to work after a few months, and her mother-in-law will care for the baby.

Young married life, before childbirth, is the gayest time for a young woman of good social standing. She need not bribe young brothers any longer to chaperone her. If her husband is in steady employment, and she carries on with her work, their joint incomes will be much higher in proportion to their joint expenditure. Her domestic responsibilities in her husband's home will presumably be less than before, and until family responsibilities start, she will lead an active social life. She and her husband will go to dances, to parties, arrange picnics, play games, or whatever their hobbies might be.

This way of living only applies to young women who married into an economically secure home. The majority of girls will just exchange responsibility, to which in a short time will be added early morning sickness, reduction of family income, and added expenses.

Overcrowded homes is the key-note of all difficulties. This also is the difficulty for an investigator trying to

get/.....

get any clear picture of family life, of incomes and expenditures. Only in the higher social strata can a normal family life be lead, with a certain amount of privacy for its individual members. But that is only possible with families of old standing, who are property owners themselves, or have been occupying houses for more than one generation. This, obviously, applies only to a very small number of people.

The majority-middle class, lower middle class and poor class - are forced by circumstances, which are not dictated by economic consideration, but by limitations enforced upon them outside their jurisdiction, to live under overcrowded conditions which result in many anomalous situations.

As an example : It is not unusual to find a household of a working class family with a joint income of £20. a week, living in a house with a rent of 17/6d. a week.

But this family, though they live under one roof, pooling their resources, are really two to three families. That is, this joint income of £20. a week is arrived at by the work of :

1. One parent - approximately 48 years of age.
2. His son - about 23 and the son's wife - same age.
3. One or two unmarried children of the parent.

Sometimes the joint incomes are even higher than £20. This will not imply better living conditions, only a larger family of earning age, who cannot set up house on their own, as there is no accommodation available. Usually there are also a number of small children as part of the household, the children of some of the couples living with their parents.

Women who are working and are between 30 and 40 years of age often have a difficult life. They mostly are, or have been, married, have children who are not old enough yet, to supplement the family income, and a husband who cannot support the family adequately. Often they are the sole supporters of their family.

Marie/.....

(vii) MARIE : There is Marie, for instance. She is 35, has four children ranging from four to twelve years. Her husband recently died of tuberculosis. One of the children has tuberculosis of the bone and is in a home. The 12-year-old Rachel looks after the other two when she comes home from school. She also does the shopping and prepares the food.

Marie is living in a small room in a rooming house in Woodstock. A double-storeyed house, dilapidated and dirty with a narrow entrance into a dark passage with an evil stench. Creaking wooden stairs which have never been scrubbed lead up to the first landing. Five doors lead on to this landing, with five rooms, which hold five families with an average of four children each. The doors of the rooms are usually open.

Slovenly women with dirty children live next to tidy, neat-looking women. Washing is hung up in every room, stretching out into the corridor. Primus stoves are going, candles are flickering in the rooms facing the narrow air-shaft, which is dark even in broad daylight. There is electricity laid on, but the landlord had it turned off long ago, as nobody could afford to pay the bill. There is one lavatory to about ten families, one water tap in the yard.

When Marie comes home in the evening after a day of standing over the ironing board she carries up to her room bucket after bucket of water, to clean the room, to wash the children, to cook. Her room is spotlessly clean, though permeated by the smell of cooking, unwashed bodies and the lavatory - a smell which enters from the outside through every crevice.

She is a thin slip of a woman, who suffers badly from

rheumatism/.....

rheumatism in one of her arms. Her great fear is that she might not be able to work one day. She earns £4. 1. - a week, from which she still pays off debts she had incurred during her husband's illness. She has to buy school clothes for Rachel. The clothes for the other children she makes herself. To supplement her income she takes in washing which she does over weekends.

Rachel works nearly as hard as her mother. Before coming home she cleans schoolrooms to get a free meal, she scrubs, washes and irons like an adult. Even when she walks around chatting to other children, supervising her young sister and brother, her hands are busy with some knitting. At the same time she is a happy and gay child.

In spite of its poverty, the room in which the family live has a happy atmosphere. There are always flowers, even if it is rather dried-out heather. Neighbours have a gramophone which grinds the same record over and over again. But Marie and the children love it. They sing it often, harmonising the melody while doing their chores. It is a nice home, in spite of its obvious poverty and the terrible living conditions which surround it.

(viii) DOROTHY: Dorothy is a couple of years older than Marie. She could have an easier life, if she would choose to do so, but she and her husband's lives are taken up in helping others.

Peter, her husband, is a driver, and earns £4.10.-. a week. They have a daughter who is 18 and works in a shoe factory. She brings about £3. home every week. One son still goes to school. Dorothy's mother lives with them and draws an old age pension. Dorothy herself earns £4. 1. - a week.

The family lives in a semi-detached house in a street

not/.....

not far from the docks. One of the three rooms in the house is fairly large, and there every Sunday prayer meetings are held. But they do not only pray. Children from the district are invited to come, often there are as many as thirty. Every child gets a plate of soup and some fruit. All members of the family collect old clothes and distribute them to the needy.

Their flat is the centre of a mission, which works amongst the poorest of the dock area. Twice a week hospitals are visited, patients are brought presents, and prayers are said, hymns sung. Money must not be collected - but somehow there is always enough to buy a loaf of bread, some coal, some milk for the destitute.

Since the tuberculosis self-help organisation is in existence, Dorothy has become an active member of it. She visits tuberculosics, arranges for their screening at the clinic and looks after the family. In addition to all this she runs her home, completes an eight-hour day at the machine, and suffers from a leaking heart, which at times makes her unable to work for weeks on end.

(ix) ELLEN : But not all women between 30 and 40 are like Marie and Dorothy. There is Ellen. She is 36, an attractive brunette, who could easily pass as a Latin beauty.

Her father came from the Argentine, so she says. It must be true, as she is an extremely uneducated woman, and would not know that the Argentine existed otherwise. The father did not stay long enough in the country to find out that he had a daughter, and does not further feature in Ellen's life. Her mother, a Coloured woman, married a Cape Coloured, and had four more children.

Ellen herself married a good-looking, lightly-coloured

man/.....

man, who is employed as a labourer by the City Council. They have five children, two of whom are already working. Ellen is not quite sure of her age, but she thinks she got married when she was 16. She cannot read or write. She is an Ironer, and one of our quickest workers.

Her only trouble is that she loves pleasure, and pleasure spells men. There are always well-to-do men around her. She is taken for drives, to have drinks and to the cinema. She can easily pass as a European and takes full advantage of this. She does not look after her home, or her children.

All this would have nothing to do with the factory, if her irate husband would not turn up at least once every week to threaten Ellen or have a fight with one of her waiting Beaux. Ellen is a great source of gossip for the workers, and, though her "naughtiness" is deplored, she supplies much entertainment on a dull working day. Several times she has been given notice already, but somehow she manages to remain.

Ellen spends every penny she earns on herself. She is a grubby woman with worn-out, low-heeled shoes at the ironing board. Five minutes after the evening hooter has gone, out of the cloakroom emerges a coquettishly dressed, elegantly moving woman. Her father must have been an Argentinian after all

5. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON WAY OF LIFE OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL CLASSES :

When visiting the homes of our women, the one common denominator among them, of whatever class or age-group, seems to be that they are all extremely hard workers. This applies to Coloured and Malay alike. Even when they are "resting", their hands will never be idle, there will be some knitting, some mending, some sewing, or some embroidering done while

talking/.....

talking or listening.

What then is the difference in the way of living of the women within their social classes ?

It is the position of the man, really, who gives a woman status, and the economic and emotional security of the family structure, which determines the standing of all members of the family within their community.

(a) Upper Middle Class : When speaking of an Upper Middle Class family it will mean in most cases that the head of the household is a "White Collar worker." It will also mean that it is the daughter, and not the wife who is employed at the factory. "Father" might be a teacher, a minister, a clerk, he might have a small business of his own.

In an upper class family, a woman with small children will rarely leave her home, only later in life, when the children are grown up, she might consider going back to work. If she decides to work, she will often keep a maid, or at least a "daily woman", who does the rough housework for her.

The basis on which the home is built, is economic stability. An economic stability which has enabled all members of the family to get a good education, to be able, over one or more generations, to save some money, so that when sickness or unemployment should threaten any member of the family difficulties can be met without upsetting the whole pattern of living.

But there will not only be economic stability, but also emotional stability, that is the heads of the household, the parents, will be one unit, who can be relied on, who will set an example which they expect to be followed.

The father, and all children over 16 years of age will, earn a living, the mother will be given most of the wages, from which she will clothe and feed the family.

The/.....

The family will rarely live up to the hilt of their joint incomes. There will always be something for "a rainy day", for unexpected expenses. Monthly accounts in stores are run up as a rule, and the budget will be well thought out and balanced. If anything is bought on hire purchase, it is within the household's earning capacity.

Usually only unmarried members of the family will occupy the home, though there might be a married daughter or son living with the parents, but this is only a question of expediency, which the housing shortage had enforced. More often, a parent of either of the parents will be a member of the household.

The life of the women of an upper class family will be a very much easier one, than of any other social class.

Great store is laid on gadgets, on electric appliances, which will simplify housekeeping. An electric washing machine or a pressure cooker are greatly coveted possessions in a large household. An electric stove, a frigidaire, running water are taken as a matter of course. Very rarely will a Hoover, or any other electric carpet cleaner be found. But then hardly any home will have carpets. There might be a runner, but otherwise most of the rooms will be laid out with linoleums, which is easiest to keep clean.

All this enables the women of the household, of whatever age, to have more leisure, than those in less fortunate homes. Leisure will not mean laziness. It will only mean that one can do things one enjoys, and not things which have to be done, and are a drudgery.

"Mother" will take more care with cooking, she will make confyt, and preserve fruit and vegetables, she will do sewing and knitting. She will find time to visit relations

and/.....

and friends, or have visitors herself.

