

P.1.
meat

(A) The only other non-white person in the plane was a young man from Basutoland on his way home from a short ^{Government-sponsored} course in Canada. He had automatically gravitated towards me at London Airport. He had not been away from Southern Africa long enough to have forgotten his "place" so he jumped up respectfully, anxiously, every time a white person approached. Between my going to the airport toilet and returning something happened to the young man which made him keep away from me as though I were the devil himself. On the plane he was unobtrusive to the point of not being present, so they did not mind him. It is not a question of physical presence as such; it is the quality of the presence. If the black presence is submissive and indicates, with that tacit delicacy ^{which} ~~that~~ is part of the currency of race relations, its awareness of being out of its "place" the white South Africans are likely to be overwhelmingly kind. //

Note E
was typical
P. 37

The sentence beginning at (E) should read:

The Central Province — where
Kikuyu country and white settler
country bordered on each other —
occupied a mere 5,000-odd square
miles out of a total land area of
225,000 square miles.

P. 13
Note C
for typist.

My spelling of "hotel" as ~~hotle~~
"HOTLE" is not a mistake to be corrected
in typing. This is the way Mr. Patel
pronounces it, and that is how it is to
be spelled whenever he uses the word.

P. 30
Note D
for typist

Sentence beginning "Perseverely, and feeling..."
should read as follows"

"Perseverely, and feeling like a reactionary,
I found myself more concerned, more saddened
than I had thought possible, over the
fate of the defeated settlers who had either
hated or feared or else had so little faith
in the humanity and sense of humanity of
of their black fellow countrymen that they had
uprooted their lives and sold up their homes
at giveaway prices.

~~hotle~~

¹⁸
Subert B after "He gave me coffee, telephoned
some hotels and arranged for me to go to
one" next following:

He, like nearly all the present rulers of
Kenya, and most other African countries, had
been one of the angry men, one of the 'dangerous
agitators' of the old days. The outbreak of the
 Mau Mau had caught him in Britain. Because
he would have been clamped into detention
the moment he set foot on Kenya soil, he
got out the emergency in exile, doing what
he could to plead a cause few men in the
outside world had any sympathy. With victory,
and when the Pan-African idea still seemed
more than an empty slogan, he became Minister
of State for Pan-African Affairs. That did not
last long and he is currently his country's Minister
of Education.

13 VC 10

Dawn was breaking and BOAC night flight 115 out of London sped south-eastward to meet the coming light of day over Africa. In the seat beside mine the bejewelled white South African matron stirred, straightened in her chair and became, once more, as selfconsciously aware of me and my colour as she had been from the moment, at London airport, when the stewardess had guided her to the seat beside mine the previous evening. We had been studiously polite to each other, careful not to brush against each other, not to make any kind of physical contact; and we had ~~also~~ been extremely civilised about the fact that neither of us ~~wanted to sit beside the other~~ relished sitting beside the other. I don't think she minded; and I know I did not. But this was a planeload of white South Africans and my presence ~~there~~ was a violation of the accepted and understood rules. (Take in A)

It was thirrtten years since I hae last made this selfsame trip but it was as familiar as my morning coffee with its precisely measured amount of milk and ~~its teaspoons~~ and a half of sugar, ^{the feel} as though I was repeating a journey made on the same day every week.

Thirteen years ago the giant plane had been a South African Airways Constellation. The route of that flight had been London-Rome-Khartoum-Nairobi-Johannesburg. ~~Today South African Airways~~ Today South African Airways are not able to make such flights. The majority of black African states do not allow South African planes to fly over their territories, so BO.A.C. operates the very lucrative London-Rome-Nairobi-Johannesburg run. Basically, ~~the~~ this particular run is for the benefit of the South Africans, and because they are an affluent crowd and lavish spenders the service is superb. For the East and Central Africans who are far less well-off ~~than the South Africans~~ there is an adequate, though more cramped and less luxurious East African Airways Comet 4 service,

plying between Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Entebbe + London

Perhaps the most striking difference between this flight and that other I made thirteen years earlier was something so ^{invisible} invisible and ~~so~~ elusive that it ^{was} ~~is~~ hard to pinpoint. In that earlier journey the South Africans with whom I travelled had been sufficiently sure of themselves and the stability of their world to be able to look at me, the ^{rogue black one} ~~odd one~~ in their midst, with curiosity. Thus, in that earlier journey, an old gentleman, an ex-mayor of one of the big cities of South Africa, and a gentleman who worked in Tanganyika, had struck up a ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ fishing conversation with me. Where was I going? Who was I? What was I going to do? The 'insiders' were in fact curiously examining an 'outsider'. This time there was none of that. They were not as sure of themselves any more; and they were reticent about coming ~~forward~~ to find out. There was always the possibility that I was some important political figure and that any kind of exchange might lead ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ to political complications or even an 'incident'. There was, too, a marked absence of the casual racial arrogance that I remembered from that other time. I was no longer an ~~'outsider'~~ travelling in a plane in 'white Africa' because the idea of 'white Africa' had died between that other journey and this; and the reality, shrunk to the limits of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia had an uncertain future. Yet for all these vast, ~~though~~ subtle, psychological changes, I could not shake off the feeling of things unchanged.

The time gap fell away as I responded to the pilot's voice and looked down and to the left at Batian and Nelien, the twin peaks of Mount Kenya. ^{At level 17,000 ft they were, as} usual, ~~they were~~ above cloud and above the snowline. The ~~pilot's~~ words were the same words used - perhaps by the same pilot - in that earlier journey. Why not? I was the same person who had made that earlier ~~journey~~. So why not the pilot? We went down into the massed solid-seeming body of cloud, shaking as we hit ^{invisible sky} ~~invisible matter~~ ^{mtc.}

On the ground the signs of change were all about, too striking not to be noticed. This was not the Nairobi airport at which I had landed that other time; this one was vaster, with one of those ~~apparently~~ endlessly long runways, the familiar low-slung buildings of the 'international airport' the world over, and the air of sameness of all such. Embakasi airport was new to me, built since my last visit with the labour of those held as detainees during the period of the Mau Mau emergency. It was a monument to ^{that} ~~the~~ war that had started within weeks of my ending ~~last~~ last visit ^{a war} and that had lasted ~~for~~ nearly a decade. It seemed to me as good a job as that long road built through the Rift Valley by the Italian prisoners of the Second World War. Roads and buildings seemed, out there in the chilly Nairobi morning air, the only worthwhile monuments to the wars of the world.

I followed the crowd across the tarmac, startled (and remembering this same reaction that other time) by how cold it could be on the Equator ^{at} ~~over~~ ^{over} 5,000 feet above the sea.

The ~~majority~~ South Africans from Flight 115 veered right to the intransit lounge and my brief, distant but very tangible contact with my former countrymen and women was broken. Through that night flight I had felt ^{again} something of the mood and atmosphere that is part of South Africa and South Africans. Perhaps the single dominant ingredient ^{I sensed was} ~~in~~ a ~~blindly~~ stubborn ~~Canute-like~~ determination to defy the tide, but open eyed, aware of what was involved, not provocative yet totally unyielding. ^{confirmed my ancient conviction} It ~~seemed to me~~ that there was no ~~possibility~~ possibility of a peaceful resolution to South Africa's racial problems and at the same time that any physical engagement would mean a massive slaughter of the black majority by the highly disciplined, well armed and determined white minority.

At immigration I was caught in a French-speaking-package-tour and

, in East African Airways blue, followed the line till a pert young African Miss/with the strikingly chiselled lines of the Somali women, told me to go back and wait since my passport showed I wasn't part of the French-speaking party. I looked closely at her and decided she could not be all Somali. She was shorter, stockier, slightly bigger boned. The fine, elongated Somali bone structure had been blunted by other genes, but ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the Somali beauty ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ shone through for all that. She misread my stare and seemed momentarily confused. She ~~seemed~~ ^{looked} not much older than my eldest daughter, a year perhaps, or two. But men my age, and older, take young women of that age for second or third wife in those parts where polygamy is still practised. I walked away from her, back to the lounge and sat down to wait. The presence of the young woman was itself a sign of change, a warning of the future changes that would, ultimately eliminate even the polygamous relationship between old men and young women. After a while, when the French-speaking crowd had passed through customs and there was less of a crush, she strolled casually over to me.

"You from the coast?"

I said: "No."

"Kampala?"

"No."

"Dar?"

"No. Jamaica."

It was clear/^{Jamaica} ~~that~~ meant nothing to her, she'd never heard of it.

"In America?"

"No."

