

# ✕ Get the Natives!

BY S. G. RICH.

Let us face the *facts*. The bulk of unskilled labour in South Africa is done by natives—"kafirs," "niggers." A Labour Movement that does not make it a policy to organize and educate the unskilled, is by that fact a movement of only part of labour, and is sure to sacrifice the rest. Furthermore, without the unskilled, whose life is by that fact the most thoroughly proletarian of any, cannot be revolutionary. It has foregone the motive-power of revolution.

We must at all costs, whether to race-pride or to other forms of practical egotism, avoid the mistakes of old line Trade Unionism. We must not, like the Miners' Association or the carpenters in Durban, try to "keep the kaffir in his place."

First of all, capitalism won't let us. Capitalism trains natives as helpers, or puts them into vocational schools in a few cases. Wages that are rank scabbery look BIG, BIG, BIG, to the natives, whose wants are few. We all know that the natives do not realize that in accepting them they are hurting both their white fellow-workers and themselves.

We cannot prevent black competition in perhaps all trades or industries: capitalism won't let us. Is it of any advantage for us to try to do so?

The natives are ready for the message of Industrial Socialism. Free access to land and the plenty of tribal communism are very recent and dear memories to them. Solidarity they have, far beyond any white workers in Africa. Capitalism presses hard on them, what with land laws, taxes, Russianized or Prussianized pass laws, "segregation"—really expropriation, and the like. They need only a "live issue" to focus their attention on the facts.

Capitalism is educating the natives into industrial life. It is using them to play against high wages for white labour.

Our remedy lies in the stand proposed in this paper by L.H. Greene of Maritzburg: "Equal Pay for Equal Work, Black or White." The missionaries are teaching the natives how to work. Let us take the Bible phrase: "The labourer is worthy of his hire," and finish their work. Let us turn to the natives and make them insist on the same pay as Europeans for the same work.

Only this and Industrial Socialism together can bring into the movement of Labour the bulk of African labour—the natives. Anything less is too weak. The Zulus, Xozas, Basutos, Shangaans, and the rest need this stirring slogan to awaken them to their actual interests:

**EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK—**

**BLACK AND WHITE ALIKE.**