The younger generation will belong to different clubs, sports clubs, the mountain club, will attend "socials" and dances organised by their clubs, or attend church functions. They might attend evening classes.

Family festivals will always be celebrated with great aplomb. A twenty-first birthday party might mean 200 guests at a local hotel or public hall, with a band, refreshments and dancing. The same, only on a larger scale, will be done, when one of the daughters gets married, but then a dressmaker will be kept busy with the bride's and bridesmaids frocks, with flower girls, and pages who have to be clothed. Printed invitations will be sent out, and in addition to a dance in the evening, a family reception will also be held.

These functions are on a scale far beyond the economic level of any of the families, but has become so much a question of prestige, that it just has to be done that way.

Large cars will be hired for these functions, professional photographers will attend who will submit a pictorial record from "Signing the register", "Coming out from Church", "Getting into the car" to "Cutting the Cake" at the evening reception. Some of these photos will be enlarged and coloured, and will find a place of honour on the walls of the different homes.

If any members of the family are musical, there will be a piano, or some other instrument, and a gramophone with classical as well as dance records.

They will only go to the cinema occasionally, but the younger ones of the family might be active members of the choan group, and participate in one or more of their activities. They might attend dancing classes, play-readings or acting. They will go to plays, to concerts at which non-

Europeans/.....

Europeans are admitted.

If they like reading, they might belong to a book club, where they pay a monthly amount, and get a book of their choice regularly by post. There are very few library facilities for non-Europeans.

They will take in at least one daily paper, and most probably also read one of the papers which report on non-European matters extensively, such as the "Sun", the "Clarion", or the "Torch". American comics will be very popular with the younger ones of the family.

Members of this type of family, who are also members of the factory community, will be mainly young girls, or women who will remain at work until their marriage, or until they expect a baby. The girls will usually give their earnings to their mother, and just receive pocket money.

A few elderly women of this social class will also have come back to work. They might be widows, or illness in the family might have made it essential that they supplement the family income. They will rather work than reduce their standard of living.

During holidays they will often travel to other towns, to visit relatives and friends. Wherever possible they will go by car or boat, so that they cannot be affected by the Colour bar. The younger members of the family will often go camping, either with their club, or a number of friends will get together.

(b) Middle Class : Members of the Middle Class strive towards the way of living just described. The husbands, fathers, and sons of a middle class family will be artisans of some description, will be drivers, or in municipal, provincial or government employment.

Their homes will be furnished in a similar manner to

the/.....

the homes of the upper class families, their style of living will be similar, and family festivals, particularly the twenty-first birthdays of the girls and weddings, will be celebrated on an often equally large scale to those already described.

The important difference between these two classes and their way of living will be, that, while the standard of living of an upper class family will remain the same during the life of one or more generations, that of the middle class family will be subjected to greater fluctuations. Poverty and comparative wealth will be close neighbours within one lifetime.

A young couple gets married. Their way of living will not change, except that the one partner will move into the house of his or her in-laws, depending on the space available. They will both remain in employment. The joint income of this particular household for this particular period will be very high. The young couple will pay towards their upkeep, but a great slice of their income will already go to a furniture store to pay off the bedroom suite, which constituted their first purchase. They will also buy a radio, or a radiogram, and may be even a dining-room suite, which will remain in the store until such time as they will have a home of their own.

The joint life will be started with an income of about £10 - £12. a week, and commitments ranging between £120. and £200.

The young woman falls pregnant. After a few months she will have to leave work. The family income of £12. a week will be reduced by £4., and new expenses are added to the reduced income. After the baby has been born, she might come back to work for a short time. She will only be able to do this if there is an elderly relative in the house, who is not working herself.

But wherever it is possible the young couple will try to find a home of their own. Often a second baby follows the first within a year, which will make it imperative for the young woman to remain at home, and to find a home of their own.

The next number of years will be a continuous struggle against poverty. Furniture, kitchen equipment, linen, bedding will have to be paid off, growing children mean increased expenses, and money coming in will only be whatever the husband is

earning/.....

earning. If added to that some misfortune, such as illness or death befalls the family, then the family budget cannot cope with such expenses. Hire purchase instalments will get in arrear, doctor's bills cannot be met and the standard of living will fall well below the poverty datum line.

During this period of economic difficulties new sources of income are sought. A boarder or lodger might be taken in. Sometimes the Child Life Association is approached, which is always on the look-out for "foster parents" for neglected or orphaned children. This carries with it a small monthly allowance and means a welcome addition towards the household money without much more work, as one child more or less does not make much difference in a household with several children already.

The economic level of pre-marriage, or early marriage days is only gradually reached again, when one or more children have reached the age of 15 years or more. The next generation gets absorbed into the labour market, their wage envelopes are given to "mother", and comparative prosperity sets in. Particularly as by that time most hire purchase commitments have been met, and the family might be able to save some money, or permit themselves some luxuries, such as the buying of some labour-saving devices, of holidays, new clothes, etc.

The cycle will be closed when the children get married and set up homes of their own. Very often the youngest daughter or son will be left as "sole provider" of an aged parent and will have to think twice before he or she can get married.

The poverty of a family during the most formative years of their children will have lasting effects on the generation.

The family budget will not be well-balanced, as in an upper class family, as too much money is spent on "prestige values", such as expensive furniture. Rent will have to be cheap which means a small house or flat with no bathroom, and often only one water tap in the kitchen or yard. There will be a coal stove but no refrigerator or electric washing machine.

This will mean that all women of the household have to work very much harder than those of the upper class families, their leisure occupations will be curtailed,

their/.....

their educational possibilities reduced, as the children will have to leave school when they are 15 years old.

It appears to me, though I have no statistical proof for this statement, that there is more illness and disease in the middle class than in the upper class home.

There will often be one member of the family who is permanently, or for long stretches of time, incapable of working. Be it tuberculosis, cancer, blindness, some form of malformation, somebody will have to be cared for.

In nearly every family I visited, one or more children have died in childbirth, or when very young. Families are large, an average family has four to six children.

Though the child in a middle class family will not have the secure background of economic security, there will, as a rule be "emotional" security. The parents will, as in the upper class home, set an example of "decent living", which they will expect their children to follow.

The differences in the upbringing of a youngster in an "artisan family" to one in a "white collar" home might be that the artisan-parent will be very much stricter than the one of an upper class home. The dividing line between a lower class person living in poverty, and a middle class person living in poverty, can after all be expressed only by the degree of "respectability" as in manners, and in one's standing within the Church-community to which one happens to belong.

My acquaintance with middle class families has been mainly during the prosperous cycle of their lives, as one or more unmarried, or newly-married members of the family will be employed at the factory.

Their pattern of living at that period will not be much different from that of an upper class family, though there

will/.....

will be more work and less leisure for the working girl in the family.

Household chores will fill a great deal of her "free" time, and she will not be able to be an active member of more than one club. She might play hockey or netball, but then she will not play tennis or go up the mountain. She might go to Sunday School, but not attend evening classes as well. While the upper class girl will get a chance to go for drives, as some friends of the family might have a car, or hire one, the middle class girl will have a bicycle, and go for rides with other girl friends.

Holidays in a middle class family will very rarely mean travel to other towns, though they will visit relatives in the country or the whole family, old and young, friends and relations, will hire a lorry and go camping for long weekends or even a couple of weeks during the Christmas holidays.

Cultural activities will be confined to the reading of a book, and occasional visits to the cinema. A middle class girl will very rarely have the opportunity of seeing a play or attending a concert. There will be a radio, sometimes a radiogram in the home, but no piano, or any other musical instrument. There will be some dance records and often song records, but hardly ever any orchestral music. A daily paper will be bought, and one of the weekly non-European papers. There will not be one member of a middle class family, who has not experienced poverty and hardships at some stage of her or his life.

(c) Lower Class : The same pattern reveals itself in the lower class home - only more so. Prestige spending at the cost of nutritious food, of adequate living conditions, of health. The cycle of poverty is not always relieved by

one/.....

one of comparative prosperity, as the occupational life of a labourer, which in its many forms is that of the lower class man, is a very much more precarious one than that of an Artisan. There might be long stretches of unemployment, the wage will never go higher than about £4-10 a week.

Families will be large, homes overcrowded as this means reduced costs as more families pay into one household pool. Married members of the family will not be able to set up homes for themselves in spite of an ever increasing family of their own.

Small household budgets will demand uneconomical buying. Only small quantities can be bought, usually on credit, account with the vegetable hawk, the "breadman", "fishman" or at the little store at the corner.

The overcrowded home offers no privacy and men will be more inclined to seek their pleasures outside the home. There will never be any economic security, and not always "emotional security".

The women will carry the full burden of a household which will be difficult to run as there will be no labour saving devices, no running water, which will often have to be fetched from a water tap used by several families. Heavy buckets of water might have to be carried up staircases, across yards. A woman who takes a pride in her home will have to fight continually against vermin, against filth which will surround her home. There will always be sickness in the family, always be a death to mourn and very little pleasure.

A young girl, a factory worker of a lower class family who tries to live "respectable" will have no leisure time and the easiest and most pleasant time of her life will be spent in the factory at her machine. At the factory she will

find congenial company, large airy cloakrooms, wash basins and W.C's, unknown luxuries in her home.

When she comes home she will have to scrub and clean, look after the younger children, supplement the family income by sewing. At weekends there will rarely be any time for outings. She will have to help with the family washing, with ironing, cooking. "Mother" will rule the house and will hold the home together.

Candles, firewood and soap are the most important items on the budget. Light, heat and cleanliness the basis of a continuous effort towards decent living in the face of nearly insurmountable obstacles. What a long way from the electric washing machine and the mahogany radiogram of the upper class of the Coloured community !

There is no security in the life of the lower class family. There is no striving towards a security but one to be buried in a style one has never managed to live in. Year in, year out, the weekly threepence or sixpence will be scraped together to ensure a dignified exit from a world which did not offer this opportunity to the living.