She shrugged slightly and strolled away leaving me feeling unreasonable and difficult. To get over the feeling I went looking for the ^{John} John. There were no 'European', 'Asian' and 'African' signs as there had been at the ^{John} John of that other airport in Nairobi in 1952.

There were three immigration officers. The one in the most prominent position in the centre of the three-lined ~~exit~~ passageway through to customs was African. To his right, near a wall was a white officer, and to the left of the African was an Indian in the turban of a ~~Sikh~~ Sikh. Last time the immigration men had been white only. I presented my passport to the Sikh gentleman. I looked beyond him and it was clear that the world had indeed changed here. The customs officers waiting to examine the luggage were all Africans.

To anyone who had known the old East Africa, the old Kenya, the old Nairobi airport, certainly to me, this was like stepping through the gateway of a South Africa where all the racial barriers of Apartheid had been swept aside. Last time Nairobi airport ~~xxxxxx~~ *had been* ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ *was* one of the two main gateways into 'white' Africa: Johannesburg airport was, and still is, the other. Nairobi airport, now, was African, ~~not white~~, ^{longer} ~~not~~ the gateway to a piece of white Africa, ~~that it once was.~~

I went through to the relaxed, assured young customs officer, then a Kikuyu porter came to take my bags. He had the - for me familiar - large holes in his ears, but ~~the~~ ^{his} eyes were wholly unfamiliar. The last time I had looked into a Kikuyu face, any Kikuyu face, there had been a smouldering and bitter anger in the eyes. I had ^{seen and felt} ~~sensed~~ this bitterness and anger everywhere I went, breathed it in the air and felt it even in the red earth; but most of all, strongest of all, it had been in the eyes of the Kikuyu. It had made all of them look hard and bleak and cold, ^{and embattled} Now I looked into Kikuyu eyes that reflected a soft and gentle and friendly mood. There were other Kikuyu porters, other men with big holes in the lobes of their ears, and they were all men at peace with themselves and their world.

My arrival at Nairobi airport in August 1965 was as different as anything could be from my arrival ^{that other} in August, of 1952, ^{long ago and far away} ~~almost a new world.~~

Nairobi ^{is} was big, sprawling, very clean, very modern; and because the sky was overcast and no sun shone the eight-mile trip from the airport to the city could have been in Britain on a fine and clear ~~but~~ sunless day, or in the flat regions of the French countryside on a dull autumn morning. Perhaps the fine road was wider and straighter and newer, but that was all the real difference. And the city, too, gave off strongly this feel of being more part of Europe than Africa. It was built by people who had ~~planned~~ conceived and planned it as a piece of Europe set on the African highveld, and they had done a firstclass job. And because they had built it for themselves and on the assumption that they would always be in control, they had built it beautifully and well, with wide tree-lined avenues and open spaces where patches of neatly cropped grass soothed the eye or a riot of flowers stirred the spirit. There are few cities in Africa as well laid out as Nairobi, few that are as E 'European' in its planning and architecture. But ~~then~~ that is not really to be wondered at since its original builders did conceive of it as the main city of a 'white' East Africa. The result is that the Africans of Kenya have inherited from the white settlers one of the most modern capital cities in all Africa. Today the city area covers roughly 266 square miles and has a growing population that now stands at ^{350,000} ~~well over~~ 300,000. It boasts a fine City Hall where you can have morning coffee or lunch out in its gardens or on its terraces, or something stronger at the bars. Then there is a massive hall rigged up with those conference gadgets ~~where~~ which makes it possible for a speech in one language to be instantly translated into a number of others. There is a National Museum which incorporates a snake park and aviary, a City Park of 300 acres and an Arboretum of 80 acres. There is The McMillan Memorial Library (not named after Britain's former Prime Minister) with

close on a 100,000 volumes. All these, and much more, the white settlers had made ^{and} a built for themselves, and all these the Africans ^{have} had now inherited.

The city/^{centre} had grown and changed so much since I had last seen it that I felt lost. To add to my confusion old names had been replaced by new ones so that what had once been Delamere Avenue was now Kenyatta Avenue, ^{perhaps,} signifying/^{perhaps,} the final and complete victory of the Africans as symbolised by Kenyatta ^{over} against those ^{fighting} to make Kenya a white man's country/^{and} ^{and these} of the ^{and} ~~protagonists of W.A~~ Lord Delamere: with the defeat of the 'white' Africa idea ^{was} and so/Delamere Avenue became Kenyatta Avenue; and Hardinge Street was renamed Kimathi Street after Dedan Kimathi, one of the military leaders thrown up by the Mau Mau struggle who was captured and executed by the British. There were a multitude of other changed names: the road from the airport into the city had once been Princess Elizabeth Way. Now it was Uhuru Highway. White House Road had become Haile Selassie Avenue. Such changes, I found out later, were not confined to street names only. For example the King George VI Hospital had been transformed into the Kenyatta National Hospital. These were the outward and visible evidences that state power had passed/^{from the whites} to the blacks.

I found the town a deal more friendly than on my last visit. There were fewer Europeans about than ~~remembered~~ last time, and those I saw did not carry themselves as lords of the earth. And there were the Indians, often more numerous than the Africans, but still not as ~~as~~ sharply forced on my consciousness as that other time. Then, Nairobi had been a town belonging to the Europeans and Indians, with each fighting for the dominant position. There were African locations, of course, but these were segregated and on the outskirts of the city, and from them came the servants who ^{worked at} ~~worked~~ menial jobs in the homes

and offices and shops of the Europeans and the Indians; they were on the fringes of the city, welcome when they could be useful, but not of the city, not enjoying the same rights and privileges as the other two groups.

I remember that on that first day in Nairobi thirteen years earlier Jomo Kenyatta, the old Chief Koinange, now dead and honoured by having one of the streets of Nairobi named after him, one of the old chief's sons, myself and a handful of others, had gone to an Indian-owned restaurant. ~~xxxxxx~~ They had refused to serve all of us: the old man, Kenyatta and myself, yes; the others, no. So the others had gone. I remember the old chief Koinange had said: "This is our burden. We are either denied or they make us concessions. It is a heavy burden."

Now, though the Indians were still very much there, it was clear that the city, like the country, had been taken over by the Africans. Today the African population of the city is greater than its European and Indian citizens combined. And, as everywhere else in the world, there is a steady, persistent drift from the countryside to the big city.

I had spent the best part of an hour cruising about the city and I was getting concerned about the taxidriver's bill so we hunted down the office of an old friend from my London days, eldest son of the old chief Koinange and now a Minister in the government. It was still early morning but already he was at his desk. He gave me coffee, telephoned some hotels and ^{arranged for me to go} sent me off to one. ~~He, like so many of the present rulers of Kenya, had been one of the angry men, one of the dangerous 'agitators' of the old days.~~ ^{He had spent the years of the emergency in the} Now he was benign, relaxed, obviously happy and contented, involved in the work of nation building, anxious to conserve and consolidate what had been gained. And there was the new reserve I had by now come to expect and look for in those of

my former friends who had assumed the burdens and the responsibilities and the powers of political office.

It was obvious the Minister was busy; his Permanent Secretary came in to brief him on an important conference with either some British or American government representatives, so I left quickly. My friend promised to come and look for me after work that afternoon. I did not bank on it: Ministers of government are busy people and in Africa one often makes ^{quick and firm} promises in order to get rid of someone who might ~~possibly~~ take up more time than one either can or is prepared to give.

The Minister's secretary was an ^(in the interior office) ~~Indian~~ young woman dressed in ^{her} traditional ~~Indian~~ sari, ^{which is} to my mind the most feminine of all the ^{Indian} national costumes of the women of the world. I was admiring her dress when she ^{impatiently} snapped ~~something to~~ the African porter who was helping me with my things. I closed my eyes and listened. It was like this, in arrogant tones tinged with contempt, that Europeans and Indians had addressed their African servants that other time I was ^{here} ~~there~~. I wondered, ^{suddenly} ~~curiously~~ how deep the changes really went, ^{great} ~~curious~~ ^{closed now} ~~suddenly~~ and with a slight sense of skepticism about all I had seen thus far. Then I ^{remembered} ~~recalled~~ that it was only two years since Kenya attained independence. Changes in attitudes, outlook, patterns of prejudice, generations of ~~xx~~ habit, could not be carried through at the same pace as the political changes. I reminded myself that I would have to allow for the greater time-gap needed for the adjustments ⁱⁿ of outlook to catch up with the new power adjustments.

The hotel was a couple of miles from the centre of the city, on the crest of a low rolling hill. The grounds around it were well-kept, spacious, and its facade was most pleasing. There was a playing area

for children, with swing, small sandpit and seesaw. A continental European effect was achieved with two tables under sunshades outside the entrance to the hotel. Two women, one coloured, one white, and clearly American from their speech, sat talking and writing letters at one of the outdoor tables.

