

2619x DD

DL. 114  
1150

LABOUR INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

147



Exp 30  
13549  
61-E104

REPORT  
ON  
LABOUR CONDITIONS IN  
THE COTTON GINNING  
AND BALING INDUSTRY

BY  
B. P. ADARKAR

PRINTED BY THE MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS SIMLA

Price : Re. 1-8-0 or 2s. 3d.

62

A 119

# CONTENTS

	Page.
Preface .. .. .	(iii)—(v)
Acknowledgements .. .. .	(vi)
<b>CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTION</b> .. .. .	<b>1</b>
<i>conomic Background. Location of the Industry. The Main Seasons. Pooling Agree-     ments</i> .. .. .	1—2
<i>Processes of Production and Types of Workers : Pressing</i> .. .. .	2—3
<i>The Nature of Employment</i> .. .. .	3—4
<i>ombination of Cotton Ginning with other Industries</i> .. .. .	4
<i>Accidents and Occupational Diseases</i> .. .. .	4—5
<i>The Working of Labour Acts</i> .. .. .	5—6
<b>CHAPTER II.—C. P. AND BERAR AND KHANDESH</b> .. .. .	<b>6—19</b>
<i>mployment.—Nature of Employment. Length of service. Classification of     workers as Permanent and Temporary. Labour Turnover and Absenteeism.     Standing Orders. Recruitment. Miscellaneous</i> .. .. .	6—11
<i>ages and Earnings.—Dearness Allowance and Bonus. Overtime, etc.</i> .. .. .	11—16
<i>Holidays</i> .. .. .	16
<i>orking Conditions.—Shifts and Hours of Work. Ventilation. Shelters</i> .. .. .	16—17
<i>elfare Activities.—Medical Aid. Grain-Shop etc.</i> .. .. .	17
<i>Housing</i> .. .. .	18
<i>he working of Labour Acts</i> .. .. .	18
<i>idents and Diseases</i> .. .. .	18
<i>ooling System</i> .. .. .	19
<i>Miscellaneous</i> .. .. .	19
<b>CHAPTER III.—BOMBAY—Gujerat</b> .. .. .	<b>19—24</b>
<i>mployment.—Length of Service. Classification of Workers as Permanent and     Temporary. Miscellaneous</i> .. .. .	20—21
<i>ages and Earnings</i> .. .. .	21—23
<i>orking Conditions and Welfare Activities</i> .. .. .	23
<i>Housing</i> .. .. .	23
<i>Miscellaneous</i> .. .. .	23—24
<b>CHAPTER IV.—BOMBAY—Hubli</b> .. .. .	<b>24—27</b>
<i>Employment.—Length of Service. Classification of Workers. Recruitment..</i> .. .. .	24—25
<i>ages and Earnings</i> .. .. .	25—26
<i>Working Conditions and Welfare Activities</i> .. .. .	26
<i>Housing</i> .. .. .	27
<i>Miscellaneous</i> .. .. .	27
<b>CHAPTER V.—MADRAS—Trirupur</b> .. .. .	<b>27—37</b>
<i>mployment</i> .. .. .	29—30
<i>ages and Earnings.—Pressing. Wages of Skilled Workers. Bonuses and Allow-     ances. Miscellaneous</i> .. .. .	30—33
<i>orking Conditions</i> .. .. .	33—34
<i>elfare Activities</i> .. .. .	34
<i>Housing</i> .. .. .	34—35
<i>ile Unions and Strikes</i> .. .. .	35
<i>orking of Labour Acts</i> .. .. .	35
<i>ebtedness</i> .. .. .	35—36
<i>iscellaneous.—Pensions and Gratuities. Overhauling. Holidays with Pay</i> .. .. .	36—37
of L	

6/62

19

	Page.
<b>CHAPTER VI.—SIND—Mirpur Khas</b> .. .. .	37—46
<i>Employment.</i> —Length of Service. Classification of Workers. Recruitment. Labour Turnover and Absenteeism. Promotion, Holidays with Pay, etc. .. .. .	37—39
<i>Wages and Earnings.</i> —Dearness Allowances and Bonuses. Miscellaneous .. .. .	39—41
<i>Working Conditions and Welfare Activities.</i> —Shifts and Hours of Work. Accidents, etc. Latrines, Urinals and Drinking Water. Medical Facilities .. .. .	41—42
<i>Housing Accommodation.</i> —Kuchcha Rooms. Thatched Huttings .. .. .	43—44
<i>Enforcement of Labour Laws.</i> —Workmen's Compensation Act. Inadequacy of the Inspectorate .. .. .	44—46
<i>Migration</i> .. .. .	46
<b>CHAPTER VII.—PUNJAB—Amritsar</b> .. .. .	46—53
<i>Employment.</i> —Length of Service, etc. Labour Turnover and Absenteeism. Recruitment .. .. .	46—48
<i>Wages and Earnings.</i> —Dearness Allowance. Overtime .. .. .	48—50
<i>Working Conditions.</i> —Shifts and Hours of Work. Ventilation and Lighting. Line-shaft. Opener-room. Ginning-room. Shelter .. .. .	50—51
<i>Welfare Activities.</i> —Sanitary Arrangements .. .. .	51—52
<i>Housing.</i> —Types of houses. Sanitation and water supply .. .. .	52
<i>Trade Unions &amp; Strikes</i> .. .. .	52
<i>Working of the Labour Acts.</i> —Occupational Diseases and Accidents .. .. .	53
<b>CHAPTER VIII.—SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</b> .. .. .	53—56
<b>APPENDIX I.—A Note on Pooling Agreements</b> .. .. .	57—58
<b>APPENDIX II.—Rates of Wages paid in the Mirpurkhas Cotton Ginning and Baling Factories</b> .. .. .	5
<b>APPENDIX III.—A Note on Two Factories in Baroda.</b> —Employment. Wages and Earnings. Working Conditions. Welfare Activities. Housing. Miscellaneous .. .. .	60—63
<b>APPENDIX IV.—A Glossary of Indian Terms</b> .. .. .	63—64

6162



## PREFACE.

The Tripartite Labour Conference at its meeting in September 1943 recommended the setting up of a machinery to investigate questions of wages and earnings, employment and housing, and social conditions generally, with a view to provide adequate materials on which to plan a policy of social security for labour. In pursuance of that resolution, the Labour Investigation Committee was appointed by the Government of India by Resolution No. L 4012, dated the 12th February 1944 to carry out the investigations. The Committee was instructed to extend its investigations generally to all industrial and semi-industrial labour covered by the Royal Commission on Labour in their Report, with the addition of certain other categories. The Committee was asked by the Government of India to decide in each case the most suitable manner of conducting the enquiry. The Government, however, considered that the method of enquiry should not merely consist of sending out questionnaires to Government agencies and Employers' and Workers' Associations, but should also comprise specific enquiries in individual concerns based on representative sampling.

2. In India, in spite of the quite comprehensive enquiries made by the Royal Commission on Labour and a few Committees appointed by the Provincial Governments, there have remained large lacunae in regard to information on labour conditions in several industries. In particular, broadly speaking, the method of direct enquiry on the spot has not been adopted on a sufficiently wide scale so as to cover the entire industrial structure. Moreover, certain industries, like cotton textiles and coal mining, have received greater attention than others, and even as regards these industries, comprehensive information on an all-India basis has not been available. With a view to making up this deficiency as well as to bringing the available information up to date, the Committee decided that *ad hoc* surveys should be carried out in various industries so as to secure a complete picture of labour conditions prevailing in each. The following industries were selected for the purpose :—

A. *Mining.* (1) Coal. (2) Manganese. (3) Gold. (4) Mica. (5) Iron Ore. (6) Salt.

B. *Plantations.* (7) Tea. (8) Coffee. (9) Rubber.

C. *Factory industry.* (10) Cotton. (11) Jute. (12) Silk. (13) Woollen. (14) Mineral Oil. (15) Dockyard. (16) Engineering. (17) Cement. (18) Matches. (19) Paper. (20) Carpet weaving. (21) Coir matting. (22) Tanneries and Leather Goods Manufacture. (23) Potteries. (24) Printing Presses. (25) Glass. (26) Chemical and Pharmaceutical works. (27) Shellac. (28) Bidi-making, cigar and cigarette. (29) Mica Splitting. (30) Sugar. (31) Cotton Ginning and Baling. (32) Rice Mills.

D. *Transport.* (33) Transport Services (Tramways and Buses). (34) Non-gazetted Railway Staff.

E. *Other types of labour.* (35) Port Labour. (36) Municipal Labour. (37) Central P.W.D. (38) Rickshaw Pullers.

3. The main conception on which the *ad hoc* surveys have been based is that information should be collected on the spot by direct enquiry conducted with the help of the Committee's own staff and that this information should, as far as possible, conform to the sampling methods widely adopted in such work. Owing to great variations in the character of the different industries, however, there could not be a complete uniformity in regard to the methods which had to be adopted to suit the peculiarities of particular industries and centres. For instance, while there are only a few centres and units in certain industries such as potteries, mineral oil, gold, etc., in other industries, such as

textiles, engineering, transport services plantations, tanneries, bidi-making, etc., a very large number of centres and units in different provinces (and even States) had to be covered. Moreover, some of the industries are modern industries of the large-scale type, wherein factory legislation applies more or less entirely, while others are indigenous handicrafts or small-scale industries, where factory legislation is either inapplicable or partially applicable. Thus, information has not been uniformly available in advance as regards the size, location and ownership of industrial units, such as is necessary before decisions for sampling are taken. Consequently, the technique of representative sampling had to be modified and supplemented so as to obtain whatever information of a reliable character was available. As far as possible, however, in all industries important centres were covered. In each of these centres units were chosen on a sample basis, but it was possible in a few centres to cover all units. The final lists of centres of survey and individual establishments were made out in the light of the impressions gathered during the course of the preliminary tour and in consultation with local authorities. The guiding principle in the selection of centres of survey was to make the survey regionally representative so as to discover differences in the conditions of labour in the same industry in different parts of the country. The selection of individual concerns was generally based on considerations in order of importance, of (a) size, (b) ownership (private or limited) and (c) whether subject to statutory regulation or not. In this connection, it may be stated that the Committee were greatly handicapped in sampling the units owing to the lack of complete information regarding location and number of units in the selected industries. Unfortunately there are no all-India employers' organisations in some of the organised industries, nor are the statistics maintained by the Central and Provincial Governments at all complete. Moreover, in certain unorganised industries, such as shellac, carpet-weaving, bidi-making, etc., owing to their very nature, no such information could have been readily available in advance. In certain cases, therefore, owing to these difficulties as well as transport difficulties and other exigencies, the sampling could not be fully adhered to. Nevertheless, the Committee have been anxious to gather in the maximum possible information in the limited time at their disposal and with a view to this, they have cast their net as wide as possible. The main instruments of the *ad hoc* survey were the Questionnaires. These were of two kinds :—(a) the main *ad hoc* survey questionnaire on points likely to be common to all the industries surveyed, and (b) supplementary and special questionnaires in respect of certain industries, such as plantations, mines, railways, rickshaw pullers, port labour, municipal labour, glass, shellac, mica, etc. The main questionnaire was accompanied by a tabular form for entering wage data and this was used wherever possible. In the case of certain surveys, however, such as salt, paper, cotton, woollen and jute textiles, dockyards, silk, cement and gold mining, it was possible to conduct a wage survey on a sample basis. The chief method of collection of data was by personal investigation of industrial establishments, examination of their records and contact with labour in factories and homes. The information thus collected was supplemented and checked with replies to the Questionnaires received.

4. For the purpose of conducting enquiries, a sufficiently large field staff, consisting of 16 Supervisors and 45 Investigators, was appointed. Before the commencement of field work, all the Supervisors (with the exception of those working in Bengal) were called to the Committee's headquarters at Simla and given detailed instructions on the technique and scope of the enquiries to be conducted by them, the manner in which they were to submit their data, and the centres and units which they were to investigate. In addition, both Supervisors and Investigators were provided with written instructions regarding the

use of questionnaires, sampling of concerns (where this could not be done in advance), filling of the wage forms, etc. In particular, they were asked not only to collect information on the spot but also to draw upon every other possible source of information. In doing so, they were required to distribute copies of the questionnaires in the centres assigned to them not only amongst the sampled units but also amongst Employers' and Workers' associations in the industry and such other associations and individuals as were likely to be interested in the subject. They were also asked to get into touch with officials of Central and Provincial Governments connected with labour and obtain such facilities as might be necessary in doing their work.

5. As far as the field work in Bengal was concerned it was done by the staff of the Committee under the guidance and supervision of the Labour Commissioner, Bengal, and his subordinate officers. Members, however, paid visits to selected centres and units in Bengal to obtain first-hand knowledge of local labour conditions.

6. The Committee's survey covered all Provinces with the exception of the North West Frontier Province where none of the industries selected for survey was sufficiently important. It extended to many of the Indian States also, such as Kashmir, Patiala, Gwalior, Baroda, Mysore, Sandur, Travancore, Cochin, Bundi, Indore and some of the States of the Eastern States Agency. No survey was undertaken in the Hyderabad State as that State preferred to appoint its own Labour Investigation Committee, with terms of reference identical to those of this Committee, for enquiry into local labour conditions.

7. In dealing with the *ad hoc* survey work, several courses were open to the Committee :—(i) the Committee, as a whole, to study each industry, (ii) the surveys to be distributed region-wise and each Member put into charge of a region, and (iii) each Member to be entrusted with a few surveys throughout India. With a view to speedy and efficient work, the third course was actually adopted. This departure from the usual procedure of the Committee as a whole dealing with the work was necessary in view of the immensity of the task and the necessity of maintaining an all-India perspective. Moreover, it was felt that this procedure would enable Members to make a specialised study of labour conditions in individual industries in different parts of the country. It was also felt that the peculiar problems of industrial labour had more an industry-wise than a region-wise dispersion and that the procedure would be helpful to future legislation which has to take into consideration the diversified conditions of each industry. It will be seen, however, that in the Reports the factual material has been presented both on an all-India and on a regional basis.

8. Thanks and acknowledgments are due to Provincial Governments, State Authorities, Labour Commissioners (and particularly the Labour Commissioner, Bengal), Directors of Industries, Chief Inspectors of Factories, Port authorities, local bodies, employers' and workers' associations, managements of the units surveyed and all others who rendered help in the collection of the data presented in these Reports.

D. V. REGE, *Chairman.*

S. R. DESHPANDE  
AHMAD MUKHTAR  
B. P. ADARKAR

} *Members.*

TEJA SINGH SAHNI,

*Secretary.*

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.**

Acknowledgments are due to Messrs. S. D. Punekar, T. Satyanarayana Rao and C. P. Srivastava, Supervisors, and to Messrs. V. Anjeneyulu and D. G. Nerurkar, Investigators, in the collection of material and for assistance in the preparation of this Report.

## CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTION.

### I.—Economic Background.

The Cotton Ginning and Baling industry in India is easily the most important seasonal industry of the country. It provides employment, at present, to about 1,20,000 persons, though the employment figures have shown some fluctuation from year to year. In 1939, the average daily employment in all the registered factories was 1,23,879; it went up to 1,42,456 in 1941 and fell down to 1,17,311 in 1943. While the present war has stimulated many industries and accelerated their development, it has hit the cotton ginning and baling industry pretty hard. The countries of the East, *viz.*, Japan, China, Korea, etc., were the main customers of Indian cotton in pre-war days. The outbreak of war between Japan and the Allies in December 1941 cut off the entire Eastern market. During 1939-40, the number of cotton bales exported from India was 2,947,900. The corresponding figure for 1942-43 was a petty 300,900 bales! The following table gives statistical data as regards export and Indian mills, consumption of Indian cotton. Neglecting the carry-over, the total production of cotton bales in India fell from 5,999,900 in 1939-40 to 4,334,900 in 1942-43,—a fall of nearly 25 per cent.

TABLE 1.

*Export and Indian Consumption of Indian Cotton (In Bales).*

Year.	Exports.	Indian Consumption.	Total.	Indices. (Base 1939-40 = 100).
1939-40 .. ..	2,947,900	3,052,000	5,999,900	100
1940-41 .. ..	2,167,600	3,358,000	5,525,600	92.1
1941-42 .. ..	1,437,700	3,938,000	5,375,700	89.6
1942-43 .. ..	300,900	4,034,000	4,334,900	75.6

*Location of the Industry.*—The black cotton soil region in Bombay and the Central Provinces and Berar contains more than 50 per cent. of the cotton gins and presses working in the country. Thus in 1942, the total number of registered ginning and pressing factories was 1,841 and of these 1,022 or 55.5 per cent. worked in the two Provinces mentioned above. Besides these, other areas of importance are Madras, the Punjab and Sind. The following table shows the number of cotton ginning and baling factories and the main centres of the industry in the above named five Provinces.

TABLE 2.

*Main Centres of the Industry.*

Province.	Number of Factories in 1942.	Number of Workers in 1942.	Main Centres.
Bombay .. ..	645	38,832	Hubli; Palej; Virangam; Dhulla; Dondaicha; Jalgaon; Pachora; Chalisgaon; Broach.
C.P. and Berar ..	377	29,091	Amraoti; Buldana; Akola; Nagpur; Nimar; Wardha.
Madras .. ..	363	21,205	Tirupur; Ramnad; Bellary.
Punjab .. ..	286	18,983	Lyallpur; Amritsar.
Sind .. ..	105	11,568	Mirpur Khas; Nawabshah.

*The Main Seasons.*—As has been said above, this industry is seasonal in character and its season is dependent upon and follows the cotton-growing

season. In the Punjab, Sind and the United Provinces, cotton is first harvested in September and soon thereafter the factories start working. The ginning and pressing season in these areas begins in September and ends in April. In Madras also the working period is the same. In the Central Provinces and Berar, as also in Khandesh, cotton is ginned and pressed from October to June but in Gujerat the active ginning months are February, March and April. In South Bombay, the factories work intermittently throughout the year. The average number of days worked by these factories in the course of a year would be about 150, though some of them work for a hundred days or even less. The necessity to work only for a brief periods arises out of the fact that cotton cannot be ginned at high temperature. Moreover, as far as is known, the short staple lower variety of cotton cannot be stacked for long.

**Pooling Agreements.**—One interesting feature of the cotton ginning and pressing industry is the system of "pooling" of factories which is widely adopted in most of the areas and which is necessitated by the fact that there are generally more factories than would be required to dispose of the crop. The main idea of a pooling agreement is to pool and concentrate production in a few factories according to the availability of work, keeping the others idle and thus to eliminate competition, waste and duplication. Details in regard to such agreements are given in Appendix I. Here we may briefly state the main features of a pooling agreement. In the first place, the contracting parties continue to be absolute owners of their factories, but they agree to work them as per conditions laid down in the agreement deed. Secondly, a uniform rate is charged by the contracting parties for ginning or pressing, as the case may be. Thirdly, the constituent factories have to work or remain closed for certain stated periods during the season. Fourthly, from the pressing or ginning charges a certain fixed proportion is allowed to be retained by the constituent factories, and the balance is paid into the pool. Fifthly, all members are required to submit daily an account to the trustees of the pool, showing the number of *khandies* of cotton ginned or bales pressed. Finally, at the end of the month or the season, the collections of the pool are divided amongst the parties according to ratios laid down in the agreement and corresponding to the total strength of gins or presses in each factory. These pooling agreements are, no doubt, favourable to employers, but their effects on labour are not always so. In those centres where alternative employment is readily available to the excluded workers the continuity of employment which the agreements provide to a definite group of workers is indeed worth having. However the agreements become definitely injurious causing unemployment among workers, in places where there are no alternative avenues of employment during the agricultural off-season.