The lower class family has one advantage over the middle or upper classes. There are fewer pretences to keep up and the close proximity of crowded humanity creates a spirit of neighbourliness which is not to be found to that extent at the higher social levels.

A bowl of soup, a crust of bread can always be spared for one who needs it more than oneself. This is done in a natural manner with the unspoken agreement of "what I do for you today you may do for me tomorrow." There is no atmosphere of charitable superiority, which so often envelops "good deeds" and makes them go sour on the recipient.

To whatever social level a family belongs, there can

always/.....

always be felt an upward urge. The parents, the mother in particular, will always hope that her children will "better themselves", and will do her utmost towards it.

But this does not seem to apply to the last group, the lowest group on the social scale as represented in the factory. The few households I have visited, the women and men I have met of this group seem to have given up the fight towards a more secure life, towards a better standard of living. Here it is not soap which is an important item on the budget.

There is no budget. Money which comes in occasionally in small sums is never sufficient to cover even the debts which have been incurred since the last "windfall". Therefore it seems more appropriate to buy a bottle of sherry with it, or a pair of stockings to gain immediate pleasure. There is no pattern of living, and no system - somehow one exists.

The following budgets are tentatively offered as an indication as to distribution of Income and Expenditure of different types of families.

No claim can be made that these budgets are typical for these particular types of families, as the samples at my disposal have been too small to draw general conclusions.

The figures were arrived at by the following means:

1. Questionnaires of the type attached were distributed to 60 families, of which 15 were returned completed.
2. In my capacity as Welfare Officer at the Factory I administer the Workers' Mutual Aid and Benefit Fund. Any worker who requires financial aid has to submit particulars as indicated in the Questionnaire. In this manner approximately 50 Budgets were collected.
3. In casual interviews with workers, when visiting their homes, hire purchase commitments, the high cost of living etc. was discussed, and particulars were noted by me after the completion of the interview.

The following Budgets are representative of the Coloured Section of the Factory only. The few Malay girls of well-to-do homes could not supply me with particulars of their family's Budgets, and their fathers were not keen on doing so.

Where lower-class Malay homes are concerned, Budgets are similar to that of "Marie and her Family", Budget No. 3.

In the following Budgets in each case a month is taken as four weeks.

1. The Family of "FRANCES" - an upper middle class Home.

(For Biography see Page 81)

Household Budget - 6 Adults

<u>INCOME:</u>			<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
	<u>Occupation</u>			
1. Father:	Music Teacher	- - approx.	£30. 0. 0	
2. Mother:	Housewife	- -		
3. Frances:	Factory Worker	£4. 1. 0		£16. 4. 0
4. Sister:	" "	£1.15. 0		£ 7. 0. 0
5. Brother:	" "	£3. 0. 0		£12. 0. 0
6. "Granny"	Pensioner (European)			£ 4.10. 0
				<u>£69.14. 0</u>

<u>EXPENDITURE:</u>			<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
Grocer			£1.15. 0	£ 7. 0. 0
Milk			4. 2	16. 8
Butcher			2. 0. 0	8. 0. 0
Vegetables			-.15. 0	3. 0. 0
Bread			-. 8. 0	1.12. 0
			<u>5. 2. 2</u>	<u>20. 8. 8</u>
RENT	...	...		7.10. 0
Clothing/Household Linen		...		7. 0. 0
Repairs/Cleaner		...		2. 0. 0
Train/Busfares		...		3. 7. 6
Hire Purchase - new equipment		...		4. 0. 0
Telephone/Electricity/Water/Tax		..	(approx)	2. 0. 0
Part-time maid		...		2. 0. 0
Pocket money - three children		...		5. 0. 0
Entertainment/Cigarettes/Newspaper				8. 0. 0
Lodge/Burial Society/Church dues..				2.10. 0
				<u>£ 63.16. 2</u>

INCOME £69.14. 0

EXPENDITURE: £63.16. 2

2. The Family of "MAGGIE": - a poor middle class home.
(for Biography see page 90)

Household Budget: - 3 Adults: 1 Child.

<u>INCOME:</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
1. Father:	Pensioner	-	£2.15. 0
2. Mother:	Occasional work	-	3. 0. 0
3. Maggie:	Factory Worker	£ 4. 1. 0	16. 4. 0
4. Sister: (child)	occasional help	-	2. 0. 0
			<u>£ 23.19. 0</u>

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>Per week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
Grocer	£ 1. 5. 0	£5. 0. 0
Milk	- 0. 3. 9	- 0.15. 0
Butcher	- 0.10. 0	2. 0. 0
Vegetables	- 0.12. 0	2. 8. 0
Bread	- 0. 3. 6	14. 0
	<u>£ 2.14. 3</u>	<u>10.17. 0</u>
RENT 	17. 6	3.10. 0
Clothing/Repairs/Household ... approx.		4. 0. 0
Fares - Maggie ...		18. 2
Pocket money - Maggie, child ...	5. 6	1. 2. 0
Burial Society/Church dues ...	-	1. 2. 0
		<u>£ 21. 9. 2</u>

INCOME £23.19. 0

EXPENDITURE £21. 9. 2

The Budget makes no allowance for any 'extras', such as fares for the parents, newspapers, cigarettes, entertainment, or any quarterly or annual expenditures. No allowance is made for loss of earnings through illness.

3. The Family of "MARIE" - a poor lower class home.

(For Biography see page 97)

Household Budget: 1 Adult, 3 Children.

<u>INCOME:</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
1. Marie:	Ironer	£4. 1. 0	£16. 4. 0
2. Rachel:	School - 12 years	-	-
3. Sister:	" - 8 "	-	-
4. Sister:	" - 4 "	-	-
			<u>£ 16. 4. 0</u>

<u>EXPENDITURE:</u>	<u>Per week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
Grocer	£1. 0. 0	£ 4. 0. 0
Milk	-. 5. 10	1. 3. 6
Vegetables	-. 10. 0	2. 0. 0
Meat	-. 5. 0	1. 0. 0
	<u>2. 0. 10</u>	<u>8. 3. 6</u>
RENT 	-. 12. 6	2. 10. 0
Clothing and Repairs	-. 15. 0	3. 0. 0
Fares: Marie, Rachel	-	1. 1. 0
Church dues/Burial Society		-. 12. 0
		<u>£ 15. 6. 6.</u>

INCOME £16. 4. 0

EXPENDITURE £15. 6. 6

The Budget makes no allowance for any 'extras', for illness or any new purchases.

4. JOINT INCOME THROUGH HOUSING SHORTAGE

Three families living in three rooms with one kitchen, pooling resources. A typical example:

<u>INCOME:</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
1. Mother (widow)	Factory Worker	£ 4. 1. 0	£ 16. 4. 0
2.			
(a) Son (married)	Driver	4. 10. 0	18. 0. 0
(b) Wife	" Factory Worker	4. 1. 0	16. 4. 0
3.			
(a) Daughter	" At home	-	-
(b) Husband	" Foreman - Factory	7. 16. 2	31. 4. 8
(i) child - 3 years old		-	-
(ii) child - 1 year old		-	-
4. Daughter (Unmarried)	Factory Worker	1. 17. 6	7. 10. 0
			<u>£ 89. 2. 8</u>

Household Budget: 6 Adults, 2 Children:

<u>JOINT EXPENDITURE:</u>	<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month</u>
1. Rent:	£ 1. 0. 0	£ 4. 0. 0
2. Grocer	2. 10. 0	10. 0. 0
Milk	- 8. 9	1. 15. 0
Butcher/Fish	2. 10. 0	10. 0. 0
Vegetables	1. 0. 0	4. 0. 0
Bread	- 10. 0	2. 0. 0
Wood	- 4. 0	- 16. 0
		<u>£32. 11. 0</u>

RENT AND FOOD PER HEAD (children taken as adults) ... £4. 1. 4d. a month

DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME PER FAMILY :

<u>FAMILY I.</u>	<u>Income per Month</u>	<u>Expenditure Rent & Food.</u>
i. Mother (1)	£16. 4. 0	£4. 1. 4
ii. Unmarried daughter (4)	7. 10. 0	4. 1. 4
	<u>£ 23. 14. 0</u>	<u>£ 8. 2. 8</u>
<u>FAMILY II</u>		
i. Husband (son - 2(a))	£ 18. 0. 0	£ 4. 1. 4
ii. Wife (- 2(b).)	16. 4. 0	4. 1. 4
	<u>£34. 4. 0</u>	<u>£ 8. 2. 8</u>
<u>FAMILY III</u>		
i. Husband (3(b))	£ 31. 4. 8	£ 4. 1. 4
ii. Wife (daughter 3(a))	-	4. 1. 4
(i) child - 3 years old	-	4. 1. 4
(ii) child - 1 year old	-	4. 1. 4
	<u>£ 31. 4. 8</u>	<u>£ 16. 5. 4</u>

As the keeping of a joint household reduced the cost of living for Rent and Food for each family considerably there is sufficient money left to cover all other requirements for each family.

4. JOINT INCOME THROUGH HOUSING SHORTAGE:

The two young couples, Family II and Family III, will most probably have committed themselves to the amount of £150-£200 in order to buy furniture and household equipment for their future homes. This will have been done on Hire Purchase on the lay-by system, wherein the goods remain in the store until required, while regular payments are made.

Typical Purchases on Hire Purchase are as follows:-

1.	Bedroom Suite	...	£68. 0. 0
2.	Kitchen Dresser, etc.		24. 0. 0
3.	Linen, Blankets, Curtains, Lino		30. 0. 0
4.	Radiogram		34. 0. 0
			<u>156. 0. 0</u>

	A Dining Room Suite is cometimes added		45. 0. 0
			<u>£ 191. 0. 0</u>

Commitments of this description are undertaken in cases where the monthly income of husband and wife is approximately £30 to £40, when both members of the family are working.