Inside, an African male receptionist eyed me with a combination of curiosity and suspicion. Behind him, in the background, a tall, angular English woman was hard at work at the hotel accounts. Above the woman's head, looking directly down at anyone registering was a portrait of the President of the Republic, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. 'Mzee' is the title that he himself chose. It means 'Old One', 'Old Man', 'Elder'. Age is ^{more} honoured in Africa than elsewhere. But the title is not and has not been made exclusive to the President. All over the country when people wanted to show respect for someone who was elder they addressed him as 'Mzee'. The portrait was in one of those cheap utility frames - the sort of thing you buy if you must, not because you want to. In the weeks that followed I saw portraits like this one - sometimes a little larger, sometimes a little smaller - in every public or semi-public place in the land: every store, every hotel, every restaurant, every bar, every office, had its portrait of the President hanging where it could most easily be seen as you entered the place. With rare exceptions the frames of the Presidential portraits were all cheap, mean-looking affairs, giving the impression of a thing done because it had to be done. ~~On the few occasions~~ In a few places, usually Indian-owned, ~~places~~ there were more than one: one in the window and one where you can see it the moment you step into the store: A sort of doubly declared sign of patriotic loyalty made doubly manifest

The young African did not know about any reservation for me so the Englishwoman left her books and took over. She had waited in silence

until the young man and I had reached an impasse, with him insisting there was no reservation and me insisting that there was.

She said: "Oh yes, Mr. Abrahams; I had the call from the Ministry. The room won't be empty till twelve but we can put up your things till then."

The young man looked at me with expressionless eyes that could not quite hide his mood of heaviness. Had the woman deliberately left things until he was on the verge of turning away a customer? And was this in order to show that he could not yet cope by himself?

Now, with her in control, everything went smoothly.

The place was old and very British. It had probably once been a large private home run with an army of servants. Its location had once been the most exclusive section of white residential Nairobi; within easy reach of the centre of the city and yet far out enough to be away from all its hustle and bustle. It could once have been the home of a top colonial civil servant or of the manager of a bank or of some very senior representative of a private business firm. As an hotel it clung almost desperately to its Britishness with a not very inspired British cuisine. And since its terms were on a full board basis there was not much the guests could do about the food they got. On my floor, the ground floor, the bathrooms were of that age where they looked dirty, no matter how much they were scrubbed. The total effect was a genteel, clean, shabbiness. All gentlemen guests were expected to wear jackets and ties for dinner and the night life of the hotel centred around the bar.

It transpired that the two American ladies were part of a group tour of teachers from the United States. I encountered at least two other such groups during my East African journey. Apart from the American teachers there was a young Italian family with two lovely children,

two or three couples of settler-type East African whites and a trades unionist from Ghana come to ~~participate~~ in some sort of advisory capacity in a labour dispute between ^{the workers and their employer,} the East African Common Services Organisation, a body set up by the governments of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda for the running of certain common regional services.

My room, and presumably all the others, was provided only with running water and washbasin. Toilets and bathrooms were outside, and all telephone calls had to be made, or received, ~~xxxxx~~ in public at the reception desk. As far as I was concerned while 45/- a day was not a great deal to pay, it was too much for what was provided and for the quality of service. The trade unionist from Ghana, I discovered felt the same way; and since he was not paying the bill himself he would not have minded so much if only the food had been a little better.

It took me four days to find a better place and on the fifth day I moved into ~~a~~ the Hotel Pigalle in the Indian section of central Nairobi. For 40/- a day I had a spacious single room with private bathroom and toilet and a telephone in the room, ^{and breakfast as well.} I also met Mr. C.A. Patel, ~~whaxxxxxxxx the xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx~~ manager and general factotum of the hotel, and a passionately overwhelming protector and promoter of the interests of those he likes. He stands five foot two or ~~xxxxx~~ three, is as thin as a rake: I doubt that any scale he stood on would register a hundred pounds weight. He is dark brown, sharp featured, emotional; his face registers, mirrorlike, every mood and feeling that courses through his mind.

We started off badly. I liked my room, I liked the privacy it afforded and I liked my view of the clean clear skyline of the city; so I decided to book ^{on a} ~~xxxxxxx~~ monthly basis which carried a decent discount. Mr. Patel wanted a month's money in advance, and the manner of his asking for it made for the trouble: he ^{exuded} ~~exuded~~ apprehension and ~~a need of~~ apology, *self-conscious guilt.*

"Does everybody here pay in advance?" I demanded, ~~suspicious.~~

"No sir. But we ask it of long stay customers who get the monthly discount."

"Why?"

"You see, Mr. Ebrahim, sir, sometimes customers come and take a room for a month because it is cheaper; then they leave after two weeks and want to pay only half of the month's rent which means ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~hotel~~ is the loser. So we make this rule, sir."

I was mollified.

Another rule of the house was that no ^{lady visitors} ~~guests~~ were permitted ~~were~~ into the rooms at night - unless ~~the~~ ~~guest~~ the guest concerned booked the lady in and paid the standard daily rate for her. I asked Mr. Patel who had thought up this particular rule. The Italian owner, who also ran Nairobi's only striptease joint ^{the Sombroso club,} a little further down the same road.

Understanding and communication between Mr. Patel and myself grew slowly, delicately. I sensed a particular restraint in his dealings with Africans. They were the new factors. Once they had not been entertained in places like this. Now they came in and demanded service as of right: and their behaviour was often unpredictable. Sometimes two or three would sit in the upstairs lounge and consume vast quantities of beer. Afterwards they would want to pay by cheque, and if Mr. Patel refused to accept a cheque because he did not know them ^(and he had experience of such cheques being) they would accuse him of racial prejudice and the like. Dealing with the new customers often presented strange and complex problems. If a man had a meal and then walked out of ^{the} ~~the~~ ~~hotel~~ restaurant without paying you had to know who he was, who he was related to, whether some ~~government official~~ public figure would later come and pick up his tab. To just have him arrested could lead to complications and the charge of practising racial ^{which could hurt the interests of the hotel} discrimination. So Mr. Patel was exceedingly careful with all Africans.

He was also careful in talking about himself: ~~so~~ it took ^{the last part of a month} quite a while for me to find out that he was forty-two, that his was perhaps the 'first Indian love marriage in East Africa because I chose my wife without the permission of her parents and mine', that he had been brought to Kenya at the age of one and ~~k~~new no other country as home. Once he said to me: "How can they say I don't belong here, Mr. Ebrahim? This is my country. I don't know anything about India."

"Who says you don't belong?" I asked.

But Mr. Patel would not be drawn: he shook his head, watery eyes glowing affectionately at me from behind his thick glasses. Whenever he felt emotional ~~my~~ his eyes grew moist.

Going shopping with Mr. Patel was ^{a most} ~~an~~ rewarding ^{in every way.} experience. He seemed to know every Indian we encountered on the streets. And when I wanted a bottle of Scotch I got it at less than the wholesale price because Mr. Patel was with me, knew the vendor and spoke to him in the voice of, and with the gestures of, the timeless huckster. I did ~~not~~ need to understand the language ~~spoken in order~~ to understand what was being said. But in order to make his ~~special~~ ^{always} plea for the special discount I invariably got Mr. Patel ~~invariably~~ slipped into his own ~~particular~~ Indian tongue. Indeed, this business of slipping into one's own particular tribal tongue in mid-conversation is very pronounced in Kenya. In the midst of a mixed group of say Indians, Africans, Americans and Englishmen, the ~~the~~ African who are either Kikuyu or Luo or Kamba might, at any moment, slip into their own private tribal language leaving the rest of the group not understanding what they are saying, ~~the Indians would do precisely the same.~~ In this way, I found, that which separates the Kikuyu from the Luo, the Luo from the Kamba and the Kamba from, say, the Luhya ^{is} dramatised and emphasised. Tribal language thus becomes an instrument of ~~exclusive~~ exclusion, of making the person not linguistically 'in' feel cut off.

Very often I received the distinct impression that slipping into one's tribal language with a fellow tribesman was in fact used deliberately, especially by members of the dominant tribes like the Kikuyu and Luo, to indicate superior status. The trouble is this is an important ⁱⁿ divisive factor/the hard business of nation-building. But everybody who had a private language, members of the various African tribes, Indians, Arabs, ^{and without apology} all slipped casually and blatantly/into these private languages in the presence of guests and strangers. Once I saw a world of pain/^{baffled frustration,} and doubt in the eyes of a wife as her husband left her out in the cold while he slipped into the language of his tribe with a male friend.