## II.—Processes of Production and Types of Workers.

The cotton is first brought to the factory either by dealers or by the management itself and stacked in godowns by men called *khalasis* or coolies. They do the weighment, carry the *borahs* (long gunny bags) into the godowns stamp the ginned cotton into the gunnies, stitch them and do such other ancillary work from the time the cotton comes to the factory till it goes out after ginning. In Madras these *khalasis* have to obtain a weighment licence from the local Cotton Marketing Committee by paying Rs. 5 per annum. They are required to wear the Committee's badge while doing the weighment.

The cotton thus stored in godowns is taken out and picked by women known as *kapas pickers*. These are mostly old women who are unskilled and young women who are beginners. The stains are removed and the cotton thus picked is then arranged into rectangular or square heaps in the godowns. In the South Indian Factories these heaps are called *ambarams*.

Elsewhere no particular name is given to cotton heaps. The advantage with this arrangement is that cotton which is grown and is brought from different regions and which varies in quality because of the varying sun and climatic conditions, gets well mixed before it is ginned. When cotton arranged in separate heaps is ginned, it becomes uniform in quality, which is essential for manufacturing textiles. In some cases, the cotton taken out of the heap is cleaned for a second time before it is ginned. During ginning the seed is separated and it goes down through the machine and accumulates in the godowns constructed for the purpose. The gins are adjusted in such a way that there is not much of cut-seed getting mixed up with lint and impairing its quality. Women coolies are generally employed to remove the seed from the godowns and store it elsewhere. The Women who work at the gins are known as "gin-feeders."

The ginned cotton is then put on a cot which serves the purpose of a sieve and is shaken well. The cut seed falls down through the interstices of the iron lattice and the cotton is taken out to be stamped into *borahs*. Any stains left in the ginned cotton may be picked again. A big gunny bag nearly 6 feet in length is tied to a beam or some rafter in the shed and is filled with cotton. After it is filled three-fourths, a man gets into the *borah* to stamp the cotton in. Then they are stitched, weighed, and sent out. Superior cotton from which diseased and inferior portions have been sorted out is utilized for making quality textiles. The stains and the inferior cotton are used for manufacturing cloth of lesser counts like carpets, blankets and such other coarse stuff. Ginned cotton, if it is free from dust, dry leaf bits, cut seed and such other impurities and is well mixed, commands a high market value. Cotton and *kapas* bags are carried from one place to another in the factory area by men variously called coolies, *khalasis*, *jhotiwalas* and *palledars*. All the work connected with ginning requires little skill and hence the labour is of the unskilled type. In some factories the whole of the ginning process is automatic. *Kapas* has only to be fed into a broad pipe. A strong current of air then takes the *kapas*, to the open and then on to the gins. Flakes of ginned cotton are deposited into a receptacle kept for the purpose near the press.

*Pressing.*—Before being pressed, the ginned cotton has to be mixed well. To get this done, the ginned cotton is taken to the opener where it is beaten by the machine but in case the ginned cotton is of uniform quality it is shaken well with hand and is sent to the press. The cleaning of cotton is the next process whereby impurities, if any, are removed. After the ginned cotton undergoes all these processes it is weighed before being pressed. Each bale weighs 400 lbs. Weighment coolies are given different names in different areas, (e.g., *tolewalas* in Bombay, *labariwalas* in Sind and press coolies, elsewhere). After weighing cotton is shoved into half-presses. The press box is about 16 feet deep. Workers who are engaged at the half-presses are called "rammers" since they ram the cotton in. After the cotton is half-pressed it is sent to the finisher press. The workers employed here are called "lashers" and the process is known as "lashing". The bales are wrapped and hooped automatically in the finisher press. The pressing of cotton is done in some factories by steam presses. The processes of production are practically the same in all the areas, although the nomenclature of workers differs from place to place.

### III.—The Nature of Employment.

Attention has been drawn above to the seasonal character of employment in the cotton ginning and baling factories. Besides being seasonal, the employment is intermittent also. If the supplies of cotton are irregular, work is stopped off and on, and the daily paid worker gets no wages. The fact that

in the ginning factories no particular skill is required for the processes makes the position of the worker somewhat insecure. He can always be dismissed and a fresh man taken on without impairing the efficiency of work. On the other hand, this insecurity of tenure encourages absenteeism and turnover among the workers. Workers prefer to take up an odd job in the town for a day or two if it pays them better. Figures for absenteeism and turnover were found to be fairly high in a number of centres. The "contract system" prevails in the industry on a wide scale. In almost all the centres work is let out to contractors and it is the job of the contractors to recruit workers. The firms take care to insert clauses in the contract indemnifying themselves against compensation for employment injury payable in respect of the employees of contractors. The payment of wages to the employees of the contractors is supervised by the management in few firms. The firms do not feel responsible for the provision of medical and other facilities and the contractor is too insensitive to see that they are necessary or desirable. It is hardly necessary to say that a number of malpractices continue unabated and that, from the standpoint of labour, the system is rotten to the core. The employment of children of prohibited ages is also prevalent on a wide scale. The work of gin-feeders is rather easy (though not always safe) and is entrusted to children who are always in large numbers. If the woman, who is generally responsible for the work, can be paid two-thirds the wages of man, a child can be paid merely a third and the employer is, therefore, never unmindful of the possibilities of gain by the substitution of child for female labour. In view of the inadequacy of the inspectorate everywhere, one cannot legitimately blame the factory inspectors for the non-enforcement of law in regard to the employment of child labour.

#### IV.—Combination of Cotton Ginning with other Industries.

In many places, cotton ginning and pressing are combined with other industries, both being undertaken in the same premises. Among such industries are oil milling, rice milling and groundnut decortication. In a number of cotton textiles factories, moreover, cotton ginning and pressing are the least important of a series of vertical processes ending up with spinning and weaving or dyeing and bleaching. It is surprising, however, that no ginning factory has so far established a plant for utilization of its main by-product, *viz.*, cotton seed. It may probably be due to the fact that the production of cotton seed in individual units is too insufficient even for the smallest plant. There can be little doubt that a few of the factories could easily utilise this by-product by supplementing their own stocks of cotton seed with purchases from other factories. The combination of two or three seasonal and small-scale industries in this fashion has one great advantage in that it is capable of providing to the worker continuous employment by switching off from one process to another according to the nature of the season. This, however, is a matter for conscious planning and it does not appear that either the State or the employers have given any serious thought to the possibilities of such alternate employment. The one, and perhaps the only, disadvantage of the combination of industries is that, it becomes possible for employers to defeat the factory law so far as shifts and hours of work are concerned by transferring the workers from one section of the factory to another, often under different names, and the temptation to do this is helped by the availability of alternative work at different times. Rigorous factory inspection is the only remedy for this.

#### V.—Accidents and Occupational Diseases.

The incidence of accidents in cotton ginning and baling factories is rather low and the accidents that occur, are such as can be avoided in most cases, by a little more cautious supervision on the part of the management. The danger spots, as the regional surveys will show, are the cotton opener and the line-

shaft. Coolies have to feed *kapas* into the opener and they use their hands for the purpose. If they are alert no accidents occur but the least inattention on their part may involve them in accidents and cause the loss of a few fingers or the whole arm. This can be avoided if the opener coolies use a wooden rod to manipulate the insertion of cotton. The line-shaft is usually an underground chamber in which the big wheels carrying belts rotate at great speed. A cobbler works in this chamber and his job is to repair the belts if they break, to arrange them on the wheels and to grease the wheels. These line-shafts are *nowhere* ventilated properly and are invariably ill-lighted. The floor is damp and the atmosphere stinking. More than that. The clearance in between the wheels and between the walls and wheels is always too inadequate to allow free movement. It is no wonder, therefore, that the clothes of the cobbler who moves about in such rooms get caught in between the belt and the wheel, dragging him also to serious injury or to death. Most of such accidents can be avoided if (i) the line-shaft is better-lighted and ventilated and has more space, and (ii) the cobbler is provided with tight-fitting garments. Rules made under the Factories Act in some of the Provinces oblige the factory manager to equip the cobbler, with such clothes free of cost but these rules are observed only in the breach.

As for occupational diseases, no positive evidence was available to show their incidence. There can be little doubt that lung diseases like bronchitis, tuberculosis and asthma are contracted by workers engaged in the ginning room and near the opener. The atmosphere in these two places is surcharged with dust and cotton particles and these are inhaled by the workers. These persons do make efforts to filter these out by wrapping a piece of cloth round their nose but unwittingly sufficient space is left between the cloth and the nose to allow free entry of the injurious admixture of dust and cotton. No firm has so far provided its employees with dust respirators. The fact that diseases of the type mentioned above are contracted by the workers in the course of their employment was confirmed by several medical men practising in towns wherein cotton ginning factories are situated. In the narrow technical sense the diseases may not be regarded as "occupational," but although they cannot be said to be peculiar to the industry, they *do arise* from the nature of work.

#### VI.—The Working of Labour Acts.

The Acts applicable to the ginning and baling factories are the Factories Act, the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Maternity Benefit Acts. It may be stated that, on the whole, the operation of these laws has been thoroughly unsatisfactory in this industry. The provisions in the Factories Act in regard to sanitation and health, hours of work, employment of children, employment of women beyond prescribed hours, etc., are openly disregarded. Latrines and urinals, besides being insufficient in number, are exceedingly dirty. Children of 5 to 10 years of age are employed in large numbers. The working of the Workmen's Compensation Act has been, in a large measure, infructuous. Due to the absence of trade union organization among the workers employed in the ginning and pressing factories and also due to the seasonal, if not casual, nature of employment, the workers have not become conversant with their rights under the Act. The result is that in most cases the injured are quietly removed from the scene and the payment, if any, made to them is wholly incommensurate with the amount of injury sustained. It is only in some of the Bombay and C.P. factories that employers have insured with private companies against employment injury. In such cases, generally speaking, accidents are properly reported and compensated. The Maternity Benefit Act was found to be wholly inoperative. The ginning factories employ women in fairly large numbers as cotton pickers and gin feeders. In some of the Bombay and

C.P. factories more than 50 per cent. of the total employment was found to consist of female labour. Still no maternity benefits had been paid in any of the factories. The fact that workers are employed in these factories only for 4 or 5 months continuously was largely responsible for this. But it was also stated that women were dismissed at the first sign of pregnancy. The case of the ignorant and illiterate employer who pre-dominates in the ginning industry deserves special mention. He manages the factory himself without being aware of the provisions of any of the Acts. In most of the factories such employers expressed considerable surprise when they were told that women workers were legally entitled to maternity benefit. The employers have been abetted in their desire to show scant respect to law by the imposition of ridiculously small fines in cases of successful prosecution by factory inspectors.

## CHAPTER II.—C. P. AND BERAR AND KHANDESH

The cotton ginning and baling industry of India is mainly concentrated in the black-cotton soil region and areas adjacent to it. As has been stated earlier, the ginning and baling season is entirely dependent upon and follows the cotton-growing season. The Central Provinces and Berar have been grouped together with Khandesh (Bombay), because of the coincident cotton-growing season in the whole of the area. This season commences in the second week of October and lasts till the end of June. This, of course, is the normal period but there are occasional variations, and adjustments become necessary if the crop is ready before time or is delayed. Apart from the reasons of coincident season and geographical compactness, there is a third and, from the standpoint of this enquiry, the most important reason for such grouping, *viz.*, similarity in the conditions of labour.

The Central Provinces and Berar factories alone provide employment to about 30,000 workers daily. Of the 40,000 workers employed in the Bombay factories, 15,000 (approximately) are employed in Khandesh. This would put the total average daily employment in the whole of the area at 45,000. In the C. P. and Berar this industry is of particular importance, in so far as it provides work to about one-third of the total industrial labour of the Province. The factories are scattered all over the area and the only consideration guiding the selection of a site is the availability of transport facilities. The important centres are Buldana, Khamgaon, Akola, Amraoti, Wardha, Nimar and Nagpur, of which all except Nimar were visited for the purposes of the present enquiry. In Khandesh, the main centres are Jalgaon, Chopda, Chalisgaon, Pachora, Dhulia, Dondaicha and Shahada. The present *ad hoc* survey was conducted in four of these centres, *viz.*, Jalgaon, Chalisgaon, Pachora and Dhulia. In the whole of the area, 560 factories were working and of these 98 (or 17.5 per cent.) were surveyed, and 7,803 workers (or 17.3 per cent. of the total number of workers employed daily) were covered.

### I.—Employment.

The total average daily employment in the cotton ginning and baling factories in this area is appreciably lower at present than what it was even as far back as 1929. In the Central Provinces and Berar, 37,409 workers were employed in 1929. The figure for employment in 1943, was 26,324. In Khandesh, about 17,000 workers were employed in the ginning and baling factories in 1929. The figure had gone down to about 15,000 or even less in 1943. A number of factories have had to remain closed for long in the course of the present war. A veritable slump set into the industry in 1942 when the effect of the stoppage of exports to Japan was seriously felt. It was only by "pooling" that the factories were able to avoid incurring loss. The pool arrangements as has been pointed out earlier, affect the total employment

figures adversely. Figures for employment in the 98 establishments investigated are given in the following table :—

TABLE 3.  
*Volume and Nature of Employment.*

	Number.	% of total.
I. Total Number of Workers .. .. .	7,803	100·00
Piece-rate Workers .. .. .	1,652	21·17
Time-rate Workers .. .. .	5,601	71·78
Unclassed Workers .. .. .	550	7·05
II. Workers employed and paid directly .. .. .	1,726	22·12
Employed and paid by contractors .. .. .	5,417	69·42
Employed through contractors but paid directly .. .. .	110	1·41
Workers whose mode of payment is not known .. .. .	550	7·05
III. Males .. .. .	3,872	49·62
Females .. .. .	3,931	50·38

The 56 gins and 42 presses visited employ 3,872 men and 3,931 women. Over 70 per cent. of the total number of workers, or almost all workers in the presses and many in the gins are employed and paid by the contractors or merchant. Only in one concern at Shegaon, there was no contract labour and all workers were employed and paid directly by the Company. In three factories at Akola and two factories at Dhulia, contractor's labour is employed both in the gin and the press, the management being responsible only for the payment to its salaried staff.

In a prosperous centre like Khamgaon the maximum number of workers employed in any single ginning factory was 387 (257 men and 130 women), and the minimum 43 (22 men and 21 women). The average number of workers per ginning factory was found to be 130 (50 men and 80 women). In the presses, where usually the contractor employs his men and women, and pays wages per bale, the maximum number of workers employed in any factory was 100 (80 men and 20 women) at Khamgaon and minimum 56 (30 men and 26 women) at Digrus. The average daily employment in the press factories was found to be 80 (60 men and 20 women). It appears from the above that the number of workers in a gin is nearly double that in a press. Of the total number of workers viz., 7,803, nearly 10 per cent workers consisted of the salaried mechanical and office staff, the rest being ordinary labourers on daily wages. No children were employed in any of these factories.

*Nature of Employment.*—In the Central Provinces and Berar as well as in Khandesh, all the factories are seasonal in character. In these factories there is a maximum pressure of work during the season, moderate work for a part of the year and they are completely closed in the off-season. In Hubli in South Bombay, on the other hand, the factories are open throughout the year, there being maximum work during the season and intermittent work for the rest of the year. In the seasonal factories in the Central Provinces and Berar, most of the monthly-paid workers are temporary and employed for the season only while in Hubli such workers, though temporary, get employment almost throughout the whole year. Nearly 60 per cent. of the workers are employed on daily wages. In most of the presses, work is given out on contract. Tentative contract rates are fixed in the beginning of the season but these rates are usually revised at the end of the season when the accounts are settled. There is no possibility of extending the period of work in the factories which do only ginning and pressing. The permanent mechanical staff in many factories practically remains idle after doing the work of repairing

overhauling etc. At present, when there is a great demand for labour, all workers (both male and female) get some sort of employment in the off-season in the P.W.D., grass and wood-cutting, fruit-selling, domestic service, and agriculture. Some are absorbed in cottage industries, e.g., *bidi* making in Yeotmal district. It is only in some of the factories that the skilled workers are retained even during the slack season. In a couple of factories, however, a change of policy has occurred and the technical staff is now recruited on permanent basis. In one factory, the engineer used to be given Rs. 70 p.m. for the 6 months of the active season and for the other six months, i.e. in the slack season, Rs. 40 p.m. Only from this year, which is the thirty-fifth year of his service, will he be given Rs. 70 p.m. throughout the year. Some of the skilled workers, when thrown out of employment, resume their own private businesses, such as manufacturing tins, repairing umbrellas, hand-weaving, cart-driving etc. The proprietor of one factory advanced small loans to some of its workers to enable them to engage in vocations like fruit-selling and hawking. In the case of factories having oil-milling or textile sections, the gin and press workers get a chance of employment only to a limited extent in such sections. There an altogether different set of workers is employed perennially or on *badli* system.

*Length of service.*—Data regarding the length of service of operatives could be collected from 27 concerns only and are given in the table below. These refer only to the staff, both skilled and unskilled directly employed by the factory. There seems to be a statistical flaw in the mode of keeping such records; for the services of the seasonal staff also are counted as continuous, if they worked in all the successive seasons. The yearly gap of 4 to 6 months in their services is not taken into account,

TABLE 4.  
*Length of Service of Workers Directly Employed by the Concerns.*

Unit No.	Length of Service in Years.				Total.
	0—1.	1—5.	5—10.	Over 10.	
20	3	24	..	..	27
21	8	5	3	5	21
22	11	11	..	..	22
23	2	4	5	10	21
24	5	6	3	2	16
25	8	3	6	2	19
26	12	..	..	..	12
27	6	11	..	..	17
28	12	6	8	..	26
29	14	21	..	..	35
30	3	22	1	..	26
31	12	8	4	10	34
32	16	28	..	..	44
33	20	1	1	..	22
34	20	1	1	..	22
35	3	12	1	..	16
36	4	8	2	1	15
37	10	4	8	2	24
38	5	2	3	3	13
39	..	6	2	3	11
40	3	5	2	..	10
41	8	6	..	5	19
42	21	2	2	..	25
43	8	1	1	1	11
44	9	8	..	..	17
45	2	5	1	..	8
46	10	13	3	4	30
Total ..	235	223	57	48	563
% ..	42	40	10	8	100

In spite of the comparatively long existence of these factories, about 40 to 50 years, it is interesting to note that only 8 per cent. of the workers have over 10 years of service to their credit. They are mostly the manager, the mukadam, the engineer and the boiler-attendant, although there may be some stray cases of an engine-driver, carpenter, cobbler etc. also sticking to the same concern for a long period. The migratory section of workers which is nearly 82 per cent. of the total, consists mostly of watchmen, firemen, oilmen, coalmen, etc. Their work involves little or no skill. Better remuneration and the possibility of getting a job for a longer period tempt them to move from one factory to another. Those having over 5 years' service are 18 per cent of the total number of monthly-paid workers and those between 1 to 5 years are 40 per cent. In practice, if a worker is honest and sincere, he gets the first chance of re-employment every year. This is equally true in the case of ordinary workers, who are given preference by their contractors or by gangmen, especially in the press factories. These press contractors employ their men because it is only with the help of such trained workers that they are able to finish their work early and earn profits. As many as 42 per cent. of the total workers have less than one year's service to their credit. These low-paid workers are at present forced to migrate to various urban centres and military area.