Immediately the wife falls pregnant and her earning power is reduced to nil, commitments continue over years, but it is often a near impossibility to carry on with regular payments.

Debts are incurred, poverty sets in - the vicious circle has started.

3 Typical Case asking for help from the
Workers' Mutual Aid and Benefit Fund.

Household Budget: 3 Adults,
2 children.

THE FAMILY:

<u>INCOME:</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Per Week</u>	<u>Per Month.</u>
1. Husband	Building Trade	£ 3. 9. 0	£13.16. 0
2. Wife	Factory Worker	2. 0. 6	8. 2. 0
(1) child	School	-	-
(11) child	At home	-	-
3. Mother of Wife	Pensioner	-	2.15. 0
			<u>£ 24.13. 0</u>

EXPENDITURE:

	<u>Per Month</u>
Food/Cleaning materials, etc. approx.	£10. 0. 0
Lodge/Burial Society/Church dues .. "	1. 0. 0
Running repairs, etc. "	1. 0. 0
Fares to and from work "	1.10. 0
Rent "	4. 0. 0
Hire Purchase commitments on furniture	4. 0. 0
Store account (household requirements, clothing etc.)	<u>3. 0. 0</u>
	<u>£ 24.10. 0</u>

INCOME £24.13. 0

EXPENDITURE £24.10. 0

Commitments to go on for some time.

On Hire Purchase: Still to pay:

Kitchen	£18. 0. 0
Dining Room	
Suite	30. 0. 0
Store account..	<u>15. 0. 0</u>
	<u>£ 63. 0. 0</u>

At the time of application for financial aid the husband was out of work as he has seasonal work only, one of the children was sick. The family had got in arrear with hire purchase payments and was threatened with removal of furniture. Doctors' and Chemist bills had to be met, and the rent was in arrear. Grocer and dairy bills had accumulated.

QUESTIONNAIRE.

(Used as basis for enquiries).

I. FAMILY PARTICULARS: Members of household:

NAME.	AGE.	RELATIONSHIP TO YOU. (Worker).	OCCUPATION.	WEEKLY WAGE. (if any).
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

II. YOUR HOME: If you yourself are a boarder or lodger - please say so.

1. Does the house belong to any member of the family _____
Do you still pay off on it? _____ How much: _____ What rates: _____
2. Is the House/Flat/Room rented? (Underline which it is) _____
What rent does your family pay _____ (per week/or month?)
How many rooms are there? _____ Kitchen: _____ Bathroom: _____
Yard: _____ Garden: _____ Vegetable Patch? _____ Fowls _____
3. Is all your furniture paid off? _____ If not, how much to pay _____
How much have you paid already: _____ How much per week? _____
Do you still pay anything else off belonging to the Home?
(Frigidaire, stove, washing machine etc.) _____
How much paid? _____ To pay: _____ How much per week _____
4. Do you, or your parents, pay any help at home to look after
anybody at home? _____ How much do you pay: _____

III. YOUR FAMILY:

1. Is anybody in your family permanently sick _____ What is the
trouble? _____ Does he/she get a pension? _____
How much _____
2. Does anybody in the family get an old agen pension _____ How much _____
3. Does anybody get money from Childlife? _____ How much _____
4. Does any member of your family get support from anybody not
living at home? (For instance non-support) _____ How much _____
5. Does any member of your family support anybody not living with
you? _____ How much _____

QUESTIONNAIRE CONTD.

IV. YOUR HOUSEHOLD BUDGET (Or your mother's, or whoever keeps house):

1. Does any member of the family keep an account with any store or shop_____ What do you buy there:_____

_____How much do you pay per month/week_____

How much does your household cost you (per week or month)_____

Grocer_____Milk_____Butcher_____Vegetables_____Bread_____

Any other expenses?(cleaning materials, washing etc.)_____

V. Any other expenses? Do you, or any other members of your family pay towards a burial society, lodge, church dues, save up for a wedding, anything else?_____

_____Burial Society:_____How much do you pay_____All other members_____

Church dues:_____How much do you pay_____All other members_____

Lodge:_____How much do you pay_____All other members_____

Any other expenses?_____
(newspaper, classes?)_____

_____Did you have to pay Personal Tax this year?_____How much?_____

Any other member of the family?_____How much?_____

Did anybody have to pay Income Tax?_____

Have you any debts you have to pay off weekly or monthly?_____

(Doctor, Dentist, or any other) How much to pay off_____

How much do you pay per week/month_____

Have you any other income or earnings, than mentioned already?_____

P A R T II.

THE WOMAN WORKER AT HOME.

CHAPTER IV : The Malay woman at Home.

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THE MALAY WOMAN AT HOME.

1. WHY LOWER CLASS HOMES WERE MAINLY VISITED:

When describing the Cape Malay group within the factory community, I stated that this group, in contrast to the Coloured group, was not representative of the social composition of the Malay Community in Cape Town.

I stated that the social standing of a person was closely linked with their capability to adhere to religious demands. Religious demands in turn necessitate economic wealth.

A large family, hospitality on a large scale at family functions and on religious feast days, the Pilgrimage to Mecca, the payment of Zaka - all this costs money - money which has to be earned over and above the daily needs. A family of good social standing will therefore be synonymous with a well-to-do family. Their daughters, sisters, wives and mothers will not be found working in a factory.

The Malay woman working in a factory might be an unmarried member of the middle class community. She will mainly work to cover expenses of an elaborate wedding feast, and to get a dowry. She might also be a married woman with a grown-up family, who will work for some time to enable some members of the family to go to Mecca.

But the greater number of Malay women in the factory will be of the lower class, who are forced to supplement the family income to keep it on or above the poverty datum line, as their husbands or fathers are unable to support their large family adequately.

They/.....

They might also be women who have been deserted by their husbands, or young women who have to support aged parents.

These are the women whose homes I visited and whose families I got to know.

The majority of the Malay women working at the factory live in "Cape Town" - that is, in District Six, the area around Hanover Street, in the "Malay Quarters," in small streets branching off Bree Street, in houses creeping up and along the slopes of Signal Hill. Small numbers live in municipal flats erected on the Cape Flats, in little houses nestling around a Mosque in Athlone and Elsie's River, at Claremont, Constantia and Grassy Park.

2. FATIMA: I spoke of the different atmosphere one can feel and experience when visiting the different areas, where Coloured, Malays and Europeans mix, always one group predominant. The crowded, sometimes rowdy slum-atmosphere of the Hanover Street area, the "select" dignity of Walmer Estate, parts of Wynberg, Kenilworth, etc., and the gaiety of an Italian village street on a summer evening at Gleemoor or along Klipfontein Road.

I have spoken of the neighbourhood spirit which is particularly strong in the overcrowded areas. All this - gaiety, colour, the spirit of goodwill as expressed in royal hospitality, friendliness and human warmth - will be epitomised in the spectacle of a Malay wedding.

A Malay wedding is a highly dramatic event. I would like to describe the life of one of our factory girls towards and beyond the very big event in her existence - her wedding.

She/.....

She comes from a good home, a family of tailors over generations, who live in their own house in one of the cobble-stoned streets which wind their way up Signal Hill at an 80 degree angle - 80 degrees at least it seems to the breath-seeking, panting pedestrian, crawling up that hill.

Fatima is 23 years old. She is a beautiful girl of slender build, with delicately carved features, big brown eyes slanting at the edges, black straight hair, always covered by a "doek." She has been with the firm for over seven years and is known as a very capable and reliable worker.

Her brother is also "learning the trade" in our factory, and will most probably gradually build up a clientele in evening work, until he is sufficiently well-established to start on his own or join his father as an independent tailor.

Fatima is the eldest girl in the family. She has four more sisters, and three brothers. One brother and one sister are married and live with their wives and young families in the big roomy nineteenth century house, with its squat, unprepossessing facade.

Steep stone stairs lead up from the street to the ground floor of the house. Clever use has been made by the builder of the possibilities of a foundation slanting in its level, and large cool rooms with high, wooden-beamed ceilings stretching away from the street entrance. It is reminiscent of similar constructions under similar conditions around Montmartre, near Sacre Coeur. Instead of Paris at one's feet, one has the different but equally beautiful view of Cape Town nestling against the mountain, and the harbour in its

blueness giving the picture a splash of colour. The Malay craftsmen were clever builders. . .

a) Fatima: Her daily life, home and family:

Fatima is a dutiful daughter. She was betrothed to a young Malay at the age of 17. The parents of the young people arranged the match as it was thought most beneficial to all concerned.

Since that time, now six years ago, Fatima has been busy with preparations for her wedding, and has been receiving weekly instructions as to her duties as a wife. A certain amount of Fatima's wages are put aside weekly to be contributed towards wedding expenses, and to buy materials to be made up for the trousseau.

She is an excellent needlewoman and loves embroidering. Evening after evening she will sit at home and do embroidery. Underwear and pillowcases, bedcovers and doylies in shiny satiny material, in fine cotton, linen or silk. She will make her own dresses, though not her wedding dresses, which will be given to her by some of her relatives.

Fatima has a full day. It starts at 6 a.m. when she gets up to help her mother make breakfast for the family, cut sandwiches, and tidy up the room she shares with two sisters. At seven o'clock she leaves the house to walk down the steep road to catch a bus to the factory. She will sit at her machine from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., take part in the rush for buses back to town, and climb up the hill to her house. She will rarely get home before 6.30 p.m.

Twice a week after dinner and washing-up, she will go to the Imam's wife where she and other young girls will receive instruction in the religious-ritual

obligations/.....

obligations of a young Muslim wife-to-be. She will memorise Arabic prayers and learn at what occasions they have to be spoken. She will learn what role she has to play on days of festivals, fasts and of mourning.

On many occasions before her own wedding she will be invited to be a bridesmaid, to help prepare wedding-feasts and learn how to cook and bake according to Cape Malay customs. She will never be allowed to go out alone in the evening, but then there is no necessity to find entertainment outside her own home, or that of friend and relatives, as the house will always be full of people, buzzing with activity.