This, among other things, had led a South African-born friend of mine to declare impatiently: "These people don't want integration, man!"

So I got used to Mr. Patel slipping into his own particular tribal language when we went shopping. And I invariably paid anything from ~~15% to 33%~~ fifteen to thirty-three-and-a-third percent less than the marked price of the particular item. And being a sucker for a bargain, and a performance, Mr. Patel and I often went shopping for things I neither needed nor wanted. It was something to see his eyes lighting ^{up} to see that special 'I'll-show-you-something' half-smile, to see that casual man-of-the-world/^{slight} tossing gesture of the right hand and the ~~slight~~ merest suggestion of a hunching up of the shoulders, all ending with the self-consciously cocky "you leave it to me, Mr. Peter." I was Mr. Peter When we were away from the hotel or when we were having a drink in my room, otherwise, and especially in front of the hotel staff, I was always Mr. Ebrahim, sir. He explained it once: "I got to train these ^{staff} young fellows, you understand, ~~and~~ ^{and} they don't ~~know~~ know manners."

His staff consisted of three young Indians who shared a twenty-four hour manning of the reception desk, five African waiters who coped with ^{the} dining-room and room service, two African porters-night-watchmen, an African and an Indian in the ~~kitchen~~ kitchen. In addition, but not under Mr. Patel's control, there was the advertised Italian Chef who turned out to be the proprietor's wife, a homely old body who could only prepare really homely Italian dishes, ^{such as spaghetti + meat sauce.}

When I first booked in contact between the African and Indian staff was remote, impersonal, cold. As it became apparent that Mr. Patel and I ~~enjoyed~~ liked each other, enjoyed each other's company, an easier, more personal atmosphere grew between his Indian and African staff. And of course I benefitted by getting from both groups a quality of service I had received nowhere else in my travels.

One of the young Indian receptionists, a stockily strapping and clean-living youngster named Bushan, was getting ready to migrate to England where his father and elder brother had already settled. He was going because they were there and they wanted him but also because he did not see much of a future for himself in Kenya.

He was a youngster without any special skills or training. He could hold down a receptionist, clerical or storekeeping job, nothing more. In this he was one of hundreds and thousands of young Indians. As long as such jobs had been ^{reserved for Indians} ~~their preserves~~ things had been alright. Now the Africans were pushing, and every year more African youngsters with precisely the same education as young Bushan came on the labour market to compete for the jobs that had once been the preserves of the Indians. Under ordinary circumstances the competition for ^{such} jobs would be tough and grow tougher; in the special circumstances of Kenya, where there was growing unemployment and where the government ^{said it was time to adjust} ~~felt that~~ the historic imbalance that had put the African majority at the bottom of almost

the economic scheme of things, it looked as though the competition would become hopeless for those like Bushan. And so at twenty-one this young man was preparing to leave the land of his birth and upbringing and follow his father and elder brother into exile in a hostile Britain that had made it clear that it wanted no ~~part of the~~ coloured citizens of the Commonwealth as residents of the 'mother country'.

The day after he had gone for his injections Bushan leaned across the reception counter and asked earnestly, with the trustful innocence of the young who are pure in heart: "What you think, sir? How will it be?"

How could I tell him how it would be? That he would come across people who would call him 'coolie' and 'curry arse'; that he would be rudely invited to go home; that the sky would be a leaden and heavy dull grey most of the year; that he would be lonely without the warmth of all the Indian faces about him; above all that he would be made to feel unwanted ^{and} a long way from home?

I said; "You'll have your father and your brother."

His face lit up. "Yes! And I'll cook for the old man."

"But it's not like here," I said. "You won't like it."

He thought about it, began to say something then changed his mind. He smiled bravely and looked very young and very vulnerable. I was reminded vividly of that distant time when I had left the land of my birth to seek a greater freedom than its rulers would allow me. I had ~~not been much older than~~ ^{been about the same age as} young Bushan. The memory was a reminder of the resilience of the young.

"You'll be allright," I said firmly.

He rewarded me with a beaming smile.

The last time I was Kenya there had been between 150,000 and 160,000 Indians. This time, and in spite of the departures since independence the official figure is 183,000. My own guess is that 200,000 would be nearer the mark. The majority of them are still, as they were then, traders. But they were, and still are, also lawyers, contractors, garage owners, mechanics, doctors, dentists, plumbers, carpenters, masons, linotype operators, clerks in post offices, banks, stores and the civil service. In the old days they held the jobs in the middle, the jobs that made the machine tick over. They kept the nation's accounts and shifted its food from one place to the other. Without their industry and their enterprise it is doubtful ~~whether~~ the Kenyan economy would have become as sophisticated as it is, even with the settler presence. The Indians, through their stores in every sizeable population centre, carried trading through the length and breadth of the nation. And if Nairobi's plumbing and sewerage systems compare favourably with the best in the rest of the world this is largely due to the skills of her Indian workers.

It was because they controlled the retail trade of the cities and were the skilled craftsmen that kept the national machine ticking over that the Indians demanded, and won, in the face of settler resistance, a share of political power. So it was that as early as 1923 the Indians won for themselves the right to elect five of their own kind on a communal basis to speak for them in the colony's legislature. They were of course outnumbered by settler representatives, but at least they had five men ^{chosen by them to} speak for them. Another twenty-one years had to pass before the first African was to sit in the Legislative Council in the company of the Europeans and Indian: and then he was not elected by his people but nominated by the Governmr to 'represent' them.

It was not surprising then that the Indians showed as little

interest as did the whites in the Africans. Their own fight against the white settlers, their struggle for a fair share in the running of the country, was fierce and hard enough for them not to have either the time or the inclination to be concerned about the interests of the backward tribesmen who made up the majority of the population. And there were vast linguistic and cultural gaps. So the Indians who were excluded and discriminated against by the whites discriminated and excluded the blacks in turn.

But willy-nilly, whatever their motives, in challenging the political ascendancy of the white settlers, and doing it as successfully as they did, they prevented settler power becoming as entrenched as it did in Southern Rhodesia and, earlier, in South Africa. So, negatively at least the relative strength of the Kenya Indians contributed to the ultimate political defeat of the settlers. Today there are Indians who claim that this is exactly what they fought for. This is far from the truth. What is true is that their presence in Kenya, because it was a brake on undisputed settler power, contributed vastly to the ultimate frustration of the settler ambition to make Kenya a European enclave in the fertile and beautiful rolling ^{highland} plains of East Africa.

For me this fact, ~~the fact that for whatever~~ ^{the} motive ^{behind their} they helped ^{to} break the settler hold on Kenya, lends an especial poignancy to their present fears and uncertainties.

With the coming of independence the British government made it clear that all the citizens of the former Kenya Colony would be welcomed if they chose British citizenship. Under the Kenya constitution dual citizenship is not permitted. Thus the Indians and Europeans were put in the position of having to ~~choose~~ either renounce their British citizenship and become Kenyans or else forfeit their Kenya citizenship

in order to remain British. On the face of it both the Indians and ~~the~~ Europeans had the same alternative choices, but only on the face of it. Any white settler who opts for Kenya citizenship knows that any time the going gets rough he will be able to pack up and go to Britain. And any Indian knows that once he surrenders his claim to British citizenship ~~byxx~~ there'll be no way back to it, no matter how rough the going becomes later. So it is relatively easy for the settler to opt for Kenya citizenship: there is ^{an} ~~as~~ unwritten, unexpressed but clearly understood escape line. The British will not let down their 'kith and kin', be they Tories or socialists. And every Kenya Indian knows ~~that~~ there is no such escape line for him or her. For the Indian opting for Kenya citizenship is ^{for keeps,} /for good or ill, with no way back. The Africans either ^{do} /~~will~~ not or will not see the difference between the European and Asian positions, so they use the comparatively more numerous European registrations and applications for citizenship as a stick with which to beat the Indians. The Indians, they say, are less committed to the land than the white settlers; the Indians are willing to exploit the land, to grow rich on it but not to ^{throw} in their lot with it.

For the Indians this situation has often assumed the dimensions of a cruel dilemma. I spent many days and many nights discussing ~~this~~ it with ~~many~~ different groups ^{of them}. At the end I was no nearer a clearcut, or even a partial, answer than at the outset. But I think I did achieve a measure of understanding of the problem, which in this case means a measure of understanding of a ^{set of} states of mind. At present, I think, the ~~main~~ Indian problem in Kenya is a ^{collection} problem of states of mind. First, because most pronounced, there is the Indian state of mind. How this is sorted out and settled can shape the fate of the Indian communities in Kenya and perhaps East Africa as a whole.