#### Classification of Workers as Permanent and Temporary.

Due to the peculiar nature of work in these factories, workers are mostly employed on a temporary basis (on daily wages or on seasonal basis, i.e., either paid monthly during the season or given a lump sum for the whole season). For example, in 5 factories, all workers were found to be temporary,—even the manager and engineer are employed for the season only. There are nearly 9 factories in which only the manager is permanent, and 2 factories in which only the engineer is permanent, while in 9 factories both engineer and manager are permanent. In the bigger firms, owning a couple of factories or more, usually one set of mechanical workers is employed on a permanent basis. There are no hard and fast rules as regards the rights and privileges of permanent and temporary workers as regards leave, dearness allowance etc. In some of the better organized firms casual leave with pay is granted both to the permanent and temporary staff at the discretion of the manager or agent. In the slack season, which lasts for nearly 4 months, the permanent or yearly paid workers are allowed to take one or even 2 months' leave provided the factory is completely closed and there is no work for them. In the case of monthly-rated workers, working during the season, absence up to a week is permitted and wages are not deducted for such absence. In practice, however, the employees are entirely at the mercy of their superiors for all such concessions. In factories owned by Volkart Brothers sick leave rules for up-country staff are as follows :—

TABLE 5.

#### *Paid Sick Leave in Volkart Bros' Factories.*

	Length of Service in years.	Length of Paid Leave in a year.
Permanent Staff .. .. .	0—1.	Nil.
	1—5.	Two weeks.
	Over 5.	One Month.
Temporary .. .. .	First Season.	Nil.
	1st—5th Season.	6 days.
	Over 5 Seasons.	10 days.

This firm grants casual and privilege leave also, though only to its permanent employees. Thus, these workers who have one years full duty to their credit

are granted 15 days' leave with pay at the end of the year. This period is extended to 3 weeks in the case of employees whose length of service exceeds 20 years. In Savatram Ramprasad Mills at Akola only permanent workers get two days' casual leave per month or 24 days per year, which can be accumulated for 3 years. They also get dearness allowance according to the index figure declared from time to time by the Bombay Millowners' Association. Similarly, they get bonus as declared from time to time. In Shri Laxminarayan Mills Co., Ltd., the permanent staff gets dearness allowance and bonus as declared from time to time, and 15 to 30 days' leave in a year. Of course, the permanent hands here, who alone enjoy these privileges, consist mostly of office staff, the factory manager and a few, if any, permanent mechanical workers.

*Labour Turnover and Absenteeism.*—It is very difficult to obtain accurate statistical information as regards labour turnover and absenteeism in such seasonal factories. The intermittent nature of employment and the increased cost of living force the labourers to move from one industry to another or from one locality to another. The labour turnover is generally greater in the case of oilmen, firemen, coalmen, coolies and such other semi-skilled workers ; and less in the case of engineers, managers, blacksmiths etc. As the factories are working three or four days a week only, the problem of absenteeism is not so important. Further, though according to the Factories Act it is incumbent upon the managers to keep a register of all the workers in the factory compound, they are generally found not to be very particular about this, and hence it is impossible to estimate the extent of absenteeism. The main reason for this indifference is that most of the workers are not in the direct employ of the factories but in the employ of the merchants and contractors.

*Standing Orders.*—The smaller establishments have no written orders governing the relations between employees and the employers. In the bigger firms some Standing Orders have been formulated, but, in general, the manager or the agent is given wide discretion as to their interpretation. The result has been that even in the units of the same firm, questions as regards leave etc. are treated differently.

*Recruitment.*—*Mukadams* or contractors are usually employed by the factory owners and merchants for recruiting labour and for supervising their work. These contractors are also required to pay their workers and undertake other responsibilities regarding labour. Every year in the beginning of the cotton season before the factory starts working, the management inform the *mukadam* as to their requirements of labour and the *mukadam* holds himself responsible for its supply in time. Before the war, recruitment was made at the factory gates as there was no dearth of labour. In the baling factories the situation is different. Baling is done on contract and it is entirely the concern of the press contractor to get his labour. In practice, the press contractor is the leader of a band of 20 or 30 workers and works with his team in three or four neighbouring factories.

It will be seen that nearly 50 per cent. of the workers are recruited by contractors or *mukadams*. In a sense, at least in the smaller firms, there is no legal contract as there is no indemnity bond or deposit or any other deed, and so the employer is free to dismiss the contractor and the contractor is free to dismiss his men, as also to give up the contract at any moment. In the bigger firms, the contractors have to enter into regular agreements and sign deeds which, in more important cases, are registered. From the point of view of the employer the contract system is advantageous as it absolves them of the work of recruiting, supervising, and paying the workers. They are generally found reluctant to take the responsibility of observing the provisions of law

and, therefore, prefer contract labour. As regards the recruitment of semi-skilled labour, a new worker who comes for a job is required to undergo a test and is appointed by the engineer if found satisfactory. Of course, the older hands get preference every year. Unskilled and semi-skilled hands are recruited from the adjoining areas. Only skilled hands like engineers, mechanics, cobblers, etc., are imported from distant places. To such of the workers as are imported by the factory owners travelling allowance is paid.

*Miscellaneous.*—Most of cotton ginning and baling factories are small units and, therefore, one cannot expect them to employ labour officers to look into the grievances of their employees. Even bigger firms, like Volkart Brothers and Ralli Brothers do not employ such officers. It would appear that in most of the factories, the interests of labour, particularly of contract labour, go by default.

## II.—Wages and Earnings.

It has been stated above that more than half the total labour is employed by contractors. Such labour is, at present at any rate, at par with or even better than the directly employed labour so far as wage rates are concerned. On the other hand, in regard to matters like over-time pay, dearness allowance, bonus, etc., contract labour was found to be at a disadvantage. In the period immediately preceding the war, wages were determined more or less by competition; but when war started, the additional demand for labour on the part of the C.P.W.D. and the Military absorbed a considerable part of the available labour supply with the result that the industry has felt some shortage of labour. It was due to this that wages gradually increased as the war progressed. The wage level in this area, however, is on the whole, lower than in Sind and the Punjab.

Wages of ordinary labour as well as the contract rates are determined after comparing the wage rates in other factories in the same locality. In some factories, the contractor (or *mukadam*) is paid an advance and at the end of the season, when accounts are settled, he is paid the balance after calculating on the basis of current rate. In some factories, the system is fix the contract rates at the end of the season in consultation with other employers. The contractors engage different types of unskilled labour on piece-rate basis, which is directly related to their own rates. Generally, the contractors retain the residue of earnings after the wages of their employees are paid out. Sometimes however, the *mukadam* is a paid agent and the piece-rate workers merely work under his supervision. The contract rate (as well as the piece rate) in the gins is so much per "beja" (load of cotton of about 14 maunds) and in the press, it is so much per bale or 100 bales. In addition to the contract rate, the contractor also gets separate remuneration from the merchants for cleaning, mixing, making the cotton loose picking the yellow stains, heaping, number marking etc. Most of the workers in gins are employed on a daily basis and almost all in the presses are employed on piece basis. Only the clerical and mechanical workers are employed on monthly wages. In the press factories, workers work in teams, and normally from 100 to 150 bales are pressed in a day,

though the maximum can be as high as 175 or 200. Naturally the earnings of the workers depend upon their efficiency and the contract rates. The higher the latter, the greater their chance of getting better wages. In the pre-war period the contract rate was between Rs. 23 and Rs. 35 per 100 bales ; at present it is between Rs. 40 and Rs. 58. The contractor in his anxiety to earn large profits employs ingenious devices to deceive his ignorant colleagues. For example, one contractor at Khamgaon deducted a part of the amount as charges for keeping accounts, while another collects a *mukadami* (here, at tip to the mukadam) at the end of the season from every worker, at the rate of Re. 1 or Rs. 2.

The mechanical workers at present earn between Rs. 21 and Rs. 55 p.m. excepting the engineer, who gets between Rs. 112 and Rs. 119 p.m. From the available pre-war monthly wage-rates of some of these workers, we can see that the percentage rise in wages is between 40 and 50. It must be pointed out here that the incomes of the same type of workers differ from not only district to district but from factory to factory, according to size and ownership of concerns. For example, one engineer in Ralli Bros' factories at Amraoti gets Rs. 243-5-0 p.m. and another in the same firm at Khamgaon gets Rs. 123-2-8. The earnings of one fireman at Amraoti are Rs. 50-5-0 p.m. ; those of another at Akola are Rs. 27-10-6 p.m. A Volkart Brothers' engineer at Nagpur gets Rs. 255 p.m. ; another under the same firm at Khamgaon gets Rs. 135 p.m. The variation in wages is thus very great. It would appear that there are no definite principles in determining wages. In practice, generally speaking, in the case of unskilled labour it is merely the physical capacity of the individual worker, and in the case of other categories of workers, it is skill and experience which are the main determinants.

The rates of wages paid to the various categories of unskilled labour in the centres selected are given in the table below :—

TABLE 6.

*Daily Wages of Unskilled Workers in Ginning Factories*

	Nagpur.		Wardha.		Amraoti.		Yeotmal.		Akola.		Buldhana.		East Khan-	West Khan-											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	desh.	desh.											
Mukadam ..	..	1	1	0	(a)	0	14	0	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)											
Mukadami ..	..	0	7	9	0	7	0	0	14	0	0	11	3	0	10	3	1	0	0	0	11	0	0	10	8
Gin-feeders ..	..	0	6	9	0	5	0	0	8	0	0	7	6	0	6	6	0	9	6	0	7	6	0	8	0
Relievers ..	..	0	7	0	0	5	0	0	7	6	0	7	6	0	7	6	0	10	6	0	8	0	0	8	0
Sweepers ..	..	0	6	0	0	5	0	..	0	7	3	0	7	3	0	8	6	0	7	3	0	8	0	8	0
Cotton-seed pickers	..	0	6	6	0	7	3	0	6	3	0	6	3	0	7	0	0	9	6	0	8	0	0	8	0
Kapas pickers ..	..	0	6	9	0	8	6	0	8	0	0	7	0	..	0	6	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kapas carriers ..	..	1	0	9	1	0	0	0	14	0	0	14	6	0	14	6	1	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Gunnybag-fillers ..	..	0	14	0	0	10	6	0	12	9	0	11	9	0	11	0	0	13	0	1	0	0	1	15	0
Cotton-carriers ..	..	0	9	3	0	9	6	0	10	0	0	12	6	0	9	9	1	0	0	0	14	3	0	15	0
Cotton-seed carriers	..	0	9	6	0	12	0	0	9	0	0	12	6	0	15	0	0	15	0	0	9	6	0	14	6

(a) The *mukadam* in these places retains the residue after paying out the unskilled workers and er him. Hence no definite figures are available.

The following table shows the wages of unskilled workers (engaged under contractors) in the baling industry :—

TABLE 7.

*Wage Rates (per 100 bales) for Contract Labour in Press Factories (C.P. and Berar, and Khandesh).*

Factory No	3	9	13	15	16	20	21	22	23	27	28	29	31	32	33	41
Contract rate (in Rs.)	56	40	42	36	50	42	45	40	41	45	(a)	45	44 6 0	45	42	37
<i>Labatia</i> (Lashers)	1 4 0	0 12 0	1 12 0	1 4 0	1 8 0	1 10 0	1 12 0	1 4 0	1 4 0	1 6 0	1 6 0	1 8 0	1 6 0	1 6 0	1 6 0	1 8 0
<i>Tolewalas</i> (weighers)	1 2 0	(a)	1 6 0	1 4 0	(a)	1 2 0	1 5 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 2 0	1 2 0	1 4 0	1 4 0	1 4 0	1 4 0	1 0 0
Bale Sewers	1 2 0	0 12 0	1 6 0	0 12 0	1 4 0	1 8 0	1 5 0	1 4 0	1 4 0	1 6 0	(a)	1 8 0	1 12 0	1 10 0	1 12 0	1 12 0
Gunnybag cutters	0 14 0	(a)	1 1 0	(a)	1 2 0	1 0 0	(a)	(a)	(a)	1 0 0	0 12 0	1 4 0	(a)	1 2 0	1 2 0	(a)
Gunnybag fillers	(a)	0 10 0	1 3 0	0 14 0	1 2 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	0 14 0	0 14 0	(a)	0 12 0	1 4 0	1 2 0	1 2 0	1 2 0	0 12 0
<i>Palewalas</i>	0 11 0 0 10 0	0 8 0	(a)	0 9 0	0 9 0	(a)	(a)	0 12 0	0 12 0	0 12 0	0 14 6	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	(a)	1 0 0

(a) Information not available, or work done by some other worker.

Besides the unskilled workers engaged in temporary and seasonal jobs there are many skilled workers employed in almost every factory for the handling and repairs of complicated machines. The following table gives the average monthly wages for different categories of skilled workers :—

TABLE 8.  
Rates of Wages of Skilled Workers in Gins and Presses\*

	Nagpur			Wardha			Amraoti			Yectmal		
	Maximum	Minimum	Average									
Engineer .. .. .	255	146	200 8	100	60	53 8	243 5	75	139 10	137 8	65	91 7
Boiler attendant .. .. .	(a)	(a)	(a)	50	40	45	69	30	51 11	60	30	47 5
Fitter .. .. .	69	27 8	52 3	60	55	58 6	70	50	59	60	20	48 13
Fireman .. .. .	50	23	36 3	35	28	31 4	50 5	25	31 11	35	17	27 3
Roll-cutter .. .. .	26	21 8	23 12	(a)	(a)	(a)	32	18	22 6	30	16	22 3
Cobbler .. .. .	55	28	35 5	30	27	29	44	20	35	35	20	30
Carpenter .. .. .	40	32	36	(a)	(a)	(a)	60	29	40	60	35	46 9
Oilman .. .. .	24	18	21 2	23	19	20 3	37	16	21 11	22	15	19
Engine-driver .. .. .	59 8	35	44 9	30	23	26 6	65	25	40 4	40	20	29 9
Blacksmith .. .. .	55	40	42 8	60	35	45	50	29	37 8	38	25	30
Valveman .. .. .	70	42	55 10	(a)	(a)	(a)	42	20	29	(a)	(a)	21 13
Finisherman .. .. .	47 13	39 1	43 7	28	20	24	37 5	20	26 15	30	15	21 3
Half-pressman .. .. .	(a)	(a)	(a)	25	23	24	(a)	(a)	45	25	16	24 1
Openerman .. .. .	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	19	33	18	27	20	18	19
Manager .. .. .	(a)	45	45	30	36 11							

  

	Akola			Buldhana			East Khandesh			West Khandesh		
	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Engineer .. .. .	302	85	148	150	55	120 6	78	52	66 11	(a)	(a)	100
Boiler attendant .. .. .	46	40	42 3	60	27 10	43 10	70	30	55 6	60	45	55
Fitter .. .. .	86	35	55 4	70	26	45 9	68 12	34	51 12	75	39	58
Fireman .. .. .	50	24	34	37	25	29 3	40	24	32 4	40	22	30
Roll-cutter .. .. .	25	18	21	24 6	21	22 14	(a)	(a)	(a)	27	22	24
Cobbler .. .. .	50	25	32 5	40	25	32 4	45	21	32 7	41	25	30 3
Carpenter .. .. .	53 12	30	40 8	50	35	40	(a)	(a)	40	50	40	45
Oilman .. .. .	25	18	20 10	25	20	22 8	28	21	24	39	19 8	23 3
Engine driver .. .. .	50	36	37 8	55	25	36	38	25	29	40	25	33 2
Blacksmith .. .. .	35	21 4	29	50	35	42 5	55	38	47 8	(a)	(a)	(a)
Valveman .. .. .	43 12	23	31	30	24	27	32	28	30	28	25	26 3
Finisherman .. .. .	42	18	23 3	28	22	25 15	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	25
Half-pressman .. .. .	(a)	(a)	22	30	26	27 15	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	27
Openerman .. .. .	27	23	25	26	22	23 11	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	22
Manager .. .. .	86 4	34	51 6	52	25	44 7	83	25	52 2	90	37	55 3

\* Figures are in Rupees and Annas.

(a) Information not available, or this type of worker was not in employment at the time of investigation, or the work was done by another type of skilled worker.

*Dearness Allowance and Bonus.*—In a number of factories the practice is to pay consolidated wages and, therefore, a separate dearness allowance is not shown. On the other hand, in some factories, such as Volkart Brothers Ltd. at Amraoti and Laxmi Narayan Mills Ltd. at Chalisgaon, there is a regular system according to which dearness allowance is paid to workers. It was also noticed that in certain factories dearness allowance was paid at the discretion of the owner, the amounts varying from Rs. 2 to Rs. 30 p.m. In another factory, dearness allowance has been related to the Bombay Millowners' Association's cost of living index. The following table gives the typical rates of dearness allowance paid in one of the factories surveyed.

TABLE 9.  
*Dearness Allowance.*

Pay per month.	Dearness allowance. Rs. per month.
Upto Rs. 60 p.m. . . . .	15
From Rs. 60 to Rs. 125 p.m. . . . .	20
From Rs. 125 to Rs. 200 p.m. . . . .	25
From Rs. 200 to Rs. 275 p.m. . . . .	30
Above Rs. 275 . . . . .	35

Only in 32 out of 98 factories surveyed was any dearness allowance paid. In all 284 or about 25 per cent. of the monthly-paid workers were entitled to separate dearness allowance. Of these, only 27 got Rs. 15 p.m. or more as dearness allowance.

Bonus is paid in 19 factories at the discretion of the management and is dependent upon the accrual of profits. In 11 of these factories all workers—whether permanent or temporary ; skilled or unskilled—were entitled to bonus ; but in the remaining 8, bonus was paid only to the permanent staff. The amount of bonus paid differed from factory to factory, but in most cases it was equal to one month's salary.