To tabulate the number of people living in a Malay home, to find their relationship to each other, is a near impossibility - and in any case a rather confusing experience.

Fatima's home consists of six rooms and a large entrance hall-cum-lounge. Of the six rooms five are bedrooms. One room Fatima and her two young sisters share. Another is occupied by her parents. The third by the unmarried brothers. The two remaining rooms are occupied by the married children and their families.

But then there is also "Granny," who is over 70 and sleeps somewhere, there are always more children than can be accounted for, there is always some aunt or cousin or friend staying for a visit. There are the neighbours to the left and right who are also relations and living in each other's kitchens, helping with this and that, or just chatting. Father is a tailor and works in one of the rooms, he has two apprentices, young lads, related to the old man. Friends, neighbours, relations, customers are constantly coming and going, a cheerful

bustle/.....

bustle, while the smell of garlic, onions and curry escapes from the kitchen and produces a fitting olfactory background to its activities.

The whole life of Fatima and her family centres around religious festivals and domestic highlights, such as Birth, Death and Marriage.

The kinship group is a large one, the older generation leading and dictating the lives of the younger. A married son, with children of his own will submit to his father's wishes. The brothers and sisters of the parents with families of their own, who again are married, with off-spring are part of the family group.

As families are large and a family group includes three or four generations, there are approximately 60 to 80 close relations, such as aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, etc. Somewhere within the group there will always be a child born, a death, a wedding or a religious festival which demands preparation and offers or extends hospitality.

There will always be widows and children in the family who would be destitute if it were not for the assistance given to them by their relations, and there will be others who will be able to afford the pilgrimage to Mecca, and on their return will bring honour to the whole clan by having become Hadjies.

Fatima comes from a good middle class family. That means that she will have to invite to her wedding about 300 people, but will have to cater for about 400.

She will have three wedding dresses into which she will change in the course of the afternoon of her wedding day and present herself to her guests each time newly-adorned. But not only that. Her bridesmaids,

the/.....

the flower-girls and page-boys will also change to fit into the colour scheme of the bride's outfit. If she comes from a family who still hold to old tradition, a horse-drawn carriage, the horses decorated with plumes in the colour of the bride's frock, will drive her through town from relation to relation. But more often, today, a limousine is hired and visiting is done by car.

b) Wedding preparations: One day, a month before the wedding, I will receive a daintily printed invitation: "Mr. and Mrs request the pleasure"

Fatima will come to my office and ask for leave to help with the wedding preparations. She has to visit all near relations and friends and invite them personally. Great baking and cooking will go on in her house. All friends and neighbours participating in the preparations.

The house will have to be re-arranged to accommodate all the guests that are expected. Furniture has to be removed, long tressle tables and benches put in their place, a platform with a "baldachine" erected, under which the bride and her retinue will take turns with the bridegroom and his bestment to receive the congratulations of the wedding guests.

The home of the bridegroom will also be bustling with activity. Here the meal has to be prepared which the bridegroom, after the religious ceremony at the mosque, has to send to his bride in acknowledgement of his new responsibilities. Dishes with Malay delicacies daintily arranged are wrapped in celophane will be ready to be despatched.

c) The Wedding Day: The day will start with prayers and ceremonial ablutions in preparation of the religious

ceremony/.....

ceremony. But the bridegroom only will attend the service at the mosque as the Bride will be given away by proxy.

The groom will have to prove his worth of taking a wife upon himself to the father of the bride, or her guardian, by reciting relevant portions of the Koran in Arabic.

The Imam, Hadjies, and elders of the community will sit in judgement of his accomplishments. Beware the nervous groom who stutters and falters in his text. He has to start all over again.

In a white robe, surrounded in a semi-circle by the Malay community, all sitting crosslegged in stockinged feet with fezzes covering their heads, he will face the community.

His recitation will be punctuated by prayers chanted by all men, swaying and bowing in the direction of Mecca.

The father of the bride will name a sum of money, stipulated by the bride, which the groom has to pay. This is in form of a token, and has to be used by the bride in such a way that the bridegroom does not benefit by it. Today this sum amounts to between £2 and £5.

Though women are not allowed to enter the floor of the Mosque, a special place had been cleared for me to attend this particular ceremony.

I was placed on a chair in such a way that my feet could not touch the Praying Carpet, looking down upon a sea of red and black fezzes, some decorated by black tassels. Those were the Hadjies.

It was a strange experience but I could not help super-imposing upon this picture of the East the other

surroundings/.....

surroundings I knew so many of the men in. Big steam-presses, electric machines, the noise and smell of a factory.

In the meanwhile, Fatima was busy dressing, helped by some of the women, while others got the tables ready for the reception. A tower of a wedding cake, beautifully decorated, baked by one of the Malay men who specialise in this work, was put in the room where the bride would sit. Flates with biscuits, all home-made according to old recipes, and little dishes with home-made konfyt, with nuts and raisins, were put on the tables which were decorated with paper girlandes and flowers.

From 2.30 p.m. onwards guests started to stream in. Mostly young women, as the older ones were still busy with the preparations, or waiting at their homes for the bride to visit them. Men, many in dinner suits, and all with fezzes, relations and friends of the bride and bridegroom, directed the women to their tables, but did not sit down themselves.

This is the only occasion where the men serve the women.

Gradually the rooms filled. Girls perched closely together, beautifully dressed and made-up, some with doeks, others wearing yashmaks, sat silently, until one of the men intoned a wedding song. The women fell in and soon the house reverberated with highly pitched voices chanting song after song of age-old Netherlands and Afrikaans liedjies in the rythm of longdrawn monotonous chants. The smell of incense hung over the rooms. Along the walls, in the doorway, men stood welcoming new guests, passing cold drinks, plates with

sweets/.....

sweets. The street outside was filled with children and women who watched the spectacle.

Then subdued excitement - the bride had arrived. A way was cleared as the stately procession walked in. The bride in her white lace frock, the train carried by minute girls in long dresses and tiny boys in white japed dress suits, brides-maids beautifully dressed - all heavily made-up. The bride wore a lédora. Her face was covered by a veil. Without movement she sat under the baldachine surrounded by her retinue. One by one the guests came up to congratulate her, while the others sang on. Hardly a word was spoken. After half an hour or so of sitting in state, the bride and her followers leave again.

3. OTHER WEDDING CUSTOMS:

At one wedding I attended, I followed the bride wherever she went. A strenuous programme the girl has to fulfil. From Signal Hill we went off through town to Athlone. There another house had a festive air, though more subdued. She was received by her women relations, hustled into one room to change into another frock. This time light blue.

Back again to the reception - where in the meanwhile the bridegroom and his attendants had sat in state under the baldachine. By the time the bride came back, he had left. Again a big entrance was made, new congratulations received with murmured "dankie's." In the meanwhile some of the men with laden trays were going from door to door in the neighbourhood offering food to all those who lived nearby, but were not guests at the wedding. Coloureds and Malays alike were invited to participate.

Again/.....

Again the bride departed, to a house in Woodstock and the same procedure was enacted.

While this was going on, the mother and other relations of the bridegroom were busy getting the bridal chamber ready for the young couple. A small room in a semi-detached house, furnished with the usual "mahogany bedroom suite" bought on hire purchase from a store, was transformed into a modernised "Thousand and One Night's" room. Satin and silk hanging, embroidered linen, flowers and incense.

According to custom the bride and bridegroom should meet in this room for the first time. The bride in an old dress, with a shawl over her head accompanied by crying elderly women should walk to her new home to prove that glamour has been left behind and she is ready to submit to the new master and new duties.

But this is done very rarely today, and I only experienced this transformation once, out of the many weddings I went to over the past three years, and of the many I heard about. Usually after the last change tradition is broken today for the sake of the photographer. Bride and Bridegroom and their retinues meet to have many pictures taken as permanent records of the most important day of their lives when once, for 12 hours they were the leading actors in an Eastern fairy tale, far removed from their ordinary life of hardship and poverty, of conveyor belts and clockcards.

For a whole week after the wedding the bride has to stay at home, attired in one of her wedding gowns to receive visitors and their congratulations.

A girl of a middle class family will very rarely come back to work after her marriage. But there are

only/.....

- 385 -

only very few girls of middle class families in the factory. In spite of this many others have a wedding feast as elaborate as Fatima's, only it is without the secure economic background of a middle class girl.

4. GADIJA: TRADITION AND REALITY.

There is Gadija, for instance. Money will be saved over years for the great occasion. Every penny saved by all members of the family will be spent in one great display, in one gesture of royal hospitality. Gadija will work up to the day of her wedding, she will come back to work a couple of days later. But not for long.

Soon she will be pregnant and have to leave her job. Her husband a carpenter, earns approximately £5 a week. Gadija's savings will have been spent on her wedding and trousseau. Abdullah's on paying the first instalments on furniture. Now, when it is most important that there should be some freedom from worry, money difficulties start. The bride might have a large trousseau, but not have enough money to prepare for the birth of her baby. She will have spent hundreds of pounds to entertain wedding guests, but she will not be able to afford a pint of milk daily.

This is the other side of the picture. Tradition, the romanticism of an Eastern fairy tale enacted for one day, at the cost of security and health of a life-time.

This might sound grossly over-stated, but if one has experienced in one's capacity as social worker the same story over and over again - the struggle of a mother to keep her family in food and clothing, of disease and illness in the home often caused by ignorance and

malnutrition/.....

malnutrition - then one is invited by the same mother to a Malay wedding in big style - followed by misery and illness, and often death of a newly-born baby - one starts wondering, is it worth it?

Does tradition warrant such sacrifice in human health?

On the other hand, these very traditions give the Malay a feeling of self-respect, of humble superiority, of belonging to a religious community stretching far beyond the boundaries of their understanding. And once a Malay breaks with tradition all ethical and moral laws begin to be abandoned at the same time.