To get to East Africa from the Caribbean it is still necessary to go by way of London; also, the High Commission offices of the places I planned to visit were in London so I had to apply to London for travel and visitor's permits ~~and the like~~; in addition many friends I had not seen in a decade and more were in London. So I spent a few days in London.

One of the people I was most anxious to see was an old friend whom I had known ~~way~~ back in the days when London was still the political centre of African, and the 'agitators' were more effective there than in their own particular countries; ^{the days} and when Seretse Khama and the Kabaka of Buganda were in exile there. In the London of those days we went to parties, restaurants and nightclubs with the men who are ^{the} now/shapers and shakers of their African world. This particular friend, ^{an} Ismaili or Kheja Moslem from Kenya, had been in touch with and had introduced me to most of the outstanding young students and political figures in the making from East Africa. He was, at the time, the only East African Indian I knew who believed that political power should be transferred to African hands; he believed too that there should be social and cultural integration between all the people of East Africa and he played out these beliefs in his personal relations. He had more African than Indian and European friends; he shared digs with some, went on holidays with them, chased the same girls, whatever their race or colour. And because he came from a relatively wealthy family whatever he had was always available to his African friends. His views and his conduct had inevitably made him a 'dangerous coolie' to settler groups and suspect among his own Indian people.

When the political change came he went home. Now he was back in Britain. At our first meeting it was clear that something had gone seriously wrong. He was bitterly disappointed at the way things had

developed; freedom and African power had not worked out as he had hoped they would. I was disturbed and surprised because my friend, more than any other East African Indian, had been with the Africans, intimate with the most influential among them, close to the mainstream of African feeling. So what had gone wrong?

We did not get far on that first meeting; but he invited me to dine at his home a few days later, promising to round up one or two other friends from the old days.

On the appointed day I travelled to the distant northern London suburb by underground, and it was as though I had travelled back in time except for one new element: there was a crystalized racial hostility in my white fellow passengers in the underground train that was uniform enough for me not to miss it. In the old days there had always been pockets of prejudice, but there had also been pockets of a counter mood that had neutralised the atmosphere. Now this counter mood seemed absent.

I found the house easily enough but the name on the door nonplussed me. It was English, two-syllabled as against my friend's four-syllabled and very Indian name, but it was familiar. If you had an Indian name such as my friend's and you wished to change it so that it fitted unobtrusively into a London suburban middle-class setting then you were most likely to change it to the name I saw on the door. I rang the bell and it was my friend's house.

My friend's plans, now, were to live permanently in Britain, to be 'called to the Bar' and to practice as a Barrister in Britain. Later we were joined by another Indian from Kenya, a barrister who had been a Minister in the government immediately prior to the African takeover. This gentleman had packed up and left the country. Now, two years later, he announced that he was going home; Britain was not and never would

be home. It was a hard decision for this man to make; he had been identified with the regime before Kenyatta took over and that would take some living down for an Indian. In the new dispensation things that would be forgiven or at least overlooked if done by an African could, done by an Indian, be a very heavy burden to live with. All three of us were sufficiently intimate with the African reality to know this.

"And you can't really make a living at the bar here?" I said to the ex-politician.

"They keep the briefs among themselves." He tried to make it sound offhand ~~and~~ unimportant, as though being ~~unable~~ unable to make a living for himself and his family was a small matter.

"But they don't want us!" my friend exploded.

Even the ex-political type protested that this view was too extreme to be just. But my friend stuck to it, insisting with a sick kind of obsession such as sometimes goes with blighted young love, that there was no future for the Indians in Kenya: the Africans did not want them, and they did not want to integrate with the Africans.

When I got to Kenya I found it was not as my friend had painted it; I found ^{general} ~~no~~ ^{on the part of the Africans} hostility. They seemed ~~to me~~ much too preoccupied with their own affairs, their own problems, to devote more than passing thought to the Indians among them. There were periodic outbursts from individual African politicians against the apparent reluctance of Indians to take up citizenship; I heard gripes of how they tended to keep what they had within the Indian community. And when I raised the matter with Africans I was treated to a multitudinous ~~ix~~ catalogue of ways in which Indian behaviour rankles, from the tail-tossing snottiness of the majority of Indian women who seem to have been convinced that the only thing in every black man's mind is to rape them to the

apparent inability to become reconciled to the fact that you do not patronise people who control political power, or you do so at your own peril.

Often it was the small things that seemed to rankle most. One of the most influential African Senators told a group of Indian intellectuals in my presence: "The thing we don't like about you people, the thing we find hard, is when we invite you to our homes. When you invite us and we go we drink what you drink, we eat what you eat, even though your curries sometimes upset our stomachs afterwards; but when you come to us you've already had your tea if we offer you tea, you've already had your food if we offer you food, your children won't even accept sweets from our children. It is as though you make us the new untouchables in your minds." No-one challenged the Senator's charge.

My good friend Mr. Patel said:

"You never invited me, Senator."

"I will, Patel." Then the Senator caught my eye, read my reaction and said hurriedly: "Yes, I will, Mr. Patel."

Mr. Patel turned twinkling watery eyes on me, making it obvious to all the others, African and Indian, that he and I shared a special non-racial conspiracy of understanding. I knew he was cheating because he, too, would, at any moment slip into his private language of race should the need arise.

Another time an Arab friend pointed out two young people to me: an attractive young Indian woman in western dress and a goodlooking young African male. They were not together at the time but he told me they were lovers. It was a piece of interesting information because others had given it an importance he himself could not accept. This young couple, though both Kenyans working in the same organisation, did not

get to know each other till they met in Europe. Getting to know each other led ~~to falling in love~~ ^{the discovery of} to a community of interests and, ultimately to falling in love. In Jamaica that would have been the end of that. In Kenya, even independent Kenya, it was not. I was told by my Arab friend, and it was later confirmed by an Indian journalist, that the young lovers had to meet in secret; the girl was afraid of being seen in public with her boy; she was afraid of her family's reaction and afraid of the impact of Indian public opinion on her family if she were seen with a black boy on the streets of Nairobi.

I was told, and I saw, that Indians practised communal exclusiveness among themselves. I found remnants of the caste system of India more prevalent among the Kenya Indians than among the Indians of my native South Africa. The sub-caste groups such as the Patels and the Shahs were more clan or tribal group names than family names. And the lines were almost as rigidly drawn within the sub-groups of one caste, and between one caste and another, as between the Indians as a group and the Africans. For instance intermarriage between/castes is frowned on by the more conservative and orthodox, which means the majority. In the power scheme of things in Kenya until a scant two years ago the Africans were, in caste terms, the lowest of the low, the Untouchables.

In these terms the Europeans were the Brahmins, the aristocrats at the top of the heap; and the caste system can be seen in colour terms because the original Sanskrit word for 'caste' does mean 'colour' and the historical assumption is that the caste system owes its origin to the fair skinned Aryan people who invaded India wishing to preserve their own racial characteristics. So it was easy for Kenya Indians to see the white settlers as the Brahmins of their new homeland. Next in the four original Indian castes there are the Kshatriyas, the warrior

caste of soldiers and rulers of whom very few went to Kenya. After the warriors come the Vaisyas or Vaishyas - the merchants and traders - of whom my friend Mr. Patel's sub-group is a part, as are the Shahs, the Lahanas and the Oswals. Then there are the Sudras, the artisans and the labourers of ^{whom} the Sikhs of Kenya are such outstanding examples. The majority of Kenya's Indians are from the last two castes, the Vaishyas and the Sudras. And as it was in mother India, every Hindu belongs to the caste of his parents and nothing, no accumulation of wealth, no outstanding talent, ^{can} ~~could~~ alter his caste status. Caste, like a person's colour, ^{is} ~~was~~ something fixed and permanent; and marriage outside a person's caste ^{is} ~~was~~ forbidden or very severely discouraged.

On a personal and psychological and emotional level the question the new situation poses for the Indians of Kenya is: What do you do when the Untouchables become the rulers of the land? According to the caste system they are still Untouchable, will remain Untouchable no matter how much power they have. The rub is that ^{new rulers} they themselves do not recognise the caste system, are impatient and have no room for it. For me this seemed the really important Indian problem of Kenya in particular and of East African Indians in general. And like all ~~practical~~ problems of the heart and the spirit and traditional cultural habits, it is a hard one.

It is ironic that the vastly greater Indian population of South Africa - some half a million as against Kenya's close on two-hundred thousand ^{have} ~~are~~, because of the terrible pressures of Apartheid, effectively destroyed their own caste system.