*Overtime, etc.*—There is very little overtime working in ginning and pressing factories. When the season is in full swing all the factories have maximum work. The head office or the merchants concerned ask for an immediate delivery of cotton bales at any cost as they are keen upon taking full advantage of the fluctuating prices of cotton all over India. Sometimes at the time of boiler inspection the mechanical staff normally works even on holidays. For overtime work on holidays the mechanical workers, who are few in number, are paid one and half times the usual wage. However, the employers in certain factories extract work from ordinary labourers, to the extent of an hour or so, over and above the scheduled hours, without paying anything extra, by just manipulating the clock sometimes ! However, there is very little night work here. Only 5 out of 56 ginning factories are reported to have worked at night and there is no night-shift work in any of the 42 pressing factories. Only in big factories situated at important cotton centres like Amraoti and Khamgaon is work done at night. But such work is restricted, as it involves the employment of men who must be given double wages at higher rates than those of women working during daytime. There is no fine fund and no deductions of any sort in any factory except the contribution made to the Provident Fund by the permanent workers in one factory. In these factories the common period of wage payment is the week, 82 per cent. of the work-people being paid on that basis. Nearly 18 per cent. of the workers are paid on a monthly basis. Ordinary labourers are paid every week, and the office staff as well as mechanical workers are paid monthly. But there are some cases of

permanent workers being paid on a seasonal or even annual basis.

*Holidays.*—As prescribed by the Factories Act, every factory is closed once a week either on Sunday or on the bazaar day, or on the rationing day. Nearly 64 per cent. of the factories are closed on the bazaar day and the remaining 36 per cent. are closed on Sundays. Sometimes it happens that 2 factories owned by the same management may be closed on 2 different days. For example, at Dhulia, Patuck Co's Gin Factory is closed on Sunday and the Press Factory is closed on Tuesday. In such an arrangement, probably the clerical staff does not get any holiday! Sometimes in almost all factories the clerical staff is compelled to attend the office at least for half the day even on the declared holidays. Of course, the monthly-paid workers automatically get a holiday on important festival days like Divali, Muharram etc. when the daily paid workers themselves remain absent as a result of which the factory cannot be worked.

### III.—Working Conditions.

*Shifts and Hours of Work.*—In almost all the ginning and pressing factories the daily hours of work are 10. Only in 7 ginning factories, the hours of work are 9 and the total spreadover 13 hours. In all the pressing factories the working hours are 10, except in two where they are 9. There is an interval of one hour as rest period. Where only one shift is worked the arrangement of hours of work is as follows:—

- (i) 7-30 a.m. to 12-30 p.m. ; 1-30 p.m. to 6-30 p.m.  
 or (ii) 7-00 a.m. to 12 noon ; 2-00 p.m. to 7-00 p.m.  
 or (iii) 8-00 a.m. to 1 p.m. ; 2-00 p.m. to 7-00 p.m.

As has been said above, night work is resorted to only in very exceptional circumstances, and that too only in the ginning factories. Pressing factories do not work at night. In the following table the hours of work and shifts in a few factories are given:—

TABLE 10.  
*Shifts and Hours of Work.*

Factory No.	Name of the Group or shift.	Actual Working time.	Working Hours.	Total Spread-over.
6	A	6 a.m. to 8 a.m. ; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	9	13
16	B	6 a.m. to 10 a.m. ; and 12 noon to 4 p.m.	8	10
32	C	8 a.m. to 12 noon ; and 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.	9	11
17	A	6 a.m. to 8 a.m. ; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. ; and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	9	13
18	B	6 a.m. to 10 a.m. ; 12 noon to 4 p.m. ; and 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.	10	13
	C	8 a.m. to 12 noon ; and 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.	10	11
28	A	6 a.m. to 7-30 a.m. ; 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. ; and 2-30 p.m. to 7 p.m.	10	13
	B	6 a.m. to 9-00 a.m. ; 10-30 a.m. to 2-30 p.m. ; and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	10	13
	C	6 a.m. to 10-30 a.m. ; 12 noon to 4 p.m. ; and 5-30 p.m. to 7 p.m.	10	13
	D	7-30 a.m. to 12 noon ; and 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.	9½	10½
40	A	6-30 a.m. to 9 a.m. ; 11-30 a.m. to 4 p.m. ; and 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.	8	12½
	B	6-30 a.m. to 11-30 a.m. ; and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.	9	11½
	C	9 a.m. to 2 p.m. ; and 4 p.m. to 7-30 p.m.	8½	10½
34	A	7 a.m. to 9 a.m. ; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. ; and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.	9	13
	B	7 a.m. to 11 a.m. ; and 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.	9	11
	C	9 a.m. to 1 p.m. ; and 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.	9	11
	D	8 a.m. to 1 p.m. ; and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.	9	11

The shifts are overlapping and multiple. In each of the factories, all the shifts in the column against them are working. Owing to the overlapping nature of the shifts, chances of the same worker working for the entire period of spreadover, contrary to the provisions of the Factories Act, are considerable.

*Ventilation.*—Despite the fact that a large number of windows are provided in the ginning rooms, the atmosphere in them is always laden with dust and cotton fibres which are injurious to the lungs. It is obvious that without making arrangements for draught ventilation, conditions would not improve. Not even in the biggest factories were workers provided with dust respirators. This dust trouble was, however, absent in the Double Roller ginning factories of Messrs. Volkart Brothers in which most of the processes had been mechanized.

*Shelters.*—No special shelters are provided for workers in any of the factories because most of the mechanical workers live in the factory compound and other daily-paid workers go for meals to their houses situated nearby. Others, living at a longer distance, are supposed to eat their bread under a tree or in the godowns or in the factory itself. Only in two mills at Khamgaon, temporary shelters about 8 ft.  $\times$  10 ft. of dirty old gunny bags were found erected, where women were supposed to eat their meals during the rest interval.

#### IV.—Welfare Activities.

In the Factory Inspector's Remarks Books repeated warnings are given for lime-washing and cleaning the factory and the latrines. Usually the space in the factory compound where cotton is piled up in a heap, is kept much more clean as compared with the inside of the factory proper. Many a time the factory and especially the latrines are profuse with dirt for which both the illiterate workers and the factory proprietors are responsible. There are no separate washing and bathing facilities in any factory. Near the factory a separate pipe connection is provided or a well is built where workers go for drinking and washing purposes. There are very few factories where even ordinary earthen pots are kept to supply water to the workers. In certain factories a separate worker is employed to serve water to the workers. However, in many factories, especially in the Central Provinces and Berar, certain amenities like free fuel and oil are provided to the mechanical workers living in the factory compound. In the same area, there is also the "chowka" system under which during the season boarding and lodging is free for the office staff and the merchants. In 16 of the factories surveyed, the engineer (or sometimes the manager) is given a servant or cook; and in two others the engineer is given a servant's allowance. In one factory, all workers belonging to the mechanical staff gets free of charge, a pant and a shirt every year.

*Medical Aid.*—In some of the factories except one were there special medical facilities in the form of a dispensary or hospital. However, a first-aid box was found in every factory as required by the Act, which unfortunately in many factories was not used even in emergency cases due to the lack of a first-aider. Some proprietors or companies in urban or semi-urban centres, like Amraoti and Khamgaon, annually contribute to the local public or municipal hospital where the injured are sent for treatment. Only in one progressive factory, is there a system of paying the doctor's bills for treatment of sick employees. Elsewhere, payment is made for treatment of the injured only. In another factory, there is a regular dispensary for treatment of the sick and the injured.

*Grain-shop etc.*—Though there was no regular grain-shop in any of the factories, some proprietors used to buy *jowar* directly from the cultivators in order to supply to their workers (on credit) at controlled or even at lower rates. This practice has been recently stopped due to the introduction of rationing and control of the movement of foodgrains. In none of the factories is any facility available for the education of workers and their children. Also no creche is maintained though nearly 50 per cent. of the workers belong to the female sex.

### V.—Housing.

As the bulk of the workers in these factories either belong to the local areas or come from adjoining villages, housing is not provided by the proprietors to their workpeople. Only in one factory six ordinary labourers were given material for erecting huts for themselves and were allowed to stay permanently within the factory compound. The other persons provided with housing accommodation, in almost all factories, are managers, clerks, mechanics, watchmen etc. Such among them as are temporary are allowed to stay during the season only. In three factories, however, all are allowed to stay during the slack season as well. Only the engineer and the manager are provided with two or more rooms, while the clerks, mechanics etc. are given one room each in *kaccha* built houses or in separate tin sheds or bamboo huts. Generally all workers provided with free quarters also get free oil and fuel. But in 8 gin and 5 press factories, only the engineer and the manager were given this concession of free fuel and oil. Only in one factory, 5 persons of the office staff were provided with rooms for which a nominal rent of Rs. 2 p.m. is charged.

### VI.—The working of Labour Acts.

The Payment of Wages Act was generally observed in all the factories in so far as wages were paid in time without any illegal deductions being made therefrom. In some factories, however, payment to some of the workers was made on a seasonal basis though money was advanced to them according to their requirements. Pay-rolls in a number of factories were rather defective and, therefore, checking was not possible. The Workmen's Compensation Act was found working better here than in most of the other areas where our investigations were carried out. This was obviously due to the fact that in 22 factories workers had been insured against accidents. In these factories the management helped the worker to recover compensation. In other factories, however, things were much the same as elsewhere in India. Even serious accidents, it was alleged, went unreported. The case of workers receiving only minor injuries deserves particular mention. It sometimes happens that the worker, while working at the opener gets his thumb or too injured; but the injury is cured within the "waiting period" with the result that no wages are paid to him for the period of absence. Only in one factory it was found that the injured worker was paid wages even for the first seven days of his absence. As regards the Maternity Benefit Act, though the Act applies, its operation appears to have been infructuous, as women workers are dismissed at the first sign of pregnancy. Also, in most cases the qualifying period is not completed.

### VII.—Accidents and Diseases.

So far as accidents are concerned, the danger spots in the ginning and pressing factories are the opener, the line-shaft alley and the press machine. The opener alone is responsible for half the number of accidents. The pity of it is that most of these accidents could be avoided by a somewhat careful supervision of the work of opener coolies. The ignorant worker uses his hand to insert cotton into the machine and sometimes his hand gets caught. If a small wooden rod were provided for this work, the frequency of such accidents would be reduced immeasurably. The line-shaft alley accidents, occur due to defective lighting and also due to the fact that the clearance between one wheel and another, or between the wheels and the wall of the room, is extremely inadequate. Movement in such conditions becomes hazardous and the cobbler who works in these rooms gets trapped. Such accidents, however, are few in number. As for occupational diseases, little positive information was available due to the absence of periodical or any medical examination of workers but we found an appreciable incidence of diseases like asthma and bronchitis. This, as has already been pointed out, is due to the fact that workers work in the ginning rooms in a dust-laden atmosphere without using dust respirators.

### VIII.—Pooling System.

To avoid cut-throat competition and to concentrate production in a few factories, employers enter into what are called Pooling Agreements. Such arrangements are found in most places, e.g., in pressing factories at Amraoti, Akot, Khamgaon, and Dhulia. There is also a ginning Pool at Dhulia and another at Jalgaon. The success or failure of such agreements especially in the pressing factories depends upon their monopolistic position, because even a single powerful pressing factories depends upon their monopolistic position, because even a single powerful pressing factory outside the Pool can defeat its purpose. The Press Pool at Akola has an agreement under which Rs. 1|8|0 out of Rs. 9|1|0 (which is the pressing charge per bale) is paid into the Pool, As. 4 is paid to the local public school, and the balance is kept by the factory concerned as its net charge for pressing. At Khamgaon, according to the Press Pool agreement, 10 pies is paid as Municipal tax ; 6 pies as war-fund contribution, and Re. 1 as the share of the Pool which is subsequently distributed among the non-active concerns. Usually at the end of the season, fairly large amounts (e.g., Rs. 600) are paid in charity for education, health etc. At Dhulia, under the Gin Pool, out of a total ginning charge of Rs. 8|8|0 per *boja* of 14 maunds, Rs. 2 is contributed to the Pool, As. 8 to the merchant as rebate, and the balance of Rs. 6 is retained by the factory-owner. In the same place, under the Press Pool, Rs. 1|8|0 (out of the pressing charge of Rs. 7 per bale) is paid into the Pool.

### IX.—Miscellaneous.

Labour conditions in these factories are not conducive to the formation of trade unions. The industry is seasonal, the work intermittent and the workers ignorant and illiterate. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is no union worth the name among the workers. There is a Khamgaon Ginning and Pressing Factories Labour Association, but it is almost defunct and is not recognized by the factory owners. The financial position of the workers has improved during the course of the war as most of the members of the family have found work in some capacity or other. This was also reflected in the fact that most of them were able to wipe out their debts. In a large number of factories, where the period of wage payment is one month, advances are paid to all workers every week. This saves the worker from getting indebted to unscrupulous moneylenders. Advances are made free of interest though in one factory interest at 4 per cent. is charged and no worker is allowed to borrow a sum exceeding 3 months' pay. In cases of sickness or marriage requiring large expenditure, some factories help their employees by advancing as much as Rs. 200, free of interest. The amount of loan that may be advanced depends upon the credit of individual workers. Similarly, while there is no regular pension scheme in any of the factories, a few pension-holders came to our notice. A benevolently disposed employer sometimes grants a small pension to such of his employees as have worked devotedly for a long period. An engineer who had worked all his life in one factory, was granted a pension of Rs. 50 p.m. In another factory a Mukadam who had worked for 30 years on daily wages was granted a pension of Rs. 5 per month. Provident Fund facilities are available only in Messrs. Volkart Brothers and there too for the permanent staff only. The worker contributes 5 per cent. 8-1|3 per cent. of his salary according as his wages are Rs. 30 p.m. or more. The firm contributes an equal amount though the worker is entitled to receive such contribution only after 15 years' of service.

### CHAPTER III.—BOMBAY—Gujerat.

In this area 9 factories containing 8 gins and 7 presses were visited. Most of these factories have been working for a long time, 3 of them for over 50 years. Cotton is either brought in the market at Viramgam through brokers or is sent to the factories direct from the fields. None of the factories own

cotton-growing lands. In five factories cotton is ginned and pressed only on behalf of the merchants at fixed rates. In four others, cotton is ginned and pressed both on behalf of the merchants and for the factories. Cotton bales are sent mostly to the Ahmedabad textile mills. The cotton season in this area begins in February and ends by the end of May or the middle of June. The three main ginning and baling centres in this area are, Viramgam, Broach and Palej but there is a pool agreement among the factory proprietors only at Viramgam. In the 1945 season, ginning and pressing rates were fixed at Rs. 9½0 per *khandy* of 20 maunds and Rs. 10 per bale respectively. Out of this, Rs. 2 per *khandy* of cotton ginned or bale pressed was paid into the pool. The proceeds of the pool were divided amongst the parties to the agreement in a fixed proportion. The period of the Pool contract was rather long, being 11 years, and for that period it was irrevocable. The processes of production are akin to those obtaining in the C.P. factories. Only the loosening of cotton, which is done by human labour in some other places, is done here mechanically.

### I.—Employment.

The 9 factories visited employ in an aggregate 1,109 workers daily and of these 65 per cent. are men and 35 per cent. women. The largest factory employs 193 males and 107 females, and the smallest 13 males and 107 females. Out of the 1,109 workers employed in all the factories, only 226 are paid monthly salaries. Others are all daily-rated workers though some may be paid monthly. Labour is not available in sufficient numbers locally at the three centres and is imported from the neighbouring districts. Even unskilled coolies in large numbers have to be brought from outside the factory towns. *Mukadams* and *Mukadamis* are responsible for recruitment, of contractors were paid directly by the management of the factory and the wage-bill was deducted from the sums payable to the contractors.

*Length of Service.*—Information regarding the length of service of operatives could be collected for the office and mechanical staff only. As regards others, especially the employees of contractors, no information was available. As the table below indicates, of the 226 salaried workers, nearly half had worked for less than 1 year in the same concern, and only 15.9 per cent. had worked for more than 5 years. In these factories, even the mechanical workers are employed merely for the season. It was also found that among those who had worked for long periods, a majority belonged to the office staff. Details as regards the length of service of operatives are given below :—

TABLE 11.  
*Length of Service.*

Length of Service.	Unit.	Total	% of								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	226	
Years—											
0-1 ..	27	16	20	12	11	5	4	15	1	111	49.2
1-5 ..	20	8	..	28	..	1	15	1	6	79	34.9
5-10 ..	3	..	..	2	..	1	10	1	..	17	7.5
Over 10 ..	3	2	..	3	..	3	3	5	..	91	8.4
										Total	226 100.0

*Classification of Workers as Permanent and Temporary.*—Such a classification obtains in all the factories. Nearly all the technical hands are employed only for the duration of the season. The stamp of permanency does not, however, carry with it any special privileges in a number of these factories.

Only in 3 factories a separate dearness allowance was paid to the permanent hands. This advantage was, however, set off by the temporary workers being paid increased wages. Leave was granted to all the workers at the discretion of the management. In 2 factories, bonus was given only to the permanent hands, but it was given to all the workers in a third factory. The following tables show respectively the number of permanent and temporary workers in each factory, and the occupations of such workers :—

TABLE 12.  
*Number of Permanent and Temporary Workers.*

Factory Nos.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total % to the Total
No. of Permanent Workers.	9	4	5	4	Nil	1	3	4	1	31 13·7
No. of Temporary Workers.	44	22	15	41	11	9	29	18	6	195 86·3

TABLE 13.  
*Occupation and Number of Permanent Workers.*

Factory Nos.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Engineer .. ..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	3
Manager .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	3
Clerk .. ..	..	4	3	2	4	..	..	..	..	13
Watchman .. ..	..	5	..	2	..	1	2	2	..	12

*Miscellaneous.*—In none of these factories was there any system of apprenticeship or graded promotion. It was, however, stated that increments were granted at the discretion of the management. Absenteeism was found to be negligible. The fact that housing accommodation at the factory was provided to a large number of workers who had been imported from outside was ostensibly responsible for this. Labour turnover was also low. Workers show a tendency to work in the same factory for the whole of the season. Moreover, the technical hands bind themselves under a contract to work for one factory throughout the season or else to give a substitute worker. The terms of the contract serve as standing orders, governing the relations between the employers and employees. The management reserve the right to dismiss any worker at any time without assigning any reason. The terms of contract are generally very unfair to the worker. According to these contracts no worker can leave the factory compound without the permission of his superiors. Secondly, if a worker leaves the factory in the midst of the season without giving a substitute, he has to defray the expenses incurred by the management in procuring the services of another person. Moreover, he cannot ask for a revision of his rates of wages. An acute shortage of labour is felt by these seasonal factories as a result of the absorption of almost the whole of local labour in the textile mills. It is natural that workers should prefer perennial employment in the textile mills to seasonal employment in the ginning and baling factories. The result is that whole gangs of workers have to be imported and large sums of money spent on travelling expenses.