He becomes the enemy of society who will gamble and drink, will rob, and attack his own people for personal gain. The skolly emerges, who will join a gang to gain power, and will terrorise his neighbourhood.

Many of our elderly women, who are either widowed, or separated from their husbands, or deserted by them, and had to bring up their children alone or with the help of relations, complain about the influence the gangs have on their children. The sons will be impressed by "making easy money," the daughters by the display of apparent wealth will not wait for their wedding to produce their first infant. Mothers bound to the machine from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. have to leave the education of their children to the street and lose all influence over them.

5. THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE MALAY WOMAN:

The life of the Malay woman, young or old, who has to earn a living, is a life of chores intermingled with patches of gaiety and festivity, with prayers and mourning. All are enacted according to a definite

pattern/.....

lives are dictated by the same religious customs. Dignity and standing are achieved by age and the number of sons which they have born.

One would be mistaken in thinking that the lot of the Malay woman is an unhappy one, that she suffers under the social inferiority imposed upon her by Muslim law and local customs. She does not know anything about the fight for emancipation of her Western European sisters, and its results among her Coloured neighbours do not impress her favourably.

The great advantage the Malay women have over their Coloured sisters in their unity and cohesion which gives strength to the whole group, and with that to the individual.

The man goes out, the woman stays at home - but never alone. There will always be mothers, aunts, sisters, daughters, nieces, or just friends to help in work, to share pleasures or console in suffering. Mutual aid is not a theoretical axiom but an unquestionable reality, taken as a matter of course to such a degree, that its participants are not even conscious of it.

The Malay man goes out - the woman stays at home. The Malays in the Cape have a cultural life specific to their group built on Netherlands-Afrikaans tradition adapted to Muslim laws and religious rites. But as the social system of the Islam is built on the predominance of the male, the social and cultural life of the Cape Malays is built around the men alone, with the women as a backcloth in domestic activities.

The men form themselves into choirs and bands, the men compete with each other during Coon Carnival, they form sports clubs and social clubs, they take part

in Khalifas - they are the outward upholders of tradition.

As this thesis is mainly concerned with the part the Cape Coloured woman plays in the industrial and social life of Cape Town, and the Malay woman is only a passive partner in the social life of the Cape Malays, no real picture of the customs of the Cape Malays can be given. This must be left to a Sociologist or Anthropologist, who might care to investigate the subject matter from a different angle.

P A R T I I I .

FINDINGS: A COMPARISON COLOURED - MALAY.

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THE ROLE OF THE COLOURED WOMAN
WITHIN HER SOCIAL GROUP.

1. FINDINGS WITHIN THE FACTORY:

The subjects investigated are 220 women - 156 Coloured and 64 Malay women. The basis for the investigation is that of a factory community.

The analysis of the community has shown that:

- (i) (a) there exists a definite split between the Coloured and Malay sections caused by the different social and cultural background of those two groups;
- (b) that the Coloured Section is subdivided into social classes with different prestige-value within their community. Also that these social classes hardly mix within the factory community, and not at all outside the factory;
- (c) that no such definite class distinction is to be found among the Malay section.

The reason for this is to be found in the fact that:

- (ii) (a) the social, cultural and domestic life of the Coloured woman follows the pattern of Western European Civilisation as it is expressed in the Afrikaans-English community surrounding her,
while
- (b) the social, cultural and domestic life of the Malay woman follows the pattern of a social organisation built on the

Islamic/.....

Islamic creed, adapted to the circumstances and conditions which originated in the Cape.

These fundamental differences result in:

- (iii) (a) a different position the woman has to uphold within her particular community;
- (b) and a social stratification within those communities based on different tenets.

2. THE POSITION OF THE COLOURED WOMAN WITHIN HER COMMUNITY:

- (i) The position of the coloured woman within her community is - within limits - that of an equal partner with the man. The limits are those which are caused by
 - (a) functional differences and tasks, as applying to any woman and
 - (b) by the point of emancipation that has reached up to date in the historical evolution of the position of the Western European women in general.
- (ii) The unit for the Coloured woman is the family - the family known in Western European society.
- (iii) The position of the Coloured family is determined by the framework within which they have to live - which is that dictated by the dominance of Western European Civilisation. Western European Civilisation with "regional" differences. "Regional differences" is synonymous in this instance with the pattern which has been created over centuries to ensure white supremacy in a country where non-Whites are in a vast majority.

3. THE COLOURED GROUP:

The Coloured group is the only non-European group within the Union of South Africa, whose very origin is the result of White immigration into a Black country. All other non-European groups existed before White infiltration took place, or had been "imported" from other countries to supply cheap labour. These groups had their roots in their own specific cultures, and were only influenced by the socio-economic conditions their White masters imposed upon them.

The Coloured group alone had no existence and no roots outside its White creators, though naturally, in the course of centuries, it was also influenced by other non-European cultures, and intermixed with them. But fundamentally, they feel themselves as part of the White cultural group, but possessing the "wrong" skin colour.

This point is of great importance, as this alone can explain the social structure existing among the Coloured group. This alone can explain their attitude towards each other, towards other non-European groups, and towards the White group. This alone can explain the dilemma in which the Coloured finds himself all the time.

Here, I feel, I must stress that all conclusions I draw are only applicable to the particular urbanised, industrial group which form the basis of this thesis. If these are applicable to a larger group I cannot judge and this must be left to further investigation.

(a) Evaluations: The Coloured have accepted en bloc the values and attitudes of their White masters, have

steeped/.....

steeped themselves as far as it is permissible to them in white culture, and are striving towards assimilation all the time.

They have accepted, without questioning, that "white" is superior to "Non-white." Here lies the root of their dilemma, the reason for the disunity existing within the Coloured group - the reason for their mutual distrust, and their perpetual aim to achieve a skin colour, which will permit them to "play" white, to be able to cross the line into the white group.

The Coloureds accept his inferiority to the white group by the mere fact of his colour on the one hand, and resents bitterly the discriminations made against him by the white group on this count on the other. He himself will discriminate in the same way against his darker brethren, and will feel superior towards the Native by reason of his "white blood."

To be near-white or light-skinned does not only carry prestige, but it also facilitates the acquiring of cultural amenities and technical skills reserved for the white group.

(b) The role of the Church: The only "Cultural association" which accepts any believer of its Faith whatever race or nation as an equal is the Church. "In the eyes of God all men are equal." This creed has given the Coloured man and woman an assurance and a dignity which they could not find in their ancestry. That is why religion is of particular importance to the Coloured. That is why the church has the greatest influence in their lives, and missionaries found a fruitful field for their work amongst them.

Particularly/.....

Particularly the women find in religion, and religious activities, a deep satisfaction which compensates them for the hardships and insecurity of their daily life.

This inner stability women gain by a sincere belief, linked with a natural instinct to find happiness in domesticity, has given them a strength which alone today seems to hold the Coloured family together.

Social disabilities, economic insecurity which often causes malnutrition, disease and all other hardships which go with temporary or continual poverty, seem to strengthen the woman in her determination to bring up her family, and weaken the man into a frustration which seeks relief in social evils, such as drink, gambling, or indiscriminate seeking after women.

The women, and not the men, within the Coloured society seem to be the moral leaders of their group.

(c) Reservations: Here again I must make a reservation and must repeat that if I generalise, I do so only for the particular group I had the privilege to analyse with their full co-operation.

Furthermore it is a woman analysing women, and however scientific the investigation, and however unbiased the investigator tries to be, personal bias might creep in. It is a group of women working in an industry which employs mainly women. Women, particularly married women, do not work for pleasure, but out of dire necessity. These women led me back to their homes, to meet their families, their husbands.

The same investigation could be made from another angle. Let us say, one takes an industry which employs mainly men, for instance the printing industry. Then one

would/.....

would follow these men back to their homes. The conclusions to be drawn might be diametrically opposite to those arrived at within a group of wage-earning women.

- (d) Class and skin colour: The Coloured feels himself a "European with the wrong skin colour" and strives towards everything which will make him more acceptable in European society. He has been taught that it is not only his colour which makes a white man superior, but his higher education, his greater skill and his way of living. Social discrimination within the Coloured group is based on these facts:

A light skin might enable a child to "pass as white" and be accepted in a European school. It is taken for granted by a Coloured that a European school will offer greater educational facilities than a Coloured school. The lighter-skinned parent will enrol the child. If the child is accepted at a European school it is felt that the first step towards success has been achieved.

Several of our workers have some of their children in European schools, some in Coloured. The first conflict in the child is created. It is ashamed of its parents and has to live a perpetual lie. Not only that, but the parents will encourage him or her to cut loose from his background, even try to find him a European foster parent to give him greater chances in life.

- (e) Attributes which give social distinction: When

describing/.....

describing the activities of the factory community I have laid stress on the eagerness I found among the workers to "improve themselves." As there are not many avenues of employment open to a young girl, work in a factory has a social significance as well as an economic one. Great pride is felt by a mother if her son is accepted as an apprentice in a skilled trade. In vain, I often tried to enter some of our girls for courses run for non-Europeans by the Technical College. They are booked up months ahead.

The "European way of living," the European home is known to the Coloured who has entry to the home in his capacity as worker, as domestic servant, etc., He cannot build himself a nice house, but he can, at a sacrifice, acquire the same type of furniture, the same radiogram, frigidaire and electric washing machine as he sees in the homes of Europeans.

The furnishing of a home or of a room is no more a question of comfort or utility which has to be solved within one's means, but a matter of cultural achievement, of prestige.

To wear hat and gloves to Church or when visiting, to wear shoes in school, but not on the way to school in order to lengthen their life, is a question of prestige, a sign of one's social standing.

The life and possible achievements within this life, of any Coloured moves within certain limits which are set by circumstances and cannot be altered by him. Therefore all shades of difference within these limits are of utmost importance to his selfrespect and have to be maintained at all cost. This explains the rigidity within each social class, and the sacrifices that are made to

maintain/.....

maintain a certain standard of living, in spite of economic hardships.