As with tribalism the caste system makes difficult a loyalty greater than that of a man to his own particular in-group, and it is this greater loyalty that the Africans are waiting to see the Indians show.

What makes it particularly difficult for the Indians is that they are expected to make this demonstration at a time when they can see a clear diminution in their political influence ^{and} the ending of their special, racial right to certain jobs. They would like some sort of guarantee, some ~~sort of~~ assurance that the future would be allright for them. I found no Indian who had worked it out sufficiently clearly in his own mind to be able to say 'we want this or that guarantee'. On the other hand I found many intelligent and perceptive Indians who said that things would work out in the long run. Even the ex-politician barrister, when I met him later in Nairobi, spoke hopefully of the future, was glad that ^{he} had decided to come back, announced proudly to me one day that he had made his decision about citizenship and had sent in his papers. A few weeks later the government Ministry concerned made public that there was such a pile-up of applications for citizenship that there would be some delay in processing them.

So, painfully/^{slowly} in some cases, but certainly, the Indians seemed to me to become reconciled to the new scheme of things. For some the 'bone in the throat' ^{is} ~~was~~ more difficult than for others and it would take ^{swallow it and so} time to/shed the caste-bred superiorities. But in the end they will become reconciled because this is how it is and this is how it is going to be and it is their homeland. The diehards had gone already, a few more might go, but the majority would remain and help build, as they had done in the past, but on surer foundations. Certainly Kenya needs what they have to give. Perhaps, in time, and if things do not turn sour, a significant Indian contribution might be a powerful infusion of that rare Indian quality of spirituality into what is now a stridently aggressive materialism that seems to have no time for the things of the spirit.

But the factors that can make for things turning sour are there. ^{too.}

Perhaps the sizeable unemployment problem is the single most important. The hungry and the homeless and the dispossessed, ^{are liable} with very little help, to turn on the 'stranger within the gate' and attack him as the cause of all their ills. Indians are a minority of high visibility and if Kenya were hit by serious economic difficulties they would make as perfect scapegoats as did the Jews in many countries of Europe in other times. And there are very highly placed politicians, some of them with pretensions at internationalism, who are not above beating up a little anti-Indian prejudice when they think it will pay a little political dividend. I was told of one distinguished Minister who went to see his Indian friends after one such nasty anti-Indian speech and explained that he did not really mean everything he said: it was just one of those things. The trouble is that a series of 'one of those things' can implant anti-Indian prejudice very deeply in the minds of his semi-literate and not-so-sophisticated audience; and this prejudice can burst into racial ugliness in times of trouble.

But on the whole I found the situation of the Indians in Kenya a deal more hopeful than my friend in London had led me to expect. The government of Kenya has made it abundantly clear that all citizens of Kenya enjoyed all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of such citizenship. The bias in public service appointments was an administrative device to ensure that the service reflected more accurately than hitherto the true face of the nation. Beyond that I found no discrimination, publicly or privately against Indians or against whites.

Indeed, I think the whites who ^{remained} ~~had remained~~ after the change were more than a little startled at how pleasant life ~~had~~ turned out for them. There were many pointers to what they seemed to have ~~expected~~ expected. I spent an evening with a young Indian couple, a journalist and his wife

who had earned her degree at a university in India though she was born and grew up in East Africa. Their small cut stone bungalow stood on an acre of land off the Ngong Road, one of the main highways in and out of Nairobi. It was ^a beautiful little house; the kind an aging civil servant and his wife dream of moving into when retirement comes and the children have grown up and married and gone away; the kind that an elderly woman could run without servants and without too much effort. There was evidence of a once beautiful garden on which much time and love had been lavished, and which looked all the more forlorn because of that. And as with some houses, this one gave off a distinct feel, mood, atmosphere: the feel was of a place of resigned quietude. I found myself submitting to a pervasive somnolence on each of my visits.

My friends, the young Indian couple, had moved in very recently and they had not yet had a chance to impress their own distinctive youthful presence on the place. Indeed, I gathered that they only half lived there. They were very well-to-do and their real home still seemed to be the rooms they occupied in the sprawling house of the husband's parents. They had bought this little house, because it had been a fantastic bargain, at an auction sale: the young man had got it for a sum in the region of £1,500.

I had asked curiously ~~about~~ whether my friend knew anything about the former owner.

He had answered casually - a sort of verbal pause between showing of his fine new toy - "I think it was an old lady; they said she went to Australia. But you could pick up better bargains than this two years ago. I'll show you a place...."

My heart went out to the old lady, ^{wherever} ~~wherever~~ she was.

I came across many other such fantastic 'bargains' in what had

once been exclusively white suburban Nairobi. Among others, the South African writer, Ezekiel Mphahlele, currently director of a ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Congress for Cultural Freedom centre located in Nairobi, had 'picked up' for a fraction of what it is a worth, a sprawling double-story house in spacious grounds and with one of the most beautiful fireplaces I have seen away from the stately homes of England'. Another bargain finder was veteran British journalist and by now old Africa hand Tom Hopkinson, who had moved up from South Africa where he had once edited DRUM magazine and now headed the African Journalists' Training Scheme for the International Press Institute. Mr. Hopkinson told me that he felt happier, more secure, as a white man in an African-run Kenya than he had felt in South Africa with its white government. Perversely, and feeling like a reactionary, I found myself more concerned, more saddened/ ^{than I had thought possible} by the fate of the defeated settlers who had ^{either hated or feared or else felt} ~~so~~ little faith in the black countrymen that they had uprooted their lives and ~~and~~ sold up their homes at giveaway prices. ~~rather than remain in their African homes~~ Perhaps it was ^{my} ~~because I was~~ reluctant to face up to ⁴² ~~the reality~~ of prejudice: that it can, given the right breeding ground, go so deep and grow so strong that in the end its victims would ^{destroy themselves} ~~give up their homes and their material possessions~~ rather than/their prejudices. Whatever the reason, I found myself a deal more ~~concerned, more interested, more~~ compassionately involved in the fate of the white settlers. As the strutting lords of the earth I had met that other time they had engaged only my resentment, brought out only the meanest emotions in me. Now I could speculate about ^{had them as} ~~those who/lost and gone as~~ human beings whose private tragedies stemmed from one of the great ^{we humans have} ~~XXXXXX~~ and most stupid public tragedies/ever brought on ~~XXXXXX~~ ourselves.

In arithmetical terms the numbers of these private tragedies were

small compared to the 'private tragedies' the African had experienced in the engagement, ~~but about that later.~~ ~~When~~ In 1952 the most reliable population figures were those of the 1948 census. This showed a European population of 29,660. By the time the 1962 census was taken the Europeans stood at 49,000. The most reliable official estimate of the number of Europeans in the colony in 1952 was the figure of 35,000. About half of this number lived in Nairobi. True, the old days of the Happy Valley crowd had gone. The wild, wife swapping parties were over; the hard drinking had toned down considerably; Nairobi had become less of 'A place in the sun for shady people'. But not all the 'hell' had gone out of it in 1952. So, in spite of disturbing talk about secret ceremonies and oath-taking among the Kikuyu, the close on 20,000 white residents of Nairobi seemed to me to be having a pretty good time that year.

Life had been rather different for the farming half of the settler population: harsher, more of a gamble, greater personal and material insecurity and, of course, lonelier. But even there the compensations were great, greater than ^{most} ~~any~~ farmer enjoyed back in Britain. The land was cool and beautiful and the man with a mind to do so could carve out for himself an empire of a thousand, two thousand, three thousand acres. He was free from the fiddling form-filling associated with farming in Britain, free too of the terrible burden of British taxation, and he had available to him an ^{inexhaustible} ~~and~~ supply of cheap labour. Where he paid ^{in cash} for his labour wages ranged from between thirty-five shillings to fifty shillings per month. More often he allowed landless Africans to squat and cultivate small strips of land on condition that they work on his farm. Some of these squatters' 'contracts' gave the farmer the right to demand not only the labour of

the African male squatter but of his wife and children as well. And of course, if the African squatter, or his family, received as much as a penny from the farmer it was out of the goodness of the farmer's heart.

As long ago as the late 1930s the practice of using squatter labour - which was in fact/^{a form of} peonage - had become such an integral part of Kenya farming that 20% of all settler farms on the White Highlands were occupied by African squatters.