## II.—Wages and Earnings.

Rates of wages depend upon the supply of labour available locally at the beginning of the season. As the factories commence working one after another and the supply becomes short, wages tend to go up. And while workers

agree to certain rates in the beginning, the interaction of the forces of supply and demand forces the employer often to revise their rates. The rates of wages paid to different types of unskilled workers are given in the following table :—

TABLE 14.  
*Average Rates of Wages of Unskilled Workers.*

Occupation.	Wages per day		
	Rs.	As.	Ps.
<i>Gins.</i>			
Mukadam .. .. .	1	11	0
Mukadami .. .. .	1	2	0
Gin-feeders .. .. .	0	10	0
Seed-pickers .. .. .	0	11	2
Kapas-carriers .. .. .	1	13	6
Cotton carriers .. .. .	1	1	6
Cottonseed carriers .. .. .	1	2	6
<i>Presses.</i>			
Pallewalas .. .. .	1	12	0
Cotton carriers .. .. .	1	9	0
Labariwalas .. .. .	1	5	4
Tolewalas .. .. .	1	2	8
Cotton pickers .. .. .	0	11	3

As regards the skilled staff, it was possible to collect figures for wages paid in 1939 also. In the following table a comparison is made between the rates of wages paid in 1939 and those paid in 1945 :—

TABLE 15.  
*Average Rates of Wages—Skilled Workers.*

Occupation.	Average Wages.						Increase %
	1939			1945			
	Rs.	As.	Ps.	Rs.	As.	Ps.	
Engineers .. .. .	133	5	0	160	8	0	20
Boiler-attendant .. .. .	40	0	0	57	9	0	44
Fitters .. .. .	36	10	8	46	4	6	26
Firemen .. .. .	26	0	0	45	6	6	75
Roll-cutters .. .. .	15	0	0	24	0	0	60
Cobblers .. .. .	36	10	8	54	2	0	48
Carpenters .. .. .	33	5	4	56	0	0	38
Oilmen .. .. .	14	5	4	30	0	0	109
Engine-drivers .. .. .	25	0	0	44	10	0	76
Blacksmiths .. .. .	34	5	4	46	13	0	66
Valvemmen .. .. .	20	0	0	31	8	0	58
Watchmen .. .. .	10	0	0	25	13	0	158
Coalmen .. .. .	18	0	0	27	8	0	53
Others .. .. .	22	8	0	36	0	0	60

It may, however, be noted that the above table does not show all the earnings of the workers. Sometimes, at the end of the season they are given additional sums also. No records of such payments were available. As for dearness allowance and bonus, it seems that only the permanent workers are entitled to these. An additional dearness allowance is given in almost all the factories though bonus is given only in four of them. Bonus is equal to one month's pay in most cases.

Most of the factories do not work overtime ; but where such work is done, no extra payment is usually made. The managers in some factories are illiterate and unaware of the law regarding overtime work. In a couple of factories, however, it was claimed that payments were being made for overtime at prescribed rates. No complaints were made as regards deductions, fines, etc. Wages are paid either daily or monthly or per season. Out of a total of 1,109 workers employed in the 9 factories surveyed, 262 (or 23.6 per cent.) were paid daily, 649 (or 58.5 per cent.) monthly, and 198 (or 17.9 per cent.) per season. No payments are made weekly. Those who are employed on the seasonal basis, receive advances from time to time. Sunday is observed as a holiday in all the factories except in those at Viramgam. In this town rations are distributed on Tuesdays and therefore factories are also closed on that day. Other holidays, especially for festivals, are granted at the discretion of the management.

### III.—Working Conditions and Welfare Activities.

Of the 9 factories surveyed, 6 worked one shift a day, and 3 two shifts. The hours of work in the day shift where from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. with an hour's rest between 1 and 2 p.m. In two factories, the night shift began at 8 p.m. and ended at 7 a.m. with a rest interval of one hour between 1 and 2 a.m. In the third factory the night shift began one hour earlier, but the total hours of work were the same. No overlapping shifts were worked in any of these factories. Arrangements for ventilation and lighting were found to be fairly satisfactory. No shelters were provided for the use of workers. Water for drinking purposes was kept in earthen pitchers. Latrines and urinals were found to be either insufficient or unclean. As regards medical aid, at Viramgam there is a charitable dispensary in the town which is open to all. People are given free medical help. This dispensary is run with the monetary help of the proprietor of one of the 3 factories. Similarly, there is a free municipal dispensary at Broach and the workers take advantage of this. But sometimes, in the case of one factory, the sick workers' bill is paid by the company. So far in this season only one *Mukadam's* bill of Rs. 8610 was paid by this company. There is, however, no medical help of any sort in the case of two factories. Only in one factory, free medical help is given to all. Besides this there are no welfare activities of any sort in any of these factories.

### IV.—Housing.

The proprietors of big factories especially at Broach and Palej, who import many labourers, are forced to make some provision for their housing. Excepting some of the mechanical workers, all are dumped together in temporary erected single-room dingy tenements. Generally the practice is to give one room to a family. But 4 or 5 ordinary workers are sometimes made to stay in small room, where even a couple of men would cause crowding. Arrangements for lighting and ventilation are deplorable in these rooms. In spite of the Factory Inspector's repeated remarks, no tangible improvement has been effected in these quarters. In the case of 3 factories housing is provided to 20 persons. In two factories the engineer is provided with a separate block of 4 rooms. In two other factories large tin sheds have been partitioned to provide accommodation to about 75 workers. Apart from these, there is a large number of temporary huts erected to provide living space to about 200 coolies. The general appearance of these quarters and the sanitary conditions in and around them are, to say the least, most deplorable.

### V.—Miscellaneous.

The provisions of the Factories Act are not being observed scrupulously in any of the factories, and the most commonly disregarded are the provisions with regard to sanitation and hours of work. The way in which the registers

are maintained is also defective. The Payment of Wages Act requires the maintenance of pay-rolls in prescribed forms but in some factories it was found that the requirements of law in this regard were being disregarded. The employment of workers on a seasonal basis under strict contracts is itself objectionable, but more so is the withholding of their wages until the end of the season. Only small advances are made to them twice or three a month. It is not wholly impossible that the ignorant, illiterate workers are cheated of a part of their earnings at the time of accounting. Five factories were insured with private concerns against employment injury. The operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act in other concerns appeared to be infructuous in so far as no compensation has been paid to anyone in the course of the past five years. Of course, it was claimed that no accidents had occurred in that period. No cases of occupational diseases were reported. Workers were not indebted either to moneylenders or to factories. In times of emergency, factories advanced small sums of money to their employees and recovered the amount in instalments. No interest was charged for such advances. There was no arrangement for provident fund facilities in any of the concerns. Only in two of them it was found that such employees of the firm as retired after a long period of service were paid sums of money as gratuities at the discretion of the management. Thus, in one factory when an engineer died after 25 years of continuous service, his family was given Rs. 1,000 as gratuity. There were half a dozen other cases in which also a gratuity had been paid.

#### CHAPTER IV—BOMBAY—Hubli.

What distinguishes the cotton ginning and baling factories in this area from those elsewhere in the country is their perennial character. There is, of course, an active ginning season corresponding to the cotton season of the area—March to August,—but while there is maximum pressure of work in these months, the factories continue working, sometimes intermittently in other months also. Obviously, suitable climatic conditions are responsible for this. There is also the fact that the rich cultivators of the area store raw cotton for some time and sell it only when the prices show an upward trend. Nor is the quality of the crop affected in any way even if it is stored for a couple of years. The worker is benefited under these conditions, as he gets employment for a longer period than is possible in factories in other areas. The types of workers employed here are the same as elsewhere, viz., engineers fitters, boiler-attendants, cobblers oilmen, firemen, carpenters, drivers, valve-men, finishermen, opener coolies, kapas and cotton carriers, cotton pickers, etc. The processes of production described earlier need not be repeated here. Only the pressing process is less mechanized here. It is necessary to loosen cotton before pressing and baling. In the C.P. factories this is done with the help of machines; but in Hubli large numbers of workers are employed to do the job. Probably this is due to the fact that the particular variety of cotton ginned here cannot stand machine loosening.

The factories in this area have entered into a pool agreement known as the Hubli Pressing Pool Agreement. According to this Agreement, each factory is to charge a standard pressing rate of Rs. 10/2/0 per bale. Of this Rs. 2 are given to charity funds, Rs. 2 to the pool and Rs. 8 are retained by the working factory. When the factory presses its own cotton, it pays Rs. 2 per bale into the Pool. Pool arrangements are entered into for a period of five years, capable of renewals subsequently.

##### I.—Employment.

In all 7 gins and 6 presses in 8 factories were surveyed and the total average daily number of workers employed in all the factories was found to be 842. Of these 365 were men and 477 women, and apart from the mechanical staff numbering 106, the rest were employed on daily wages. The biggest

factory employed 186 workers, consisting of 53 males and 133 females. The smallest employed 18 males and 2 females. An important point to be noted in the connection is that the dealer-merchants employed all the unskilled workers and the factories employed only the technical staff. The employees of the merchants are known as *Pallewalas*. In most factories there was contract labour.

*Length of Service.*—Information regarding the length of service of the employees of merchants could not be collected due to absence of records ; but such information was supplied by 7 factories, though only in regard to their direct employees. 54 per cent. of workers in these 7 factories had worked for over 1 year and 21.5 per cent. had put in over 10 years' service in the same concern. The following table gives details in this regard :—

TABLE 16.  
*Length of Service.*

Length of Service in years.	Unit.	% of Total						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
0—1 .. ..	9	5	8	1	1	..	21	45 46
1—5 .. ..	3	3	2	3	2	1	7	21 21.5
5—10 .. ..	3	..	..	1	6	..	..	10 11
Over 10 .. ..	5	..	..	2	6	6	27	21 21.5

*Classification of Workers.*—All the employees of the merchants are regarded as temporary for all practical purposes. It is only in the case of technical men that this classification obtains. It was found that out of a total of 106 workers belonging to this category, 73 or 68.8 per cent. were permanent. However, it was only in 4 factories that confirmation in service gave title to any extra privileges. This was especially so in one factory, where permanent men got 21 days' leave with pay annually, a gratuity after 25 years' service and a dearness allowance equal to 25 per cent. of their wages. When large profits accrued, they were given some bonus also. In other factories, permanent workers alone were entitled to bonus and emergency leave.

*Recruitment.*—As has been said above, nearly all the unskilled labour is employed and paid by contractors and, therefore, the management of the factory does not bother on this account. In the days before the war there was an abundance of labour, as men from the neighbouring famine areas used to flock this side. In recent years, however, things are different, and due to the migration of a large number of workers to military centres, the industry feels handicapped by labour shortage. Even at the present moment the problem is not acute and with some effort labour can be recruited locally. Very few persons are brought from distant place but those that are so imported are paid a travelling allowance.

## II.—Wages and Earnings.

Wages for the different categories of workers have become more or less standardised and wage-differentials for the same occupation have been eliminated. Rates for skilled workmen, however, differ from factory to factory. There are no objective criteria for fixing these rates, and market conditions alone determine them. The following table gives the rates of wages paid to various categories of labour.

TABLE 17.  
Rates of Wages at Hubli.

Occupation.	Average Wages.
<i>Monthly.</i>	
Engineers .. .. .	Rs. As. Pa. 135 0 0
Fitters .. .. .	38 8 0
Firemen .. .. .	28 0 0
Cobblers .. .. .	33 0 0
Carpenters .. .. .	61 0 0
Oilmen .. .. .	21 8 0
Dirvers .. .. .	23 0 0
Valvemen .. .. .	30 0 0
Managers .. .. .	52 0 0
<i>Daily.</i>	
Mukadami .. .. .	0 14 6
Gin feeders .. .. .	0 7 2
Sweepers .. .. .	0 9 0
Seed pickers .. .. .	0 9 0
Kapas-carriers .. .. .	1 4 0
Gunnybag fillers .. .. .	1 3 3
Seed carriers .. .. .	0 13 0
Opener coolies .. .. .	1 2 0
Lashers I .. .. .	1 14 0
Lashers II .. .. .	1 6 3
Pallewalas (Male) .. .. .	1 3 0
Pallewalas (Female) .. .. .	0 11 0

The period of wage payment for unskilled daily rated workers is one week and for the technical hands it is one month. No complaints were made regarding delay in the payment of wages. Sunday is observed as weekly holiday in all the factories. In addition to Sunday, some festivals are also declared holidays. In one factory, all Bank holidays are observed.

### III.—Working Conditions and Welfare Activities.

Hours of work in most of the factories are 10, the spreadover being 11 hours, as there is a rest interval of an hour's duration. Only in one factory, are the working hours 9. In another factory, the spreadover is 12 hours, because the rest interval consists of 2 hours. The shift begins at 8 or 8.30 in the morning and ends at 7 or 7.30 in the evening. No multiple or overlapping shifts are worked. Conditions as regards lighting, ventilation, congestion, etc., are very unsatisfactory. Apart from the ginning rooms and line-shafts which are lighted and ventilated very deplorably, there is another place in these factories which needs mention. In the godown where the cotton is loosened, large numbers of workers are employed and they work for long hours in an atmosphere full of cotton particles and dust. No factory has built shelters for use of its employees and workers either go to their places or sit in the open and eat their meals. As for welfare activities, the less said the better. No provision has been made for washing and bathing, canteens, grainshops, etc. More than that, no arrangements have been made even for medical aid in any of the factories, except one where the sick were attended to free of cost.

## IV.—Housing.

It was found that in the factories surveyed only 20 persons—all belonging to the technical staff—had been housed. Details as regards housing and other facilities are given in the following table.

TABLE 18.

*Housing and other Benefits Provided by Factories.*

Factory No.	No. of persons provided with quarters.	Occupation.	Remarks.
1	1	Manager-cum-Engineer .. ..	Quarters, Oil and Fuel free.
2	2	One Engineer and one Fitter .. ..	Do.
3	1	Engineer .. ..	Do.
4	1	Engineer .. ..	Free quarters only.
5	1	Engineer-cum-Manager .. ..	Free quarters, oil fuel and cook.
6	1	Manager .. ..	Free quarters and fuel.
7	6	Mechanical staff .. ..	Free quarters only.
8	7	Do.	Free quarters and fuel.

## V.—Miscellaneous.

On the whole, the provisions of the various acts were being observed and even though over 80 per cent. of the workers were employed by contractors and merchants, no complaints were made as regards delay in the payment of wages. The operation of the Maternity Benefit Act, however, had been rendered infructuous (i) by the exclusion of women of child-bearing age, or (ii) by dismissing women at the first sign of pregnancy. In 6 out of the 8 visited, workers were insured with private insurance companies against accidents. The number of accidents occurring in these factories is negligible. In 1944, an accident occurred in one factory as a result of which the left hand of a fitter was permanently disabled. He was paid Rs. 441 as compensation. There is no system of advancing loan in any factory except in one where interest-free loans to the extent of Rs. 100 are given to needy workers. Provident fund facilities are not available anywhere, though a gratuity equal to six months' salary is given in one factory to such of the employees as retire after 25 years of service.

## CHAPTER V.—MADRAS—Tirupur.

There are 178 cotton gins and presses in the Madras Presidency which come under the operation of the Factories Act of 1934. These concerns are distributed among the different districts as follows:—

Coimbatore .. ..	75	Anantapur .. ..	4
Ramnad .. ..	24	Salem .. ..	4
Tinnevely .. ..	30	North Arcot .. ..	1
Bellary .. ..	21	South Arcot .. ..	2
Madura .. ..	11	East Godavari .. ..	1
Guntur .. ..	4	Kurnool .. ..	1

The size of the concerns, determined by the numbers of operatives, can be gauged from the fact that there are 23 concerns employing less than 20 persons; 83 concerns employing between 21 and 50 persons; 44 concerns employing between 50 and 100 persons; and 23 concerns employing more than 100 persons. The total daily average number of workers employed in the year was approximately 11,230 in 1943 for all the concerns in the Province. The total daily average number of workers (5,450) employed in cotton gins and presses in the Coimbatore District alone constitutes nearly half of the total number employed in all the gins and presses in the Province.

Of these, Tirupur in the Coimbatore District provides an average employment for 2,330 operatives daily. Thus, while the Coimbatore District stands out prominently as a cotton-growing area in the Province and is well-known as a consumption centre, it owes its importance to Tirupur which supplies ginned cotton to the textile mills of Coimbatore besides exporting it to other centres and foreign countries. There are 75 cotton gins and presses in the Coimbatore District out of which 25 are in Tirupur (20 cotton gins, 4 gins and presses and 1 press).

The main strains of cotton grown in Coimbatore District are Cambodia and Karunganni. The cotton season commences with March and ends with September. The active months of the season when ginning is at its peak are March, April, May and June. Cotton comes to the Tirupur market from Avanashi and Palladam, as also from the adjacent villages. In certain parts of the Province, cotton gins carry on mixed operations. For instance, groundnut decortication is done in the gins of the Bellary District in Telugu parts and in those at Pollachi, in the Coimbatore District. There are also a few textile mills which have cotton ginning as a side operation. But even with these complementary operations the gins are not able to provide employment throughout the year. Originally most of the cotton gins of Tirupur belonged to the Bombay merchants. The words in vogue like *kapas*, *khulasi* and *borah* clearly indicate this. Now the factories have changed hands and most of them are either owned or are taken on lease by the local merchants. Nine units out of the 25 at Tirupur were investigated. One unit (No. 10) in Coimbatore was selected for investigation, since there were mixed operations of groundnut decortication and oil milling in addition to cotton ginning in that unit. Most of the concerns are ginning factories only, although pressing is done in two of them. Some ginning factories of Tirupur are owned by mill-owners of Coimbatore. Units No. 6, 7, 8 and 9 belong to this category. Unit No. 5 belongs to the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills Ltd. These gins buy cotton from the cultivators and after ginning it send it on to their mills. The proprietors of Unit No. 7 are the managing partners of Sri Ranga Vilas Mills and Pioneer Mills at Coimbatore, Kumaran Mills at Pudupalayam, and Sri Balasubramanya Mills at Singanailur. In the same manner, cotton is ginned and baled in Unit No. 6 to be sent to the Pankaja Mills in Coimbatore. These factories also gin cotton for dealers.

There are units which directly deal in cotton and which are not linked to textile mills in the manner stated above. These units buy cotton from cultivators either directly or through their agents, gin the cotton and sell it either to textile mills at consumption centres like Coimbatore and Madura or export it to foreign countries as was done in the pre-war period. The proprietors of units No. 2, 3 and 4 exported cotton to Lancashire and Japan before the war. Now on account of the outbreak of war these gins have to look to the local buyers who are for the most part the millowners of Coimbatore. Of these units, units 2 and 3 do ginning for outsiders but not unit No. 3. In unit No. 4, the Agricultural Demonstrator of Tirupur arranges for the ginning of cotton brought by cultivators in whose case the Department have loaned seed and supervised cultivation from sowing to harvesting. The Agricultural Department is thus one of the important constituents of this Unit. The factory has got a winnowing machine which was utilised for winnowing waste cotton to be exported to Hamburg before the war broke out. Some units depend entirely on the ginning charges, and do not deal in cotton themselves. Unit No. 10 at Coimbatore (as stated earlier) has groundnut decortication and oil milling as mixed operations. The factory gets groundnut from the Pollachi area during the months of August, September and October, and from

Puliyampatti and Bhavani during the months of December, January and February. It stores groundnut for purposes of oilmilling; but despite this, employment is available to workers only for 8 months in the year. The owner is now thinking of expanding the operations by installing additional plant so far as oil milling is concerned.

