

Story of Another African Farm

ON 6000 acres of sand veldt in Southern Rhodesia a farm is worked in partnership by a few whites and many blacks. The aims of the farm are several, but one is quite simply expressed: to show that the African can be, given the opportunity, as hard-working, as capable and as thrifty as the white. And this is a lesson that needs to be driven home in Africa today in countries where a white railway fireman considers it beneath his dignity to go to the coal tender, but has an African assistant to bring him the coal to throw into the firebox. For unless the lesson is learned, Europeans in Africa will throw away the chance of the affection and the co-operation of millions of Africans, "and the rich friendship which the African, with his wide emotional life, can give is really something to be remembered."

This is the opinion of the Rev. D. F. Stowell, the priest in charge of the Anglican St. Faith's Mission, which works with the Africans in running the farm. *The Listener* interviewed Mr. Stowell while he was in Wellington recently, a tall, bronzed man, slightly absent-minded (he couldn't quite remember where he had written down a telephone number), but carefully considering any statement before he

uttered. ("Anything you say about Africa is both true and false.") His nervous energy spilled over in quick movements as he absently folded and refolded bits of paper during the interview (including some of our notes on his answers).

To the north and north-east of Southern Rhodesia lies Portuguese East Africa, to the south lies the Transvaal in the Union of South Africa. Mr. Stowell compared the colour situation in these countries. The Union's native policy is, of course, strict segregation of black from white so that even if the white wishes, he could not, for instance, marry a coloured person. In Portuguese East Africa things are different. "There," said Mr. Stowell, "there is no colour bar, but there is a strict culture bar between those (whether black, white or intermediate) who wear European clothes and speak Portuguese, and the vast majority of blacks who are considered savages and treated as such. For the cultured black, there is no colour bar, even black-white marriage being allowed. Nevertheless, this is by no means wholly admirable; the vast majority of the Portuguese East African blacks are uneducated and under present conditions must remain that way. As such they are often treated with what we would call considerable cruelty. And by fully accepting in society the few thousand 'cultured'

blacks, that is, making them allies, the rest are kept under control."

The St. Faith's Mission farm in Southern Rhodesia with which Mr. Stowell is connected is divided into two parts, one part of which is held communally by the twelve Europeans and 70 African families, and on which all work; the other half is divided into allotments for each family to cultivate and graze privately-owned cattle. By these means, the people not only support themselves in food, they sell sufficient surplus to buy all they need from outside.

One feature of the farm is the school which caters not only for the farm children, but also has boarders, bright children from the 70 village schools, scattered over 10,000 square miles, which either Mr. Stowell or one of his two assistants (African (continued on next page)



REV. D. F. STOWELL

"We are often called Communists—of all things"

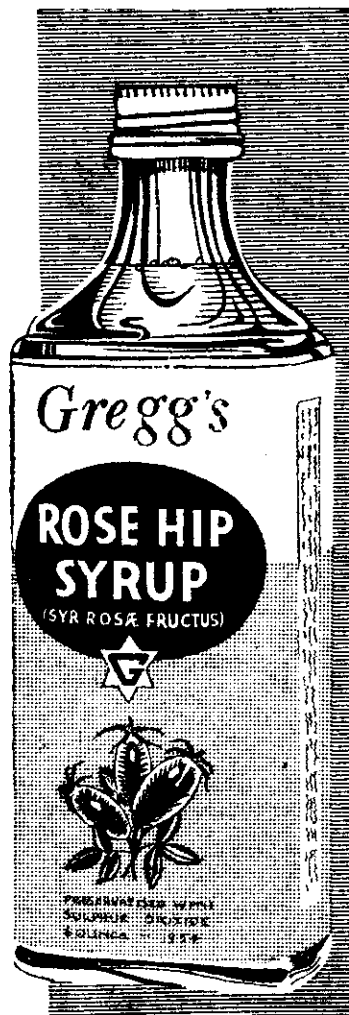
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