A middle-class, or upper middle-class status is achieved under great difficulties. It has to be watched and defended all the time. Great pride is felt in the educational or material expressions of one's status, which seems to the outsider completely out of proportion to the apparent achievement.

(1) Good standing within the community: The most coveted possession for an intelligent Coloured is to be of good standing within his community, to hold some form of authority. To have been elected chairman of an association, be it only a "Glee Club", to be captain of a Church Brigade, to be a member of a Red Cross Detachment is the outer sign of achievement. Achievement won in hard battle and therefore doubly valuable and fiercely to be defended. As a result power very often does not sit well on their shoulders, the purpose being forgotten in the pride of personal victory.

• This social pride is so strong, because it has to fight all the time a gnawing inner feeling of inferiority, which is accepted and resented at the same time.

(c) Good form: Good form is always the most important factor in social life. Courtesy, good manners, a behaviour pattern of formal conventionalism adopted more from the Afrikaans cultural group, than the English, is often the only outer expression which may distinguish one social class from the other. Poverty might make it impossible to wear the badge of good breeding in one's style of living. Two women might look equally "down and out" but the one will show in her behaviour that she has been brought up "right" and will be respected accordingly.

PART III.

FINDINGS : A COMPARISON COLOURED - MALAY.

CHAPTER VI : The Malay Woman within her social setting.

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THE MALAY WOMAN WITHIN HER SOCIAL SETTING.

How do these characteristics compare with the attitudes and behaviour pattern of the groupe of Malay women who are to be found in the factory community?

1. THE POSITION OF THE MALAY WOMEN WITHIN HER COMMUNITY:

I had said that: "The social, cultural and domestic life of the Malay woman follows the pattern of a social organisation built on the Islamic creed, adapted to the circumstances and conditions which originated it in the Cape."

The position of the Malay woman within her community is dictated by the inferior role - the socio-religious dogmas of the Islamic creed laid down for her. She remains a minor all her life, owing obedience to her elders and later in her life to her husband, as well as her elders.

2. HER POSITION WITHIN THE FAMILY CIRCLE:

The unit for the Malay woman is the family in a wider sense than known to the Christian family pattern.

She owes allegiance after marriage, not only to her husband, but to his parents as well. If he should choose to have more than one wife, the other wife and her family has to be accepted into the kinship group.

The woman's rights and duties are strictly defined by religious dogmas. Her place is in the home, her task strictly limited to that of a housewife and mother. This also applies to the Malay woman who has to go out to earn a living for herself and her dependants, which might be near-relations or children. Even though she might be the sole support of her parents, or her children, she will still owe obedience to her elders, be it her parents, or if she is a widow, or separated from her husband, to his parents, or her nearest male relatives.

It/.....

It is not expected of her to take an active part in the cultural life of her religious group. She has to fulfil definite religious obligations, such as saying set prayers in Arabic at stipulated times and occasions. She has to fulfil certain religious duties connected with birth, death, marriage, fasts and feasts. Even ablutions have to be performed according to rituals laid down in detail. The only education which is deemed necessary for a woman is religious education, which she will receive from the Imam's wife and her older female relations.

She will not take an active part in the social life of her community, if it is not connected with family functions. That is, a young Malay girl will not be found as a member of a sports club or a social club. She will not participate in artistic activities such as public dancing, singing, play-acting - while the Malay men are very active in most of these activities.

A Malay girl, or woman, will never be seen without stockings, she will always have her hair covered, and she would never dream of wearing shorts or of bathing in mixed company. The Malay man will attend public dances or socials, but his partners will be Coloured and not Malay girls.

If a Malay man should fall in love with a Coloured girl and want to marry her he can do so, as long as she is prepared to receive religious instructions and become a Muslim. This is not unusual, and the girl will be accepted by the Muslim community as one of their own.

But it is frowned upon if a Malay girl wishes to marry a Coloured man, as she then cannot uphold any longer Muslim traditions, and she becomes an infidel and is lost to her community. As a social stigma is attached to it,

and/.....

and as the Coloured community will never quite accept the newcomer as one of their own, Malay girls rarely marry Coloured men.

Religious or family functions play a major part in the community life of the Malay family and though the woman's role in all functions bar marriage is that of the technician behind the scenes, she seems to find full satisfaction and happiness in this role cast for her by Muslim tradition.

3. THE MALAY GROUP:

The position of the Malay family as a whole is determined by the same outer limitations which determine the life of the Coloured family. As far as laws, tradition, and attitudes of the European society within which they live are concerned, the same discriminations which apply to the Coloured also apply to the Malay.

(a) Evaluations: But the Malay, in contrast to the Coloured, does not want to be or become a part of Western European culture. He does not owe his very existence to White infiltration. His ancestors came from Madagascar and Ceylon, from Indonesia and even China. They were princes and slaves, political exiles, some of whom are worshipped as Saints, and Javanese craftsmen who became the first skilled masons, iron and coppersmiths, cabinet and furniture makers, carpenters, plasterers and bricklayers in the Cape.

Malay craftsmen have left their mark in the Western Cape. In architecture and in furniture, in plaster and in woodwork the fusion of Colonial Dutch style with that of the East created the "Cape Dutch house and furniture," so eminently suitable and fitting for the landscape into which it was placed.

Malay fisherman enriched the country with folklore, the Malay belief in magic evoked "Poltergeist" phenomena, which now and then still make headlines in daily newspapers. The fusion of Dutch folk songs rendered in Malay style have given the Cape the Ghomma-liedjies, accompanied by the ghomma.

The Malay in contrast to the Coloured is proud of his ancestors. His mixed racial antecedents do not give him a feeling of inferiority towards the White group as his religious beliefs mould all racial differences into one homogenous whole.

His skin colour might delegate him into an inferior position in a country which is dominated by Western European civilisation, but this fact does not make him believe himself to be inferior, as it does the Coloured. The Muslim faith gives him a spiritual aloofness, a dignity and inner strength which makes him immune against colour consciousness. In fact, I often got the impression that in his heart he pities the White infidels who will never know a true Heaven.

The Coloured lacks self-respect, as he has absorbed and accepted the values and attitudes expressed by the European surrounding him. This splits the Coloured group into as many sections as there are shades in skin colour. The Malay community only acknowledges its own values, which are determined by the demands the Koran makes on the individual.

(b) Class distinctions: Class distinction within the Malay group are determined by the capability of the individual to fulfil religious demands, and by fulfilling these demands he will enrich the whole community.

At the top of the ladder is the Imam, who is the

leader/.....

leader of his local community, and his advice is sought not only in spiritual matters, but on any problem affecting the daily life of the Muslim. The Imam's wife holds a similar position among the women. Then come the Hadjies, those who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca. As a sign of distinction they are allowed to wear a black tassel on their fezzes. "Milayas" are the women who have kissed the Holy Stone at Mecca. They will never be seen in public without the yashmak, which covers their head and the lower portion of their face.

Those who are well-to-do and able to contribute a large share towards the upkeep of the Mosque and in support of the poor are well respected. But as the payment of Zaka - one fortieth of one's total income to be given to the community - is a religious duty, it does not carry the stigma of "charity". Class distinction created by wealth are overruled by honouring age, irrespective of birth and wealth, and the belief that all Faithful are religiously equals.

The status of the woman within the Malay community is dependent on the status her parents and her husband hold. But whatever her background, she will be honoured as a "good" wife if she has borne him many sons. Age automatically increases her standing, and the respect she can demand from other women, irrespective of other considerations.

A typical example of this attitude was the words in which an old Malay woman couched her appreciation for my visiting her when her child was sick. She was about twice my age, but when she saw me and a young Coloured woman I had taken along to the door of her pondokkie in the Cape Flats she said: "I must thank you two old ladies, that you have come all the way to see me."

(c) Results of Social System: The majority of the Malay women working in the factory are those, who, from a Western point of view, have become victims of the social system which does not adapt itself to a civilisation surrounding it. A system which delegates the women to an inferior position without legal or cultural rights. At the same time it does not protect them sufficiently economically.

Women of lower status are usually married only according to Muslim law. This ensures for the man an easiness of divorce, which amounts to desertion. The permissibility of polygamy, the moral right to "concubines," gives him a sexual freedom which results in a flock of children, whom he is incapable of supporting. The Malay woman is not considered "immoral," if she submits to a man, and he is accepted as a superior being. That is why parents allow their daughters so little freedom and a girl will never be allowed out unchaperoned. That is also why marriages are arranged by parents many years before the actual marriage can take place. Once a girl is engaged, she gains in status and is considered "safe."

This attitude can be kept up where the economic background is fairly secure but in a home where there is no father, or where both parents have to work to support their family, this lack of self reliance in young women, which is forced upon them by their education, is very dangerous.

Although the Malay community or her relations will help a woman who has to support herself and her children without a husband, her life is a very hard one, and without the foil of a man, she has no social standing whatsoever.

Within/.....

The position of the Coloured and Malay woman within her socio-cultural setting, and its repercussions in her daily life. - A comparison.

1. FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES.

COLOURED

The Coloured are Christians and have been solely influenced by the pattern of Western European Christian Society.

MALAY

The Malays are Muslims and their social structure is built upon the tenets of Mohammedanism.

The results of this fundamental difference are the following;

II. FAMILY STRUCTURE.

COLOURED

1. Christian Family pattern
Monogamy is the basis of family life.
2. Position of woman:
Equal to man - often leading in family life.
3. Married young woman have right to own decisions.
4. Wives share equally with husbands in directing their children's lives.
5. Unmarried daughters owe obedience to parents, but are allowed to certain amount of freedom.
6. Household Budget - administered by wife.
7. Obligations towards near relations depends solely on attitude of individual.
8. Family functions where entertainment on a large scale is customary:
 - a) Twenty-first birthday of daughter.
 - b) Wedding of daughter.