According to the proprietors there does not seem to be any pooling arrangement among them but there was a communique issued by the Madras Government in 1927 prohibiting pools at Tirupur, Narasaraopet, etc. The manager of unit No. 5 stated that at one time a pooling arrangement was thought of but had to be given up.

### I.—Employment.

As for employment figures, some of the units were started only recently. Hence figures, wherever available, are given for 1939, but in the case of other units figures are for subsequent years.

TABLE 19.

*Average Daily Employment in Gins and Presses.*

Unit No.	Date	Men	Women	Piece-rate	Time-rate	Total
1	1939 June	10	56	10	56	66
2	Do.	14	45	14	45	59
3	Not available					
4	Recently started					
5	1939 June	21	37	Nil	58	58
6	Not available					
7	1941 June	9	73	9	73	82
8	Recently started					
9	1941 November	4	47	4	47	51
1	1944 June	12	126	12	126	138
2	Do.	14	95	14	95	109
3	Do.	15	98	Nil	113	113
4	Do.	7	58	7	58	65
5	Do.	23	25	Nil	49	49
6	Do.	23	27	7	41	50
7	Do.	4	17	4	17	21
8	Do.	13	95	13	95	108
9	Do.	4	9	4	9	13
10	Do.	10	52	Nil	62	62

The above figures do not give a precise idea of the total daily number of workers employed, since, according to the custom prevailing in these parts, the dealers who bring cotton to factories for ginning purposes engage their own coolies for picking strains from cotton. The number employed for this work is substantial. The dealers maintain note-books in which they enter the names of coolies engaged by them and the amount paid to them. These are maintained in a most slipshod manner for their own information and are not available to outsiders. A few factories enter the total number of workers engaged by the dealers in the registers to satisfy the Factory Inspectorate. Likewise, the contractor's coolies also do not figure on the muster rolls. Since Inspectors of factories have been insisting from time to time that the factory management is responsible for the labourers engaged by the contractors, figures for such employment also are shown on the rolls in some cases. For these reasons, the average daily number of workers as given in the musters may not be considered as exact.

The women workers are paid directly by the factories, so far as the gin-feeders and seed-carriers are concerned. But when dealers' cotton is picked within the factory premises, it is the dealers that employ these women coolies

and not the ginning factory. The dealers have to pay wages directly to these women. When the concern gins its own cotton, it employs and pays the different types of women workers directly.

The labour turnover in gins is considerable. Since labour employed is casual the question of retirement and dismissals does not arise. There is no classification of operatives into permanent and temporary, as even the mechanics are changed often. The workers come for work and leave the factory of their own accord after some days and go to another for work. The nature of employment is such that these coolies are engaged only temporarily by the factory or dealers when they have cotton to gin and are sent away when there is no work. Likewise, reliable figures for absenteeism were not available since the musters were maintained very irregularly. The number of workers changes from day to day according to the intensity of work. On those days when there is not much work, only the required number of labourers are taken in for work and others who are on roll are marked absent. But workers who were not previously on rolls and who joined the factory in the middle of the wage-period are marked absent for the preceding days of the wage-period. On account of these facts, figures of absenteeism are inflated and they vary from 9.5 per cent. to 25 per cent.

Almost all the workers are drawn from agricultural classes, and they are engaged in agricultural pursuits in the slack season. So far as cotton gins and presses are concerned, there is no system of recruitment of labourers. Workers come to factories of their own accord for employment. If a factory experiences any shortage of labour it sends someone to the village : nearby to fetch labourers. The employment of workers in cotton gins is closely connected with the seasonal nature of the product. Besides this seasonal variation, employment also depends on the business transactions of dealers. While there are concerns which solely gin their own cotton, there are others which gin for outsiders and depend thus on the ginning charges. The ginning and baling operations take place in spurts during the active months of the season, and to a considerable extent the factory work is influenced by erratic fluctuations in the cotton market. For this reason, employment in cotton gins is of the casual type. The floating labour force drifts in this direction and that for work. If there is no work in one concern, the labourers flock to another, and if no work is available in cotton gins, they collect themselves in front of rice mills. Thus, there is an ebb and flow of employment which does not have, at the same time, a definite periodicity. Rice mills at present do not get supplies of paddy from Tanjore, and the quotas of paddy allotted to mills by the authorities are considered insufficient. Hence the mills remain closed and there is no question of employment in them acting as a complement to the purely seasonal work of ginning. But at the same time there is scarcity of labour experienced by cotton gins sometimes, since there is a diversion of labour force into military constructional works, carried on in villages near Tirupur. Labourers are attracted to these works, since they receive higher wages with less work in addition to the advantage that the lorry comes to the villages early in the morning to take them to the work-spot, and brings them back to their village homes in the evenings.

## II.—Wages and Earnings.

In the ginning factories of Tirupur, women are paid daily wages whereas men receive piece-rates, except in unit No. 3 which has dispensed with payment by the piece. In unit No. 4 for stamping ginned cotton into *borahs*, the factory employs men on time rates, whereas for weighment and stacking, the dealers employ men and pay them by the piece. In unit No. 5 only time wages are paid to men. Unit No. 10 at Coimbatore pays daily wages to men workers.

In 1939 the following wage rates were in force for different types of workers :—

Kapas-pickers	..	..	..	4 annas daily.
Gin-feeders	..	..	..	5 " "
Seed-carriers	..	..	..	5 annas 6 pica daily.
<i>Khalasis</i>	..	..	..	15 annas per candy of seven hundred eighty four lbs. of ginned cotton.
Head coolies	..	..	..	Rs. 2=4=0 per week.
Gin coolies on night shift	..	..	..	8 annas daily.

Though these were the rates generally, there were some variations as between different units. For instance in Unit No. 1 the rates in 1939 were as under :—

Kapas-pickers	..	..	..	3 annas daily.
Gin-coolies	..	..	..	4 " "
Seed-carriers	..	..	..	4 " "
<i>Khalasis</i>	..	..	..	Rs. 1=0=6 per candy.

Regarding payment of piece rates to *Khalasis*, Unit No. 7 paid them Rs. 1|2|0 per candy.

The following wage rates were in force in the units investigated in June 1944 :—

Kapas-pickers	..	..	..	7 annas a day.
Gin-feeders	..	..	..	8 " "
Seed-carriers	..	..	..	9 " "
<i>Khalasis</i>	..	..	..	Rs. 2=4=0 per candy of cambodia cotton Rs. 2=8=0 per candy for Karunganni cotton.

The number of kapas-pickers preponderates over the number of gin-feeders and seed carriers. The number of gin-feeders is in proportion to the number of gins working in a factory. Seed-carriers, who number 3 or 4, are paid in most of the units 9 annas a day, whereas they receive 8-1|2 annas in unit No. 1 and 10 annas a day in unit No. 7. Since mostly women constitute the labour force of ginning factories, a woman *maistry* is appointed in most concerns on a fixed weekly pay to look after labour discipline besides doing her work either as a kapas-picker or as a gin feeder. She is also responsible for the weighment of cotton seed. The weekly payment to the *maistry* differs in different units. Out of the 9 units investigated at Tirupur 7 pay Rs. 4 as weekly wage, whereas unit No. 9 pays Rs. 5 and unit No. 5, Rs. 3|6|0 a week. The *maistry* is not in charge of weighment of seed in unit No. 5. There are no principles which govern the fixation of wage rates so far as the ginning factories are concerned. Enquiry has brought to light a schedule of wage rates that was drawn up by the Cotton Merchants' Association of Tirupur which came into effect only on 18th March 1944. The Manager of unit No. 5 stated that as there was scarcity of labour the Employers' Association enhanced the wages and standardised them, for different types of workers. Thus there exists at present a one-sided agreement regarding the rates of wages to be paid to the workers in ginning factories.

The wage-schedule of the employers gives the rates to be paid for time and piece work, and also for certain other minor items as rates to be charged from dealers for weighment, storage, etc. The *Khalasis* have to be paid, according to the wage regulations, a piece rate of Rs. 3 per candy of stains ginned. But stains are not ginned in most of the factories lest the wear and tear should be very high. There is only one factory which gins stains in Tirupur. The gin-workers on the night shift have to be paid a time rate of As. 12. This wage fixation followed in the wake of the general scarcity of labour and was also partly due to the labour unrest caused in unit No. 3 some time back.

So far as *Khalasis* are concerned, the practice is that of group payment. They are paid their wages by the piece at the end of every week on the basis of the total number of *khandies* ginned at the rates fixed for the two strains

of cotton namely Cambodia and Karunganni. The group distributes the wages among its members after paying any hired labourers. Generally these *khalasis* try as far as possible to do the entire work themselves. If more cotton is brought to the factory to be ginned with which the batch is not able to cope, they engage coolies, whom they usually pay at the rate of Re. 1 a day. On an average the earnings of a *khalasi* fluctuate between Rs. 2 and 3 per day.

As for the periods of wage payment the daily-rated labourers and the contract workers are paid every week. Most of the units in Tirupur pay wages on Tuesday, since it is a bazaar day. There does not seem to be any time-lag in regard to wage payment. There is no system of giving credit in any of the factories.

*Pressing.*—In units No. 5 and 6 where the combined operations of ginning and baling are done, there are instances of both time-rate and piece-rate payment. For instance, in unit No. 5 all the workers are employed directly and paid time rates, whereas in unit No. 6 the contract system is prevalent. The contractor is being paid Rs. 35 per 100 bales pressed since April 1943 and he employs labourers for pressing operation some of whom are paid by the time and some by the piece, the latter at the rate of Rs. 6|12|0 per 100 bales pressed. Before 1943, unit No. 6 was paying the contractor Rs. 28 per 100 bales, whereas the contractor was paying the piece-rate workers Rs. 4|8|0 for pressing 100 bales. Only the rammers and lashers were paid by the piece, whereas other coolies received daily wages. Now the *pala* coolies in unit No. 6, who clean the cotton, are paid As. 8 as daily wage, whereas cotton carriers, and feeders who are employed at the opener, are paid As. 12. There is an increase in the wage rates of *pala* coolies of anna 1 as compared with daily wages paid in 1943, whereas the rates of cotton-carriers and feeders have increased by As. 2 a day.

In unit No. 5, for the pressing operation the women coolies were paid a daily wage of As. 5-1 2 in 1939, but are now getting As. 8. Men who stitch the *borahs* and weigh them are paid As. 10 to As. 12 a day, whereas they were paid only As. 8 to As. 9 in 1939. The rammers and lashers receive piece wages in unit No. 6, but in unit No. 5 they receive a daily wage of As. 14-1|2.

*Wages of skilled workers.*—The following table gives the number and types of mechanics employed in each unit and the wages paid to them for the month of June 1944, including dearness allowance :—

TABLE 20.  
Rates of Wages of Skilled Workers.

No. of unit	Designation														
	Driver.		Fitter		Oiler		Electrician		Valveman		Finisher		Pressman		
	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	a.	ps.
1			(2) 42	8	0	(1) 15	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
			20	0	0										
2	(1) 60	0	0	(1) 35	0	0	(1) 20	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..
3			(3) 52	8	0	(2) 22	8	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
			37	8	0										
			37	8	0	22	8	0							
4			(2) 45	0	0	(1) 15	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
			40	8	0										
5			(2) 100	0	0	..	(1) 65	0	0	(2) 60	0	0	..	..	..
			67	0	0					5	7	0			
										(per week).					
6			(1) 40	0	0	(1) 20	0	0	(1) 55	0	0	..	(1) 15	0	0 1 3
7	(1) 37	8	0	..	..	(1) 19	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
8	(1) 32	0	0	(1) 32	0	0	(1) 17	8	0	..	..	..	..	..	..
9	(1) 32	8	0	(1) 30	0	0	(2) 18	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..
							13	0	0						
10	(4) 52	0	0												
			30	0	0										
			30	0	0										
			32	0	0										

(Figures in brackets indicate the number of mechanics in the category concerned).

The maximum number of mechanics in a unit may be taken as 5 whereas the minimum is 2. The services of at least 2 mechanics thus seem to be indispensable for a gin or a press. In all the units the mechanics are paid their salaries on a monthly basis, excepting one valveman in unit No. 5 who is paid a weekly wage.

*Bonuses and Allowances.*—The mechanics along with the office staff are given in all the units a cost-of-living bonus. It is usually 50 per cent. of their salary. In unit No. 1 the payment of dearness allowance commenced from September 1942. The mechanics as well as the office staff received 25 per cent. of their pay as dearness allowance till July 1943. Since August 1943 they have been granted a dearness allowance of 50 per cent. of their pay. Though there is variation as among the different units regarding the dates of the grant of dearness allowance, 50 per cent. of the salary is given at present in most of the units. This allowance is considered as temporary and would probably last as long as the inflationary rise in prices prevails. There are no other allowances, bonuses or gratuities given except in units No. 3 and 5. In unit No. 3, in addition to the monthly salary, the mechanics are given a yield wage also. If the total quantity of cotton ginned exceeds the prescribed norm, for every 1/16th of a candy As. 2 is paid to the fitter and Anna 1 to the oiler. The head fitter gets As. 2-1/2 and the factory clerk also gets As. 2-1/2. For the month of June 1944 the two fitters in unit No. 3 earned Rs. 3|8|0 each, whereas the oilers earned Rs. 1|12|0 each on this basis. The permanent staff in unit No. 5 used to be given a yearly bonus of 10 per cent. Now the staff in that unit is paid 12-1/2 per cent. as bonus. Besides this the management contributes to a Gratuity Fund also as follows :—

For the first ten years of service	5%
From 11 to 17 years	7½%
Over 18 years	10%

It is the usual custom in all the cotton gins to grant 3 months' pay as yearly bonus to the permanent employees. One month's pay is given as a present on the occasion of Deepavali. The grant of these bonuses is at the discretion of the proprietor. The workers do not share any of these benefits. These allowances do not figure on the pay-rolls.

*Miscellaneous.*—No overtime is worked in the cotton gins. According to the Factory Inspector's reports, there are at times technical violations in this respect. But these violations, if any, may not be taken as tantamount to exaction of work without payment. There is no deduction from wages. The monthly staff receive their pay in some units at the end of every month; in others they are paid in the first week of the next following month. On rare occasions, in unit No. 3, the monthly paid staff are given advances against their pay. But such a system does not seem to prevail in other units.

### III.—Working Conditions.

All the units in Tirupur work from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thus 10 hours are worked in gins and presses with 1 hour as interval. The total spreadover is 11 hours. The gins work night shifts occasionally when ginning is in full swing. The night shift commences from 8 p.m. and lasts till 7 a.m. with an interval of one hour between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. The total spreadover is 11 hours. Different batches work on day and night shifts.

Conditions under which the labourers work are not enviable. There are no shelters provided for the workers during rest intervals in any one of the units, whether big or small. The workers, mostly women, bring their meals from their villages and take food in the godowns. During rest interval, labourers were found sleeping near the heaps of cotton in godowns. Though ventilation and lighting satisfy the conditions prescribed under the Factories

Act, a state of congestion seems to prevail in all the units. There is no protection from dust raised during the ginning of cotton. Though no evidence was forthcoming regarding the unhealthy nature of work causing some occupational disease, work at the gins probably leads to respiratory complaints.

#### IV.—Welfare Activities.

As for sanitary arrangements, they are in general unsatisfactory. Proper arrangements for the supply of drinking water are seldom made. The Inspectors of Factories have repeatedly stated that at the time of their visit the water cisterns were found empty. Within the factory premises the concerns usually have a big cement tub constructed in which water is stored. In certain cases the cement tanks are covered whereas in others they are not covered. No cool water is supplied to workers during summer in most of the gins. Latrine accommodation is quite insufficient. The Inspectors' remarks clearly prove the latrines, even on the basis of the daily average number of employees actually on the musters are too few in many concerns, that they are not kept clean, that cans are not provided for washing purposes, and that the walls are not tarred. Separate provision is made for men and women in all the units. In some, though latrines are within the factory premises, they are distant from the places of work. There are no bathing facilities. Nor are urinals provided in any of the units. No concern has a dispensary. The units keep only a first-aid box and even that is often empty or inadequately equipped. There are no canteens where workers can have tea, since these are small factories which employ casual labour. There are no grain shops anywhere.

#### V.—Housing.

No housing accommodation is provided for workers in cotton gins by the employer. Conditions of housing could not be studied since workers come from villages which are three or four miles distant from Tirupur. The workers' quarters are nothing but thatched huts with mud walls. A family has to live usually in one room. There are also huts with two apartments. The labourers have to pay a ground rent of As. 8 to As. 12 per month. These huts are situated on a low level ground and during rainy season, there is water-logging in the locality. Labourers who come to Tirupur early in the morning for work return to their villages at dusk. The ginning factories are prepared to arrange for the procurement of ration cards for workers, provided they are willing to settle down in Tirupur. This is an inducement to make the workers reside in the town, so that the employers may have a regular supply of labour.

In Coimbatore the housing problem for workers has become very acute. No housing accommodation is provided by the employers in many cases. Workers' quarters in Katur and Srinivasapuram in Coimbatore were visited. There is much of congestion in these localities, since most of the textile mill workers of Coimbatore and employees of the Brook Bond Tea Co. live here. The tenements are owned in some cases by jobbers of mills and in one case by a woman vegetable-seller, and also by land-holders. Ten families live in one such tenement! All the quarters are one-room tenements with tiled roofs. The workers pay a monthly rent of Rs. 4 to Rs. 5. Workers were reluctant to disclose the information since they were afraid that the enquiry might be for assessment of house-tax by the Municipality, and for fear of displeasure of the owner, who also lives nearabout. The workers earn approximately Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a month. In some cases, their women also work in the mills and earn on an average Rs. 11 to Rs. 15. The workers' premises are very dirty. Heaps of rubbish are found which make the surroundings insanitary. Some families have cattle, and the premises serve the purpose of a cattle-pound as well. There is separate latrine accommodation for men and women. There is a well within the premises. But for purposes of drinking, women fetch water from the nearest municipal water tap.

In another set of workers' quarters there are nearly 18 families living. There are two portions which consist of three rooms each. The rest have only one room. For the former, a rent of Rs. 9 a month is paid for each portion, for four rooms a rent of Rs. 4|8|- per month is paid, and for others monthly rents vary from Rs. 2|8|- to Rs. 3. The owner of these premises is a worker in Kaleshwara Mills. The average earnings of workers in this locality are Rs. 25 per month. There are also two families of clerks staying in the premises. There are women who work in the mills and are, on a temporary footing, earning Rs. 13 a month. These quarters are somewhat better than the others visited, in respect of ventilation and lighting.