A logical by-product of this was/^{to give the settler with his} ~~the strength of his~~ sprawling farm a vested interest in a large landless black peasantry. And so it was that with ~~with~~ vast stretches of the White Highlands not fully used the settlers continued to press for more land to be set aside for exclusive European use. By the time of my first visit in 1952 the Colonial Government had 'alienated' for European settlement a total ~~of 7,372,880~~ of 7,372,880 acres. 5% of this was described as uncultivable and 207,987 as not yet allocated. This left a balance of cultivable and allocated land ~~of~~ of seven million acres. And in 1952 there were only about 3,000 Europeans who actually farmed in the White Highlands. This gives us an average land holding of 2,500 acres per settler farmer. But of the ^{more than} seven million acres ~~plus~~ only a little in excess of one million acres were actually under crop, the rest, over six million acres, were officially described as grazing. And since stock farming represented only 12.9% of agricultural production in the White Highlands at the time the assumption must be that the major portion of six million acres set aside for 'grazing' were just not utilised.

It was/^{after} ~~when I discovered~~ these facts ~~at that time~~ that I broadcast early in ~~1952~~ August of 1952, just under two months before the outbreak of the Mau Mau troubles, a warning that those troubles were in

in fact about to erupt. ~~xxxxxxx~~ This particular broadcast called down the wrath of the powerful settler lobby in London on my head!

In 1965, I found that about 2,000 white settlers had been bought out by the Kenya Government with money provided by the British Government and something in excess of another 1,000 were just waiting for the availability of more money to sell out too. The government has set up a Central Land Board whose business it is to buy out these settler lands. In the year 1963/64 this Board bought up 295 farms comprising a total acreage of 307,274 acres for £3,521,968 which is the equivalent of £11.46 per acre. Currently negotiations are going on in London between the British and Kenya governments over a loan to finance the buying out of the remaining settlers who want to leave. Some people, parliamentary backbenchers among them, feel strongly that the prices paid to the settlers are excessive. If it is recalled that the settlers originally got the farms for as little as one penny per acre these charges assume some validity. So far, because of the location of the bought out farms the landless among the Kikuyu have benefitted most, which has caused a measure of resentment among other land-hungry tribes.

Two stories dramatised for me the often contradictory attitudes towards the whites as well as the contradictory position of some of those whites in the country. Both stories came out of matters raised in parliament. In the first there ~~was~~ were questions about a white settler who had sold his farm to the government at a handsome figure and who had then stayed on at the farm as an 'adviser', living in the same house and behaving precisely as he had done when he had been owner of the house. This, I was told by a Senator, was not an isolated case; there were others like it. I think the settlers who can enter into arrangements of this type will not have to be persuaded not to

Land!

leave the country. Uhuru, in their cases, is very profitable business. *Ironically, they are employed in large numbers in the department that settles Africans on the land!*

The kernel of the second story was a motion ~~xxx~~ that came before parliament on the 30th July, 1965 and that was resumed on the 17th September, 1965. The motion read:

That this House urges the Government as a positive measure against the Apartheid Policy, to introduce an amendment of the Constitution which will allow confiscation of all immovable assets in Kenya belonging to nationals of the Republic of South Africa.

One backbencher speaking to the motion said there were scores of refugees from South Africa in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and other territories. These were people in need, black South African victims of Apartheid, and the ends of justice would be served if the proceeds from the confiscated property were used to aid these people. Others talked about the Kenyan African tax payer being forced to subsidise racialisists whose sole purpose was to further the evil doctrine of Apartheid. Another recited the details of how a white South African hotelier operating in the country had refused service to Kenyatta on the eve of his becoming Prime Minister of the country. This particular gentleman had now left the country and gone back to the South Africa. But he still had his holdings in Kenya from which money was being remitted to him, thus financing, the speaker insisted, the Apartheid policy.

The Attorney-General, the government spokesman, son of a chief and British trained Barrister, said the government could not behave like thugs or thieves by taking away people's property. If there were instances of white South Africans in Kenya perpetuating racialism and the ideas of Apartheid members were to bring it to the attention of the government and action would be taken against such people. For this there was no need to change the constitution.

The backbenchers were not happy and some used very strong language

to show their displeasure.

Oddly enough - and this was brought to my notice by a white South African enemy of Apartheid passing through Nairobi at the time - neither the government spokesman nor the supporters of the motion seemed to know that in South Africa itself no African, native-born or outsider, could own ^{freehold} property.

So, all in all, things had not turned out as badly as they might have for the settlers. Of course it was nothing like the 'good old days', but then they are gone forever.

The young civil servant who extended my visitors' permit summed it up quietly for me. "Let me be honest with you: I would have fought against it ('it' being the change) five years ago, just as the other Europeans did. I was as strongly against it as they were. Now I must admit that it is right; the best thing that could have happened. I think we'll be allright now. I think you'll find that things are going to work."

We talked on easily, without restraint or inhibition. In the other corner of the little office was an African who shared the room with the young white man. He was immersed in his work; but every now and then he got so interested in our talk that he paused and looked up to listen. A private little smile tugged at the corners of his mouth. He was watchful, relaxed, completely at ease. I wondered whether these two, the black Kenyan and the white, ^{working together in the same} ~~could in this room, that they~~ had ~~shared talk about these things that had to be brought out~~ reached the point where they could really talk to each other about those things of the mind that ^{have} ~~had~~ to be brought out into the open before it would really be 'allright now'.

I left them feeling they had not yet reached that point, largely because ~~the~~ young African had not joined our conversation much as I had tried to obliquely tease him out of his silence. But they were working in the same room and that was quite a beginning.

When I left the city to look at the countryside, it was like going back in time. There were changes, of course; a new power pylon here, a new cluster of huts there, what had been forest then was now cleared and cultivated land in one spot; but these were largely superficial, like a mild rash on a familiar face. In the main it was as it had been when I had last seen it : the great difference was that the White Highlands, the most fertile land in all the country, ~~WERE~~ ^{were} no longer 'reserved for Europeans only', no longer 'White'.

You have to see this land, to see its beauty and its life-giving richness; you have to stand on a crest and watch the rolling plains sweep away to the misty distances of space; you have to breathe in the sweet fragrant highland air to begin to understand why the settlers fought so savagely to hold on to this land and why a single, poorly equipped African tribe could take on the settlers and the might of British arms, fight them to a standstill in one of the most incredible wars Africa has ever known, and win the land. The outbreak known as the Mau Mau, the war in which the Kikuyu lost ten thousand dead and a hundred thousand were rendered homeless and made political prisoners, was a war fought over possession of 13,000 square miles of this land; ~~and~~ for whoever controlled this most pleasant and best watered piece of Kenya, controlled all of it. This was the heart of it. And it was logical that the Kikuyu should be the tribe to make a fight for it. It had all been their land. As far as they were concerned this was not a matter of dispute. They had been found on this land and they had been dispossessed of it, crowded into a small corner of it to such an extent that by 1952 population density in the then Kikuyu reserve was in excess of 600 persons to the square mile: this would not be bad in an industrialised area, in a peasant agricultural area it was

impossible. There were two alternatives: give in and submit to being moved from this beautiful land to the semi-desert area the government had already marked out in the arid north and named Yatta B1 and Yatta B2 (to which the Kikuyu leaders had themselves taken me in 1952), or else ~~or~~ fight. If the Kikuyu had given in the chances are that Kenya would have become like South Africa - it was well on the way there in 1952 - and the history of East and Central Africa would have been different from what it is today. The Kikuyu decided to fight. The Emergency - as the colonial government called the war - began on the 20th October 1952 and lasted until January of 1960.

In purely military terms it was a small operation fought out in one of the smallest Provinces of the country (the Provinces have now been renamed Regions). ^(E) - Kikuyu country & the ~~back~~ ^{back} of the W. Highlands. The Central Province/occupied a mere 5,000-odd square miles of a land area of 225,000 square miles. The war for Kenya was fought out in this comparatively small area between the one and a half million Kikuyu tribesmen and their wives and children (with active assistance from their close tribal cousins the Embu and Meru of the neighbouring Eastern Province) on the one hand and the white settlers ^{the} back by/British military on the other. However much other tribes in other parts of the country may have sympathised - and the more than a million strong Luo tribe certainly did more than just sympathise - the Kikuyu fought the war. People who lived in the other parts of the country, especially the people of the large Coastal Region, were as remote from the ~~xxxxxxx~~ bloody goings-on in Nairobi and the Central Region as those of us who/read about them from afar.

For me one of the/~~most~~ ^{really} striking things about the Mau Mau was its corporateness. Within a month of the declaration of the Emergency all the known political leaders of the ~~African~~ Kikuyu were locked up, not only the people at the top, those at the district and village level too.

And yet the leaderless Kikuyu maintained ~~and~~^a discipline and displayed a political sophistication under the kind of pressure ~~that~~^{few of the}/so-called more advanced nations had ~~not~~ been able to withstand.