MALAY

1. Nearer to joint family pattern. Polygamy is permissible, though not often practised.
2. Position of woman:
Minor to man - Man directs family life.
3. Married young woman owe obedience to parents, in-laws and husband.
4. Wives have only say over their daughters' upbringing, but education of sons is left to men.
5. Unmarried daughters owe obedience to parents, but are thought to need continuous chaperonage.
6. Household Budget - administered by eldest female member of household.
7. Obligations towards near relations are a duty to be shouldered by the male members of the family.
8. Family functions where entertainment on a large scale is customary:
 - a) Naming of son
 - b) Tamat of son
 - c) Wedding of daughter.

/III - EDUCATIONAL...

III . EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCES.

COLOURED

1. Stress is laid on formal school education. Religious education of secondary importance.
2. Young girls often attend evening classes to attain higher school standards while already employed as factory workers.

MALAY

1. Stress is laid on religious education. Formal education of secondary importance.
2. Young girls will only be trained in religious and domestic activities once they have left school.

IV - ATTITUDES.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Skin colour of social importance. To be near white is looked upon as asset; social and economic. | 1. No social importance is attached to skin colour. |
| 2. Resentment is felt towards social disabilities caused by skin colour. | 2. Fatalistic attitude towards life. Acceptance of the principle of Mind over Matter. |
| 3. Prestige is expressed in educational achievements and material possessions. | 3. Prestige is expressed in fulfilment of ritual demands. |

V. DIFFERENCES WITHIN FACTORY COMMUNITY.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Eighty five per cent of workers come from middle-class homes. | 1. Eighty-five per cent of workers come from lower class homes. |
| 2. Class consciousness is strongly developed. Different social classes do not mix socially. | 2. All classes mix socially. |
| 3. Respect is shown towards older women, though age does not overcome social barriers. | 3. Respect is shown towards older women, whose social standing increases with marriage, child-bearing and age. Age overcome all social barriers. |
| 4. There is no illiteracy among the Coloured Group. | 4. All women over 40 years of age employed at the factory are illiterate and a number of women in other age groups as well. |
| 5. The majority of women in supervisory positions are coloured. | 5. Only one woman among the Malay group has been elected into a Supervisory position. |
| 6. All social leaders within the factory community are coloured. | 6. There are no social leaders amongst the Malay women within the Factory community. |

V. Continued

V. DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE FACTORY
COMMUNITY (Cont)

COLOURED.

7. Workers in the age group 15-30 participate actively in social and sports activities.
8. There have been a number of conversions to Mohammedanism among Coloured girls in order to marry Muslims.

MALAY.

7. No Malay woman worker participates actively in any social or sports activities.
 8. No Malay girl within the factory community has renounced her religion for any reason whatsoever. There were no marriages between Malay girls and Coloured men.
-

P A R T III.

FINDINGS: A COMPARISON COLOURED - MALAY.

CHAPTER VII: Attitudes of the Coloured and Malay Groups.

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admiration for the community spirit among the Malays, which is tinged with envy.

- (b) The Malay women, on their side, are rather indifferent towards the educational superiority of the Coloured women, and of their active participation in the social life of their community. The Malay women are much more conscious of their "femininity," and are proud of the fact that their men direct and dictate their lives and that of their community.

It seems much rarer that a Malay girl marries a Coloured man, than vice versa. I do not know of one single case in our factory during the last three years of a Malay girl marrying a Coloured man, but I experienced three conversions to the Muslim Faith by Coloured girls, preparatory to marriages to Malays.

I do not know whether the Malay women feel superior towards the Coloured women - they are inarticulate in feelings - but I do know that they ridicule the Coloured groups' striving towards imitation and acceptance of the White group. Though their individual lives might be better than that of their coloured sisters, they find ample compensation in being deeply rooted within their community, and being proud of that community. On their side they pity the disunity existing among the Coloured sections, and their lack of a common purpose.

2. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EUROPEANS:

Here again the basic differences make themselves

felt/.....

felt in their attitude towards the Europeans as a group. The attitude of both groups is the same when it comes to a European in particular, with whom they have daily contact. The Coloured seem more resentful of the limitations set on his professional and economic development than the Malay. But both groups are extremely appreciative of any sincere efforts made in understanding their problems and difficulties.

3. RESERVATIONS.

The whole complex question of race relations is too much in flux to lay down even the attitude of a small group of people. While a statement is being made, the situation has changed again.

Emotions and politics also penetrate a working community, which only exists for economic reasons, and alter the "tone" of relationships continually.

The writer is too much in the midst of its daily fluctuations, and too much a part of the factory community itself, to be able to make an unbiased analysis of the situation.

PART IV.

CONCLUSIONS.

CHAPTER VIII : HOME AND WORK.

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 on the home life of the worker 147
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-

1. THE INFLUENCE OF HOME LIFE ON THE WORKING COMMUNITY:

Home and Work - two parts of one life, inseparably interwoven.

It has been seen that:

- (a) The division which splits the factory community into two parts and affects its working efficiency is caused by differences which have their roots in the clash of two civilisations united within one industrial community; the Western European way of life, as represented by the Coloured community, and that of the Muslim group, whose life is based on the teachings of an Eastern philosophy.

It has also been seen that:

- (b) Attitudes and evaluations which are specific to each group within their community life outside the factory are also mirrored in the social structure as found within the factory. This social pattern exists in spite of the economic structure on which an industrial community is built. An economic structure which only takes into consideration working efficiency, is blind to the influence of social, cultural and religious differences.

On the other hand it is observed that:

- (c) Working efficiency seems to be correlated with educational qualifications, even though production depends mainly on manual dexterity. These educational qualifications are found to a greater degree among the Coloured woman worker within the

factory/.....

factory. They are found among the Coloured worker who comes from a "good home."

These women have gained positions of authority within the working, as well as the social organisation of the factory community. This fact shows up again the inter-relation between work and home.

Again it is observed that:

- (d) The inferior position the Malay woman holds in her home makes it impossible for her to achieve a position of leadership within the working community, and makes her a passive participant only within its social activities.

2. THE INFLUENCE OF THE WORKING COMMUNITY ON THE HOME LIFE:

Social activities within the factory, organised and spontaneous, did occasionally produce a link which united both Coloured groups in a common aim or effort.

This was particularly noticeable where an appeal was made to help less fortunate members of the community, or groups within or outside the community. Selfless actions, such as preparing a Christmas treat for poor children, helping tuberculars, etc., united both groups.

Joint efforts of Coloured and Malay alike created mutual appreciation and tolerance, which spread far beyond the boundaries of the factory unit.

Educational courses organised within the factory for the benefit of the working community, such as instructions in "First Aid, Home Nursing, Hygiene, the showing of educational films, benefited and enriched the lives of the workers and their families.

3. BUDGETS, PRESTIGE AND THE POVERTY CYCLE.

It/.....

It has been shown that the joint income of some families where all, or most members, of the household are in employment is comparatively high. In spite of this fact emergency situations within a family, such as long illnesses, death of a wage earner, unemployment, will often throw a whole household from comparative wealth into poverty within a very short period.

The reason for this phenomenon seems to me to be threefold:

- (i) An artificial wealth has often been created by the impossibility of finding adequate housing. It forces several generations, who normally would set up house separately, into one dwelling. Cost of living goes down by pooling resources. But at the same time slum conditions are created which impair health and also lead to a deterioration of family life. Lack of privacy brings in its wake social evils, as the lack of home life forces the individual to find satisfaction for his social needs outside the home.

A way of life thus created is not conducive to saving and all earnings will be spent leaving no margin for emergency situations.

- (ii) (a) It has been shown that class distinctions in the Coloured community are among other factors expressed in certain material possessions.

This causes a great deal of "prestige

buying/.....

buying" which is made possible by the hire purchase system current in our society.

Liabilities are incurred, which are based on an earning power existing at the time of purchase. Once this equilibrium is disturbed by an emergency situation, debts cannot be met, and economic disaster follows.

(b) Within the Malay community the parallel situation is that of large slices of earnings absorbed in the fulfilment of religious demands made upon the individual, such as elaborate wedding ceremonies, or a pilgrimage to Mecca, which does not leave enough money for the necessities of daily life.

(iii) The "poverty cycle in the normal lifetime of anyone born in the labouring class", as shown up by Rowntree in his "Social Survey of York", seem also to apply to the industrial group under consideration. Rowntree drew attention to the three periods of shortage of the necessities of life within a labourer's lifetime.

Rowntree stated:

(a) "The first occurs during infancy, when the child of a labourer will be virtually competing with brothers and sisters for the food and clothing which can be bought with the father's small earnings.

The whole family rises above the poverty line as the older children begin to earn and contribute towards their keep.

(b) As/.....

(b) As time passes, the children grow up, marry and leave home. The parents left behind will be once more liable to sink below the poverty line.

(c) The children, in their turn, once they set up home and have children of their own will too sink below the poverty line . . . until their children can earn their keep in turn again."

The factors which contribute towards intermittent poverty mentioned under (i) and (iii) cannot be altered by the individual, or the social group to which he belongs.

The question of prestige buying and fulfilling religious demands as stated under (ii) as contributory factors towards sinking into poverty, represent from a purely economic point of view a mal-distribution of income. From a socio-cultural point of view it is a factor inherent in the social pattern specific to each group.

But here again working life, as expressed in earning capacity, and a social system existing outside the working community are intricately interwoven.

4. THE HUMAN FACTOR:

It has been shown how closely inter-linked work and home are in a woman's life. How important satisfying human relationships are in creating an effective working community, as well as a well-balanced human being.

Common aims for the good of others - not self-interest, but selfless actions - seemed to be one of the factors which were found to be strong enough to bridge socio-cultural differences within the working community which has been under review.

It/.....

It gave satisfaction to the individual and helped to create satisfying human relationships within the community.

This has been found within the macrocosm of a small community -- could it be applicable to the macrocosm of human associations as a whole?

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