#### VI.—Trade Unions and Strikes.

There is no effective trade union activity so far as the workers in these seasonal factories at Tirupur are concerned. The *khalasis* formed an association which is now in a moribund state. They are content with the present piece rates of Rs. 2|4|- per candy of Cambodia and Rs. 2|8|- per candy of Karunganni, as these rates compare favourably with the rates of payment obtaining previously. No strikes generally take place in these cotton gins. In 1943 there was a strike of workers organised by the *khalasis* of unit No. 3 in Tirupur. The *khalasis* were asked by employers to remain in the factory during nights to keep watch over the factory premises. The *khalasis* were unwilling to accede to the wishes of the management on the ground that it was not one of the conditions of their contract of work. As a result, seven *khalasis* were dismissed. A general strike of the workers of the factory was organised. This received much publicity, since unit No. 3 is a large concern. The matter was reported to the Labour Conciliation Officer, Coimbatore, who intervened. The management showed its willingness to take into service six out of the seven workers. But the workers were unwilling to work in the factory. Since then unit No. 3 dispensed with piece rates and the employment of *khalasis*. Excepting this strike there have been no instances of labour trouble in Tirupur for the last 15 years.

#### VII.—Working of Labour Acts.

The remarks of Inspectors of Factories usually refer to the neglect of lime-washing and painting of woodwork of factories, the inadequate provision of seats in latrines, etc. The supply of uncontaminated, cool drinking water is also often suggested. Remarks about adequate fencing of machinery are also made, and the provision of fire-buckets and of some medicines in the first-aid box, the removal of debris and heaps of rubbish from the factory premises are suggested. The proper maintenance of registers for employees, the indication of wage periods under the Payment of Wages Act and details about workers' earnings are some of the other points raised in the inspection reports from time to time. Instances of employment of workers of doubtful age have also been cited and factories asked to get certain labourers certified by a medical officer as adolescents. All these remarks of Inspectors of Factories reveal to a certain extent the non-observance of certain provisions of the Acts.

#### VIII.—Indebtedness.

It is the pressure of poverty that makes women take to factory work on low wages. But in spite of their penury, in general, workers of Tirupur seemed to be thrifty. They were not given loans by the employers. They accepted loans from retail merchants of their villages, paying interest which

varied from 1½ per cent. to 2 per cent. per mensem. There are some instances in which debts were contracted either for setting up a small retail shop or for constructing a house or for performing a marriage. In some cases, labourers managed to pull on without running into debts. There are many workers' families, the members of which work in some factory or other. There are 25 cotton gins, 12 rice mills, and 3 textile mills in Tirapur. In a family, the father may work, for instance, as a paddy boiler in a rice mill, the daughter in one of the cotton gins, and the son as a mill-hand in one of the textile mills. The family pools all the earnings and somehow ekes out a livelihood. There are also instances of parents staying at home to look after their small agricultural holdings while sons and daughters take to factory work. In spite of the fact that workers' families have no reserves of savings and eke out a precarious existence, they are able to lead an existence without running into debts. So far as the *khalasis* are concerned, the piece rates which constitute the basis of their earnings, induce them in a subtle way to exert themselves more. They do unremittingly hard work for hours at a stretch and are subject to considerable physical wear and tear. In Coimbatore, the cost of living is high. The workers are given credit in mills. Whatever slice of income is left, after a portion of it is consumed in advance, is used up as soon as it is received. The workers are given to drink. The Coimbatore mills give loans to workers. For instance, one mill gives loans to workers and charges interest at 2 annas a rupee per month. In all these cases when exorbitant rates of interest are charged, the interest for a certain period is deducted in advance and only the remainder is paid to the worker.

#### IX.—Miscellaneous.

*Pensions and gratuities.*—Excepting unit No. 5, there is no gratuity fund anywhere. Details regarding the company's contribution to the gratuity fund for its permanent employees for unit No. 5 have been given earlier.

*Overhauling.*—During the slack season, cotton which is stored in godowns, is picked. Hence picking coolies get employment only on certain days in a month. Mechanics in all units are paid their salaries during slack season. They look to overhauling of machinery. The importance of overhauling from the point of view of output of ginned cotton is brought out in the following instance. On 1st April 1942, in unit No. 2, 10 gins turned out 13-1½ candies of cotton which at the then prevailing rate of Rs. 20 per candy (gin charge) brought to the factory a gross profit of Rs. 270 per day. The same 10 gins after overhauling turned out 17 candies of cotton on 9th July 1944, and when worked out even at the old rate of Rs. 20 per candy (gin charge) they fetched a gross profit of Rs. 340 per day. This increase of Rs. 70 per day in the proceeds of the concern was the result of overhauling of machinery when labour employed remained constant.

*Holidays with Pay.*—Sunday is a notified holiday in all the units excepting units No. 7 and 9. The notified holiday in these two units is Tuesday. For important festivals, holidays without pay are declared. Some units in such cases work even on the notified holiday, whereas some do not. There are no other regular closed days in the month in any unit. With regard to leave, the office staff and mechanics may be granted leave with pay, and this is at the discretion of the management. In unit No. 5 the permanent employees are entitled to 15 days leave with pay.

*Addendum.*—The following were the wage-rates for June, 1944, in unit No. 10, at Coimbatore, where there are mixed operations of groundnut decortication and oil-milling carried on in addition to cotton-ginning :—

TABLE 21.

*Rates of Wages in Mixed Operations.*

Section.	Men's wages.		Women.		Daily wages. Rs. as. ps.
	Night shift	Day shift	Night shift	Day shift	
Ginning .. ..	..	1 0 0	..	Kapas pickers	0 7 6
				Gin-feeders	0 10 0
				Cotton cleaners	0 8 6
				Seed carriers	0 10 0
Groundnut decortication. ..	..	1 0 0	..	Coolies	0 10 0
Oil-milling .. ..	1 0 0	..	..	Coolies	0 10 0

**CHAPTER VI.—SIND—Mirpur Khas.**

Labour employed in the ginning and baling factories in Sind is almost wholly non-Sindhi. A large number of men and women from Makran have immigrated into the Province and constitute the major part of the industrial landless agricultural labour. Till recently they led a nomadic life moving from place to place in groups, seeking employment in industry or agriculture. In the summer months, a considerable number used to go back to their own country. Now, however, they have given up their summer-time exodus and have taken to more settled ways of living. Other areas from which labour is largely drawn are Marwar, Cutch, and to a smaller extent, the Punjab. This is the main industry of the Province and has developed rapidly since the building of the Sukkur Barrage which led to the growth of more cotton in the Province. After baling, cotton is sent to Ahmedabad and Bombay and is not processed further in Sind because of unsuitable climatic conditions. Mirpur Khas is the chief centre of the industry in Sind, although gins and presses are found scattered all over the Province especially in the Nawabshah, Hyderabad and Sukkur Districts. Hence this centre was chosen for investigation.

**I.—Employment.**

The following figures of employment in cotton ginning and pressing factories in Sind were obtained from the Annual Reports of the Chief Inspector of Factories of the Province :—

1936 .. ..	13,689	1940 .. ..	14,800
1937 .. ..	15,516	1941 .. ..	15,175
1938 .. ..	15,890	1942 .. ..	11,568
1939 .. ..	12,565	1943 .. ..	15,371

It is estimated that about 16,000 workers are employed in these factories now. This figure, however, does not include the number of children illegally employed in the factories these days. While it is impossible to give accurate figures for such employment, it may be estimated that approximately 2,000 children are employed throughout the Province. The total average daily employed in the factories surveyed was 1,881. Out of these, 450 were piece-rate workers and 1,431 time-rate. Details by sex and type of employer are given in the following table :—

TABLE 22.

*Average Daily Employment.*

Employer	Men	Women	Total
Management .. ..	652	342	994
Contractor .. ..	713	174	887
<b>Total ..</b>	<b>1,365</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>1,881</b>

It can be seen from the above that women constitute 27.4 per cent. of the total employment. It is estimated that about 50 per cent. of the unskilled workers are recruited by contractors.

*Length of Service.*—Statistical information regarding the length of service could be obtained only from two concerns and is given in the next table. It can be seen from the table that only 3.8 per cent. of the workers have over 5 years' service to their credit.

TABLE 23.  
*Length of Service.*

Length of Service in years	Number of workers	% of total
0 and 1	686	63.6
1 and 5	352	32.6
5 and 10	26	2.4
Over 10	14	1.4
Total	1,078	100.0

*Classification of Workers.*—Classification of workers as permanent and temporary obtains only in the better organized firms. In most of the factories all workers, whether skilled or unskilled, barring perhaps the engineer, are dismissed at the end of the season, and, therefore, all of them are temporary. It is, however, interesting to note that technical men are regarded as permanent even if they are employed for a period of four or five months only. Messrs. Volkart Brothers have such a classification, and permanent hands have a right to contribute to the Provident Fund, a right which does not accrue to temporary ones. The Provident Fund contribution is both by the workers and by the firm. This right, however, accrues only to permanent hands in the *direct* employ of the firm and such workers are not many, only technical personnel coming under the category. All unskilled workers in this firm are employed by contractors. In this firm, however, there are some privileges common to both the types which will be stated presently. The only point to be noted here is that all workers employed by the firm are entitled to one month's notice in case of termination of their services. This is, moreover, the only firm where skilled workers are *not* dismissed when the season is over but are switched on to repair work.

*Recruitment.*—Unskilled workers are usually recruited through *sardars* and contractors. This method of recruitment is preferred for a number of reasons. There is a general shortage of industrial labour in Sind. In fact, as was stated at the outset, all industrial workers in the Province have immigrated from other Provinces, Indian States in Rajputana, and Makran. In view of this, difficulty is experienced by the management in getting labour. The easiest way for them is to get their work done under contract and to shift the burden of recruiting labour to contractors. What happens is that the floating industrial labour available in the Province moves about in groups and there is always a group leader. A successful contractor tries to keep in touch with these group leaders. In case he wants to get more men, he goes to the neighbouring areas and gets the whole group on payment of travelling allowances. Sometimes, the group leader himself gets into touch with a firm and becomes a contractor. In such a case the entire earnings of the group are pooled. The group maintains a common mess and makes payments from the pool for food and house rents. What remains after these payments is divided equally.

*Labour Turnover and Absenteeism.*—There is not much turnover of labour in these factories. There is, of course, the usual migration of labour to other pursuits at the end of the ginning season. Defection of a group of workers

in the midst of the season seldom happens. This may be due to check and supervision of the contractor. The contractor keeps in direct touch with his people and in fact belongs to their own class. He is very different from the "absentee" type of contractor. Another point to be noted is that no "home" ties bind the foreign labour to any particular place, and therefore, their mobility is much greater than what it is in the case of industrial workers in other areas. It is precisely on account of this that greater effort is made to meet the demands of labour. Industrial relations were found to be cordial and labour on its own part, particularly Makrani labour is very hard-working. Idleness or loitering are things unknown to them. Figures of absenteeism supplied by one firm were  $4\frac{3}{4}$  per cent and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent for 1939 and 1943. The only cause of absenteeism is sickness. Common diseases are malaria and bronchitis. There are no social functions in village home to be attended and there is not much absenteeism after the pay-day.

*Promotion, Holidays with Pay etc.*—There is no system of graded, or incremental promotion even for the permanent people, but increments are given at the discretion of the management. Sometimes even two promotions are given in the course of one year. This does not, of course, apply to unskilled daily wage earners for in their case it is the prevailing market rate rather than the length of service or personal efficiency that matters. No holidays with pay are given to daily wage earners. Permanent and salaried staff employed in the better organized firms get leave according to leave rules framed by the management. On an average, 20 days' sick leave with pay is granted to all employees in case of certified sickness. In addition to this, ordinary paid leave subject to a maximum for each category of employees is also granted at the discretion of the management. Leave is not accumulated and sometimes there is a condition that sick leave would not be granted unless all ordinary leave had been exhausted. No Labour Officer is employed to inquire into the grievances of the workers. Nor are there many grievances on their part either. Sometimes they do want an increase in wages and the contractor and/or the proprietor look into the matter personally.

## II.—Wages and Earnings.

The general wage level in this industry is higher in Sind than elsewhere. The possible reasons for this appear to be (1) the higher efficiency of the Sind workers, and (2) the fact that they are imported from outside the Province which makes the payment of somewhat higher wages necessary. It may be mentioned here that in all the concerns investigated, unskilled workers, excepting women in one, were recruited by contractors. In Appendix II details of rates paid to contractors (*inter alia*) are given. In the following table a comparison is made between rates paid by factories to contractors and the wages paid by the latter to their employees.

TABLE 24.  
*Rates of Contract and Wages.*

		1942-43		1944-45		
		Percentage increase since 1939		Percentage increase since 1939.		
		1939 Rates	Rates	Rates		
Contractor for handling kapas ..	Contractor's rates.	0 8 6	0 12 0	41	1 4 0	135
	Wages	0 12 0	1 10 0	116.5	2 8 0	233
Loading & Unloading Contractor ..	C. R.	0 1 0	0 1 4	33	6 1 10	83
	Wages	1 14 0	2 2 0	13	3 2 0	63
Ginning Contractor ..	C.R.	0 3 2	0 4 0	29	0 7 9	144.5
	Wages	0 7 0	0 9 0	28.5	1 2 0	157
Contractor ..	C.R.	18 0 0	20 4 0	12.5	42 0 0	133
	Wages	1 0 0	1 6 0	37.5	2 4 0	125

The above analysis shows that the percentage increase in the wages in most cases has been in keeping with such increase in the rates paid to the contractors, though there are a couple of cases where wages have lagged behind.

Appendix II gives details in regard to the wages paid to different types of workers in 1939-40, 1942-43 and 1944-45, but the position with regard to some of the important occupations is summarised in the following table :—

TABLE 25.  
*Average Rates of Wages.*

	1939-40	1944-45	Increase %
Fitters .. .. . (per month)	50 0 0	75 0 0	50
Oilmen .. .. . " "	25 0 0	38 0 0	52
Cobblers .. .. . " "	36 0 0	47 0 0	30.5
Opener coolie .. .. . (per day)	0 9 6	1 12 0	194.6
Gin Feeders .. .. . " "	0 5 9	0 13 9	130.4
Yellow pickers .. .. . " "	0 5 6	0 12 3	120.0
Platform coolies .. .. . " "	0 9 6	1 6 0	131.5
Press coolies .. .. . " "	1 0 0	2 4 0	225.0
Jholivalas I .. .. . " "	0 14 0	2 5 6	134.3
Jholivalas II .. .. . " "	1 0 0	2 2 0	142.8
Carpenters .. .. . (per month)	45 0 0	66 0 0	46.6
Loading and unloading Contractor's Labour (per day)	1 0 0	2 4 0	225.0
Kapas handling Contractor's Labour .. .. . " "	0 13 0	2 2 0	161.5

It will be noticed that the percentage increase in the wages of the technical workers is considerably lower than that in the case of unskilled workers. This is partly due to the fact that the former receive additional dearness allowances also.

*Dearness Allowances and Bonuses.*—In unit 1, a dearness allowance is paid to the employees of the concern at the following rates :—

Monthly Salary in Rs.	D. A. per month.
	Rs. as. ps.
0—40 .. .. .	4 8 0
41—75 .. .. .	7 0 0
76—100 .. .. .	6 8 0
101—125 .. .. .	6 0 0
126—150 .. .. .	5 8 0

The engineer of the factory gets a salary of Rs. 220 per month. In addition, he gets annual bonus equal to two months' salary and an annual commission of Rs. 300. He is also entitled to an oil and fuel allowance of Rs. 7 p.m. In unit 2 also, only the workers directly employed are given an additional dearness allowance and a bonus. The dearness allowance rates are as under :—

Monthly Salary in Rs.	D. A. per month.
	Rs. as. ps.
1—60 .. .. .	15 0 0
61—125 .. .. .	20 0 0
126—200 .. .. .	25 0 0
201—275 .. .. .	30 0 0
Over 275 .. .. .	35 0 0

Bonus is granted only to those who have at least six months' service to their credit. Those whose length of service lies between 6 months and one year get bonus equal to half the month's wages every three months. The rate is doubled when 12 months' service has been completed. In unit 3, a dearness allowance is granted to all workers directly employed by the concern, among whom are unskilled women workers also. The rates are as follows :—

TABLE 26.

*Monthly Rates of Dearness Allowance in a leading concern.*

Period	Scale in Rs.					
	1-0-0 to 9-15-0	10-0-0 to 19-15-0	20-0-0 to 29-15-0	30-0-0 to 59-15-0	60-0-0 to 99-15-0	100-0-0 to and over.
1942-43	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0	6 0 0	8 0 0
1st July to 31st October 1943	7 0 0	8 0 0	9 0 0	10 0 0	11 0 0	14 0 0
1st November 1943 onwards	14 0 0	16 0 0	18 0 0	20 0 0	22 0 0	28 0 0

*Miscellaneous.*—Payments made by the contractors to their own employees are supervised by the management of the concern as per requirements under the Payment of Wages Act. No complaints about illegal deductions or delay in payment were made. In fact, in this Province wages are paid on the last day of the wage-period. Thus, where the wage-period is one month, payments are, as a rule, made on the last day of the month and where it is one week, on Saturdays. The practice has become so established that workers refuse to work if payments are delayed. Fines are not imposed in any of the concerns nor are any deductions made. No records for overtime are maintained and it is only in cases of extreme urgency that workers are asked to work beyond the scheduled hours. In such cases the practice is to make payments the very day. Generally, half the day's wages are paid for a couple of hours of extra work. This applies, of course, only to time-rate workers. Piece-rate workers often do not stick to the scheduled hours of work and the rates of payment for over-time work are not different from the usual rates. This is clear from the fact that there are no separate records for overtime piece-rate work.

**III.—Working Conditions and Welfare Activities**

*Shifts and Hours of Work.*—There are several arrangements. Generally where the plant is run for all the 24 hours, three 8-hour shifts are not worked as is the case in other 24-hour factories. The shift hours in such cases are :—

Day shift—8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (recess—1 p.m. to 3 p.m.)

Night shift—8 p.m. to 8 a.m. (recess—1 a.m. to 3 a.m.)

Some factories do ginning from 6-30 a.m. to 1-30 a.m. and pressing for 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Their arrangements are as follows :—

*Ginning Section.*

6.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	..	Females
12.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.	..	Males
3.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	..	Females
7.30 p.m. to 1.30 a.m.	..	Males.

*General Shift.*

8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

*Opener Staff and Engineer Staff.*

Group I.—6.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.  
4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

Group II—12.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.  
7.00 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.