The British did not only fight the Kikuyu militarily, they assaulted them with all the weapons of modern psychology. They used the techniques of 'brainwashing' on a massive scale - here of course, since ~~we~~^{we} were using these methods we used safe words such as 'rehabilitation' to describe them, much as the Chinese used 'self-cultivation' to describe their brainwashing methods. I had been told and I had read much of Kikuyu atrocities. Now, moving through the beautiful country, I ~~had~~ heard from some of the victims themselves of some of the atrocities perpetrated on the Kikuyu.

It was hard to make people remember and talk, and they certainly would not have done so had I not been with some ^{one}/wellknown and ^{trusted}/~~influential~~ ~~friends~~. Even then it required great effort to talk; and when they did they did so quickly and briefly, anxious to get it over with and go on to more pleasant things. There is not much sense in setting down ~~some~~ ~~of~~ the ugly details ~~here~~ for their shock impact. Straight physical brutality - and there was enough of it - was the smallest in a world ~~of~~ ugly experiences: some of the refinements used in the assaults on the mind and of the person's sense of dignity were really shocking. After hearing the experiences of a few people, I too found myself not wanting to know any more. It made me understand the general Kikuyu ^{the details} ^{the day-t-day events of} desire to forget, to behave as though ^{the} years between 1952 and 1960 were a nightmare rather than the stuff of the world of waking men.

One young man whom I had met as a student of one of Kenyatta's more than 200 Kikuyu Independent Schools when I was there in 1952, met me in the bar of a once-exclusively white country club. He was a leading Senator now. Over beer he remembered, glossing quickly over the details,

how he had grown to manhood, first in the forests, then in the detention camps. When I pressed him for details he turned eyes suddenly gone bloodshot on me: "We don't want to remember too much; if we remember everything we will want to go out and start killing."

And when the old man behind the bar said "It is best to forget." I abandoned ~~my~~ my probing.

But the knowledge of common suffering, and of victory won, has given the mass of the Kikuyu a pride and a confidence that is something beautiful to behold; and it is something that is not limited. From the nameless Kikuyu porter who carried my cases, to the taxi-driver who showed me the town, to the little jack-of-all-works named Peter at my first, very pukka/^{British}gone-to-seed hotel, to the jovial waiter Kariuki who served my meals under Mr. Patel's supervision and tiny forty-one-year old Bothé (father of five and whose body still bears the marks of childhood rickets) who was my 'room servant', to the doctors, civil servants, parliamentarians, there was this pride and confidence. ~~In the main there was nothing cocky about it~~ I found it even among the Kikuyu 'Town Girls' - the local name for the prostitutes who work the budding night clubs of Nairobi. The girls who had been in the forest, or who had been couriers, were a breed apart from the others, the Somalis and the girls from the coast: they were more serious, more dignified, more reserved. I suspect they traded more than a little on the fact that they had been in the battle. But in the main there was nothing cocky about this pride and confidence.

Such cockiness and arrogance as I found came largely from the new class of Africans who were emerging as the replacements of the former ^{white} top echelon/civil servants, and, inevitably, I found a fair amount of drunk-with-power pomposity in a few ^{top politicians} civil servants. But there was surprisingly little of this, much less ^{than} ~~that~~ could reasonably be expected from men relatively new to the glories of Political Power.

The Kikuyu, then, is the tribe that fought and won the war for Kenya's independence. Inevitably, the opening up of the former White Highlands will benefit the Kikuyu of the best of this land which was traditionally Kikuyu country. Inevitably again It is the liberator-tribe. This is an accepted fact for all the more than forty tribes of Kenya. Not everyone is happy with this fact. Again and again some bright and gifted person who was not Kikuyu made it clear to me his feeling that, all else being equal, the distinct advantages being Kikuyu conferred distinct advantages in the competition for preferment in business or the public service. But however unhappy, I encountered no one who either questioned/ or openly challenged directly the present Kikuyu hegemony. Periodically, however, signs of latent discontentment spilled over. When I was there the principal Luo tribal/association (it is not called a political party because/ Kenya is a one-party state and the only political party in the country is the governing Kenya African National Union) held a much publicised meeting in Nairobi. The Luo Ministers in a Kikuyu dominated government were quick to dissociate themselves from any possible tribal attitudes that might come out the meeting. Mr. Tom Mboya, one of the ablest and most experienced of Kenya's politicians, and himself a Luo, was the first to dissociate himself from the upcoming meeting and to denounce tribalism. It was both easy and wise for Mr. Mboya to take this stance. His parliamentary seat is Central Nairobi with a mixed Indian and multi-tribal African electorate. Unlike the other two, Vice President Oginga Odinga and Information Minister Achieng Oneko, he has no tribal base to fall back on. The source of Mr. Odinga's power and influence in the Government and the country, and to a lesser extent Mr. Oneko's, is the tough, tightly-knit brainy Luo tribe that had to fight all comers to carve for itself a home on the shores of Lake Victoria in the distant

days of the great African migrations when they came to Kenya from the Sudan by way of the Nile Valley. Today they are the second largest tribe in Kenya - 1,148,000 to the Kikuyu's 1,642,000. There are two other tribes - the Kamba numbering close on a million and the Abaluhya numbering a million and eighty-thousand - who could have become the Kikuyu's political partners. The Luo did because they are most like the Kikuyu in certain very important ~~basic~~ respects: they are as toughminded as the Kikuyu, as ~~brave~~ intelligent, as politically ambitious, as sophisticated, as cohesive. I think they are the only other Kenya tribe who would have performed as well against the settlers as ^{did} the Kikuyu ~~did~~. I think it is recognition of this - one strong man recognising another - that has led to the Luo-Kikuyu political partnership.

I am not suggesting that this is a relationship thought out, or worked out in tribal terms. But however non-tribal the ideas of the leaders might ~~be~~, ^{be,} ~~be,~~ this is how it has worked out, ^{this is how it is.} However much the leaders may wish to function only as nationalists, at the national level the needs and pressures from those behind them often compel actions and attitudes that are seen in tribal terms. When one prominent member of Parliament told the press club in Nairobi in September that there could be no real unity in the country unless there was an end to the favouritism that makes a man give a job to a fellow tribesman, he was saying in public what was more often, and more generally said in private.

It seemed to me that the government tried very hard not to act tribally. But if you are the M.P. for a Kikuyu constituency, and you are the Minister who controls the spending of money or the building of houses and schools, the pressures of your electorate and your other friends who represent Kikuyu constituencies and who speak the same

language and who have been through the same struggle, all this will make it very difficult for you to deny your own when there is not enough to ^{be} round for everyone. There is not enough land to go round for every one, there are not enough jobs ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ not enough homes, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ schools. Sharing out what there is in such a way as to avoid charges of tribal discrimination becomes a difficult and delicate problem. The temptation, often, is simply to do the best you can: to take care of your own kind, those on whom you depend for power. ~~Some~~ of this has come into play.

It seemed to me the greatest danger for the future would be if the relatively modest economic expectations of the mass of the people were to be unfulfilled to the point where they ~~abandoned~~ hope.

At present, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ they are still living in the afterglow of the victory that brought them freedom. Wages are still abysmally low. Male ^{adult} agricultural workers and they are still the majority of workers, earn between £3 and £3.10. 0. per month, with ~~out~~ housing. The employer may deduct ~~£~~ not more than 5/- a month for every half acre of land he allows the worker to cultivate for his own use: female workers get between £2 and £2.6.6.; males under eighteen get between £1.16. 0. and £2.2. 0. and females between £1. 4. 0. and £1. 8. 0. ~~per month~~ All these are monthly wages which include housing of some kind, often the most primitive imaginable. But low as it is, it is a dramatic improvement on the recent past. Monthly wages for workers in town often average two or three times those of agricultural workers, with £10 a month as a sort of crude norm for the majority of ^{casual} ~~casual~~ workers. Of course in town there is no house with the job, however primitive; rents are higher than in the country and food costs more.

One day as I ^{sat in the dining room} ~~was preparing to set out on~~ my long safari that would cover the best part of 2,000 miles of East Africa, one of the waiters

paused at my table to see if I wanted anything. On his tray were half a dozen empties of a very popular local beer and as many glasses out of which spirits had been drunk. In addition there was a 100 shilling note, a little damp and stained by the spilled liquor.

"Some party," I said. It was very early evening, not yet five.

"Government people," he said. Then he looked at the damp note. "One man buying and I have to work a month to make this money."

I discovered later that he had exaggerated somewhat. He earned 180/- a month. But ^{his} the point was valid. They were not judging their present conditions only by bleak memories of the recent past. They were also using the standards of living of their more affluent brothers. And these are the dangerous yardsticks.