

LABOUR AND OTHER QUESTIONS  
IN SOUTH AFRICA

# Labour and Other + + Questions in South Africa

BEING MAINLY CONSIDERATIONS ON  
THE RATIONAL AND PROFITABLE  
TREATMENT OF THE COLOURED  
RACES LIVING THERE + + +

By "INDICUS"



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## (INTRODUCTION



THE tour in South Africa, of which some account is given in the following notes, was undertaken for purely commercial reasons by a gentleman who has large business interests in India. The author, having lived in India for many years, is naturally interested in the welfare of the people of that country, for whom he has much sympathy. He was greatly astonished at the extent to which the Indians have contributed to the prosperity and well-being of South Africa. Nothing that he had seen or heard had given him any idea that such was the case, and many, if not most, Englishmen are no doubt as ill-informed as he was on the subject. He was not less surprised to notice the treatment meted out to Indians and other coloured races in the South African colonies—a treatment which, in his opinion, is as impolitic as it is unjust.) This aspect of South African policy being very little noticed in the home press, and its bearing on the future of the colonies being consequently insufficiently appreciated, it occurred to the author that the publication of his notes might be useful in bringing to light the disabilities under which coloured races generally—the educated Hindu in common with the Kaffir—suffer in the South African dominions of His Majesty. The importance of the question has lately, moreover, been greatly increased by the proposal to introduce Asiatic labour on a large scale into the Transvaal. These considerations are the author's excuse for publishing this book.

The conclusions arrived at by the author are not in accord with the views constantly enunciated by a large portion of the London press. These latter are based too much on information that is often wanting in accuracy, and in some cases the writer believes designedly misleading. The pages following will be mainly a record of facts observed by the author, and of conversations with persons of diverse races and various political views ; the sources of information being indicated if not obvious from the context. The opinions given necessarily differ according to the quarter from which they emanated and the experience of the persons who gave them. The inferences deduced will also be found to vary somewhat from time to time as the writer saw new places and made new friends. But though in commenting on facts and conversations some variations in the views expressed occur, the conclusions are in the main the same, and are summarised at the end of the book. The author lost no opportunity of obtaining and recording the opinions of any one who appeared to have real opportunities of gauging the feelings of the inhabitants, white or black, or who had such experience of the country as enabled him to speak with any semblance of authority on past events, or to indicate the best policy for the future.

It is perhaps necessary to say that sympathy for the speaker or appreciation of his personal qualities, however strongly expressed, must not be taken to denote agreement with the opinions enunciated, and that such agreement where stated was, as before mentioned, liable to qualification as further experience was gained. (The writer, it may be observed, has no financial interests of any kind in South Africa. The tour extended from early in December, 1902, to the end of March, 1903, and the record commences on board ship between Bombay and Aden.)

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