*Press.*

8 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

*Accidents etc.*—Provisions for the safety of workers in the Factories Act and Rules made thereunder are generally complied with. But no special measures are taken for the prevention of accidents. Accidents occur at the opener and in the line-shaft alley. Sometimes, while feeding kapas into the opener the hand of the coolie or a few fingers get chopped off. The line-shaft alley is in most cases not lighted sufficiently. Moreover, there is not enough clearance between the moving wheels and the walls to enable the cobbler to move freely inside the alley. Close fitting garments are usually provided to the cobbler, but sometimes this is not done and the *pagri* or shirt of the worker gets entangled in the machinery causing serious accidents. The factory inspectorate of the Province, inadequate though it is, makes special efforts to help the workers in securing compensation for accidents. Details regarding accidents were available only in one concern, and a description of some of these would show what type of accidents can occur in a modern ginning factory. In November 1938, a worker died while working in the "cotton silo". He was removing lint which had collected in the upper part of the room. Heaped cotton fell on him and he got crushed against the wall as a result of which he died. Compensation was paid to the dependents of the deceased. In another case, a condenser-greaser had the thumb of his right hand caught between the moving gear wheels, resulting in injuries to his thumb. For the period of illness he was paid As. 10 per day. A fatal accident occurred in December 1940. A fitter while working on the overhead kapas suction pipe from a temporarily-erected staging, 12 feet high, lost his balance and fell to the floor. His skull was fractured as a result of which he died. Compensation amounting to Rs. 1,350 was paid to his dependents. On the 12th March 1944, a female worker while removing the cotton seed from the seed conveyer alley put her leg on the trough where one of the hinged covers was forced open with the result that her foot was seriously injured. Despite prompt medical aid her leg had to be subsequently amputated from below the knee. The Chief Inspector of Factories made immediate enquiries in the matter and arranged payment compensation amounting to Rs. 441 to her. The installation of exhaust fans for the elimination of dust, which is thrown up in the course of opening and ginning processes, is not considered feasible by the employers. This may probably be due to the soaring prices of all electrical goods these days. The firms are of opinion that it would be possible to get exhaust fans after the war. Protection against dust could have been ensured by the use of dust respirators but this too has not been done anywhere so far. It is the considered opinion of doctors, employed on a part-time basis by factories or practising privately in areas where ginning factories are located, that inhalation of dust causes respiratory diseases, chiefly bronchitis and tuberculosis. They suggested to owners of some factories that small pieces of moistened gauze could be provisionally used by workers to cover their nose and thus inhale only filtered air. The experiment has not been given a trial so far.

*Latrines, Urinals and Drinking Water.*—While an adequate number of latrines and urinals are provided, no effort is made to keep them clean. The

result is that one cannot stand anywhere near the latrines for even a few seconds. In factories owned and managed by European firms, however, sanitary arrangements were satisfactory. Latrine and urinal accommodation is provided for men and women separately, and though doors are not provided, there is sufficient privacy. Latrines and urinals are built of pucca bricks. Drinking water is stored in big tubs and distributed through taps. Since factories do not work in summer, the necessity of making arrangements for cool water does not arise. No other drinks are supplied free of cost. Shelters have not been provided even in the bigger factories employing 500 workers or more. Workers retire to their hutments during the rest period. Cooly huttings are situated near the factories. A number of workers, however, come from more distant places and they bring their day meals with them. Such workers are seen sitting in the open and eating their food. The lack of covered space inside factory premises for the use of workers during rest hours causes real hardship. Some workers, e.g., yellow pickers, or those employed on drawing platforms, have to work in the open throughout the day. For such workers a shelter would obviously be a great boon.

*Medical Facilities.*—A couple of firms employ private practitioners on a part-time basis and it was found that daily visits were paid by these doctors to the workers' quarters. Others, however, have made similar arrangements with the local medical officer. He is usually paid Rs. 75 per month and visits only when called. A dozen visits by him in the course of one year would be considered a very good performance. Medicines and quinine injections are supplied to doctors by the firms. For patent medicines workers have to pay from their own pockets. The general health of workers was, however, found to be good. It is only, during rains that malaria is rampant causing absenteeism and sometimes defection by a large number of workers.

#### IV.—Housing Accommodation.

Labour employed in these factories comes from 'outlying areas and has to be provided housing accommodation. In Mirpur Khas as many as 1,161 out of 1,881 workers covered by the enquiry are provided living accommodation. Out of these 1,161 about 700 are housed in pucca single-room quarters built in lines, or quadrangles. As structural details differ from case to case, it would be convenient to give details of such type separately.

A. About 350 workers employed by Volkart Brothers are housed in pucca quarters. Superior staff are housed in family quarters containing two bed rooms, a kitchen, a bath-room, a latrine, a verandah and a small spare room. These quarters are easily the best working-class quarters in the town. 35 men are entitled to get such accommodation. The rest are housed in single-room quarters built in a quadrangle. Rooms are 15 ft.  $\times$  14 ft., on an average four persons live in each. Workers who have their families with them are given one room for one family. In front of the room, there is a small enclosure meant for use as kitchen. Latrines have been built in a line at some distance from the quarters and their sanitary condition is better than what is usually found. While allotting accommodation, effort is made to put together workers coming from the same area and belonging to the same "group". It was interesting to find that several groups of about 30 men each had common messing arrangements. Group leaders or *jamadars* are either contractors themselves or sub-contractors though under the terms of agreement contractors are not permitted to let out work on sub-contracts. Earnings of the entire group (after making payments for messing) are either divided equally or according to the amount of work done by each member of the group, records being maintained by a *munshi* employed for the purpose and for running the mess. Mess accounts are open to inspection by the workers

themselves. Similar arrangements have been made by Ralli Brothers but sanitary arrangements are very poor. Latrines have been built at the entrance to the quadrangles and the number of seats is also very inadequate,—2 or 3 for 50 to 55 people. Marwari women made efforts to keep the quarters clean, but Makrani men and women are indifferent to personal hygiene or sanitation with the result that their quarters are stinking and dirty.

**B. Kuchcha Rooms.**—Another 200 workers are housed in mud huts. Since these quarters were built before the war and have not been repaired ever since, they present a dilapidated appearance. Half the roof or one plank of the door missing are not an uncommon sight. There is, however, no congestion in such quarters and each worker has a room to himself. Latrines have not been provided near these quarters and workers spread out in the neighbouring fields.

**C. Thatched Huttings.**—The third type of arrangement is to make available open space to workers to build their own huts. A large number of Makranis have thus erected temporary huttings using thatch and mattings. They present the appearance of mat-tents and have very low entrance. In an area of about 60 square feet, five or six members of a family keep huddled together! Water for drinking and washing is drawn from wells. No latrines are provided, with the result that men and women both have to go to open fields, while children use neighbouring drains for the purpose. Some time ago, Messrs. Ralli Brothers gave some land to a large number of workers employed by them for building houses. No charges were made for the land provided. It was found later that workers had sold the land to local purchasers. The scheme was, therefore, dropped and now the ownership of all quarters and land, for building houses rests with the firm. Some employers contemplate building better types of quarters when material and labour becomes available for the purpose.

#### V.—Enforcement of Labour Laws.

All these factories have been brought under the operation of the Factories Act and are classed as seasonal factories. In this connection the Chief Inspector of Factories, Sind, in his reply to the General Questionnaire of the Labour Investigation Committee, states: "special difficulties are experienced with regard to the inspection of seasonal factories which number 240. The majority of these concerns are cotton ginning and pressing factories and are visited when working, by the Chief Inspector and Inspector. These two full-time officers are well known to factory owners and managers with the result that when on tour their movements are carefully watched, and with the additional disadvantage of irregular railway service, it is practically impossible for surprise visits to be carried out". In the course of *ad hoc* surveys it was found that number of the provisions of the factories Act and the Payment of Wages Act, were being evaded and disregarded. There is wide-spread employment of children below 12 years of age. In one factory it was found that out of 42 persons working in the ginning room as many as 24 were children. This proportion, however, does not obtain everywhere. It may be said that about 12 per cent. of the total employment is child labour. Other instances of the violation of the provisions of the Act are the failure to maintain correct or even any registers, employment of women during prohibited hours, and working for hours longer than those permitted under the law. Section 35 of the Factories Act (regarding Weekly Holidays) was being disregarded in some concerns. While the workers in the Engine and Boiler rooms alone were exempted from the provisions of Section 35, sometimes weekly holidays were denied to fitters and oilmen. Exhaustive rules have been made under the Factories Act but number of them in regard to the fencing of moving and dangerous machinery were being disre-

garded. Further, under these rules, attendants on prime movers and all persons working in the shaft alley of the gin, must wear light trousers, provided free of cost by the occupier. It was found that a number of workers belonging to the above categories were *not* wearing light trousers. The non-observance of this requirement causes a number of accidents every year. Similarly, provisions with regard to latrines and urinals are not being followed. It must, however, be pointed out here that the Inspectorate of the Province is extremely vigilant. The following table shows the number of prosecutions under the Factories Act launched during 1943. While in other Provinces the fines imposed are ridiculously low, those in Sind were found to be sufficiently high.

TABLE 27.

*Offences under the Factories Act and Fines Imposed.*

Classification.	No. of cases.	Total amount of fines.
Section 11—Obstructing Inspector .. .. .	1	Rs 3
Section 24—Safety .. .. .	10	1,085
Section 27—Safety for Children .. .. .	1	250
Section 28—Safety for Children .. .. .	1	30
Section 35—Weekly Holiday .. .. .	2	65
Section 36 —Working Hours .. .. .	2	40
Section 39—Notice of Hours of Work .. .. .	1	20
Section 40—Notice of Hours of Work .. .. .	2	50
Section 41—Register of Adults .. .. .	16	285
Section 42—Working Hours .. .. .	24	585
Section 45—Hours of Work for Women .. .. .	2	20
Section 51—Uncertified Children .. .. .	12	770
Section 54—Hours of Work for Children .. .. .	2	30
Section 55—Notice for Hours of Work for Children .. .. .	5	115
Section 76—Abstract of the Act .. .. .	3	40
Total .. .. .	84	3,415

*Workmen's Compensation Act.*—The Act has not been much of a success in the Province because of the same factors as encountered throughout the country, —ignorance and illiteracy of the workers, lack of legal assistance, etc. It was alleged by workers that when accidents occurred, an effort was, as a rule, made to pay "hush-money". In most cases, the incident was thus "closed". In some cases, the factory inspectorate was able to intervene and full compensation was paid, part payment being usually made before the claim was finally settled. About 80 per cent. of unskilled labour is employed through contractors and contractors bind themselves under the terms of agreement to pay compensation when accidents occur. This does not make the situation better. If, anything, it makes it worse in so far as contractors make more strenuous efforts to "close" the incident.

*Inadequacy of the Inspectorate.*—The Chief Inspector of Factories was of opinion, and he was obviously correct, that for the whole Province one Chief Inspector and one Inspector form too inadequate an inspectorate to see that the Acts were enforced.

#### VI.—Migration.

Foreign labour has found employment both in industry and agriculture in the Province. Labour in the cotton ginning and baling industry as has already been said above, has been drawn from Makran, Marwar, Cutch and the Punjab. This accounts for large-scale migration during the off-season. About a decade back, large number of Makranis used to go back to Makran at the end of the ginning season. Now, however, they migrate to agriculture in Sind, in the months of May and June ; and the landlords are only too glad to employ these hard-working people. A few may go to big towns, like Karachi and Hyderabad, for casual daily employment. Marwari labour does not migrate to agriculture in Sind but it does go back to Marwar for agricultural operations there. Nor does any part of such labour seek casual employment in the cities. Punjabis constitute only a minor part of the entire labour force. They also go back to the Punjab for employment in agriculture.

#### CHAPTER VII.—PUNJAB—Amritsar.

In the Punjab the active season of this industry usually commences by the middle of September and ends by the middle of April. If the harvesting of crop is delayed, factories start working much later, sometimes even in November. It may be noted that in the Punjab, Amritsar is said to have been the first ginning centre to begin work. This is due to the fact that there is a stretch of land in the district where an inferior type of cotton is grown, and there kapas is harvested early. This kapas is brought to the factories by the growers themselves and when supplies become fairly regular ginning is started. All the four ginning factories in the town were surveyed and it was found that each one of them combined ginning with some other industry. Two of them do rice-husking, the third rice-husking and oil-milling both, and the fourth spinning and weaving, besides cotton ginning. An important point to be noted is that in all these factories, cotton ginning is *not* the main industry. Not more than one-fourth of the total number of workers in the three factories and 8 per cent. in the fourth are employed in the ginning section. It may, also, be pointed out here that pressing and baling of ginned cotton is not done in any of the factories surveyed. The actual number of days worked in a season is about 150. There are 55 gins in all the factories, but at present only 45 are being worked. There is no "pooling" agreement in the centre and all the factories work independently.

#### I.—Employment.

Of the four factories surveyed, three remain closed for at least four months in the year while the fourth which is primarily a spinning and weaving factory works throughout the year. Workers of the former set of factories generally go back to agriculture in the off-season, but a substantial minority of them work as daily wage-earners elsewhere since alternative employment is available these days. In the fourth factory, when the ginning season is over, workers are not dismissed but are given employment in other sections of the concern. The effect of combining rice-husking or oil-milling with ginning on employment is that workers continue to work in the same factory for 8 months instead of being thrown out after 5 months during which ginning is done. Thus, while the period of employment is increased, the seasonal character of the factory remains intact. As said above, only in one concern are workers recruited on a permanent basis.

TABLE 28.  
Daily Number of Workers in November 1944.

Factory No.	Total	Piece-rate	Time-rate
1 .. .. .	62	20	42
2 .. .. .	40	..	40
3 .. .. .	35	..	35
4 .. .. .	14	..	14
(Ginning Section only).			
Grand Total ..	151	20	131

Factory No	Employed and paid directly.		Employed and paid through contractor.	
	Men	Women	Men	Women.
1 .. .. .	42	..	20	..
2 .. .. .	39	1	(a)	(a)
3 .. .. .	30	5	(a)	(a)
4 .. .. .	7	7	(a)	(a)
Grand Total ..	118	13	20	..

(a) Contractor's labour is employed but figures not available.

*Length of service, etc.*—In three of the factories, all the unskilled workers are dismissed when the season is over. The technical staff also is dismissed in two of them, but it is retained in the third. No statistical information on the point was available. Proper attendance registers were not maintained and, therefore, checking was also impossible. In one factory, it was found that some of the technical workers had served the concern in several successive seasons. Out of a total of 40, 2 had served for over 10 years, another 2 for 5 to 10 years, and 2 more for 1 to 5 years. The rest (34) had put in only a few months' service. In the concern in which ginning is a very minor section, all workers are recruited on a permanent basis. In another, the superior technical staff is recruited on a permanent basis while the remaining workers in this concern and all workers in another concern are recruited temporarily, i.e., only for the season. Even where workers are recruited permanently, no additional privileges accrue to them except that they are paid for the days when the factory does not work. But if they absent themselves with or without authority, they are not paid for such absence. In none of the factories is there any system of graded or time-scale promotion, but the managers claimed that every year workers were being given increments at the discretion of the proprietors. These increments are not based on any rules, but are given to attract workers from other factories.

*Labour Turnover and Absenteeism.*—Labour turnover in cotton ginning factories is very excessive, so much so that it becomes difficult to maintain proper registers. Proper attendance registers were not being maintained and most of the workers (ordinary coolies) were classed as casual labour for whom, the employers said, no attendance registers were required. Since this practice had not been objected to, it was being continued. An examination of the attendance registers revealed that workers generally worked in one concern for one whole week and then either left the concern altogether or came back after one week's absence. In one factory, the attendance register was examined and it was found that out of a total of 29 workers, whose names had

been entered in the register, 15 attended the factory for all the six days of the week, one for only a day and the rest (13) were absent throughout. In the next week some of the latter group returned to work while a few of the former group stopped coming, and the work had to be carried on by adding some new hands. Reasons for excessive labour turnover are apparent. Work in ginning factory does not require any particular skill or experience and new hands can always be taken in. Secondly, since all workers are daily wage-earners and are not given any paid holidays, they go away to another concern if better wages are available. Sometimes, these workers go to the town to work as coolies, if they know that there is shortage of coolies there. If a new building is under construction somewhere in the town, quite a few of the workers would be attracted to go there. In short, labour in ginning factories is very mobile and instead of trying to improve the conditions of work, usually the employers over-work them with the result that for the slightest extra advantage workers are prone to leave one factory and go to another or to any other occupation where unskilled labour can fit in.

*Recruitment.*—Ordinary coolies seek work of their own accord, but for technical men the employers have to send out persons to different places at the beginning of each season. Often the proprietors themselves move out. Addresses of technical men living in the neighbouring districts are always known to proprietors. Special effort has to be made, as few qualified workers, especially these days, would like to join these factories for the duration of one season only. There is no Labour Officer in any of the factories, not even in the Dayal Bagh Spinning and Weaving Factory where over 700 workers are employed. Grievances of workers are enquired into by the management.

## II.—Wages and Earnings.

In the beginning of each season, employers fix wages according to the supply of workers. Thus in the first week of the season they are able to fix the daily wage of ordinary workers and after that workers come and join if they find it worth while. Higgling with individual workers is not done. In the case of skilled workmen like the *mistry* or the cobbler, wages are fixed after a regular haggles and these days workers are in a fairly strong position to bargain. Wages for different occupations are given below :—

TABLE 29.

*Range of Basic Wages in 1939 and 1944.\**

Occupation	1939	1944
	Rs. p m.	Rs. p. m.
<i>Technical</i>		
Engineer .. .. .	70—80	130—200
Engine-Driver .. .. .	25—30	35—70
Oilman .. .. .	16—20	23—40
Firemen .. .. .	30	48—60
Mochi (Cobbler) .. .. .	25—30	30—70
Fitter .. .. .	45—50	60—100
<i>Ordinary—</i>		
Gin-feeders (women) .. .. .	As. 4 per day	As. 6—As. 12 per day.
Opener-coolie .. .. .	As. 7—As. 8 per day.	As 14—Rs. 1-8-0 per day.

\*Excluding dearness allowance.

It can be seen from the above that while wages of ordinary workers are almost the same in every concern salaries of technical workmen differ considerably from factory to factory. This is largely due to difference in skill and experience of workers. In two factories contract labour is also employed. The contractor there is usually the opener-coolie who has worked in a previous season. He contracts with the proprietor of the concern to keep the gins well-fed throughout the day by supplying dust-free *kapas*. He works with his own men on the opener and his task includes sending *kapas* to the gins with the help of his workers. For these two processes, namely, running the dirty *kapas* through the opener and reaching clean *kapas* to the gins, he is paid As. 10 per gin per working day. Usually the same person enters into a second contract for removing ginned cotton from the ginning room and dumping it in the godowns. For this he is paid As. 3 per gin per day. This means that mainly the technical staff and the gin-feeders are employed and paid directly by the employers, and other workers are employed and paid through contractors.

The profits of the contractor vary directly with the number of gins worked. If 16 gins work on a particular day, the contractor is paid Rs. 10 for the first two processes. He would employ five workers on the opener and pay them Rs. 1-4-0 per day per head. His total payments would be Rs. 6-4-0 and, therefore, he would get Rs. 3-12-0 for himself. If, however, the number of gins working on a day goes down, his margin of profits is reduced, for if the number of gins working on a day is reduced to 5 or 6, the opener coolie in any case cannot do without three additional hands and his own earnings, therefore, would not be more than Rs. 1-8-0 for the day. Wages paid to workers employed through contractors are not different from those paid to workers employed and paid directly by employers, but, as a rule, contract labour is over-worked and for the amount of actual labour put in, contract labour is definitely paid less than the directly-employed labour.

In another factory the terms of contract were different. There the contractor agreed to charge As. 7 for cleaning and ginning one maund of *kapas*. To be more exact, the weight of ginned cotton and not that of *kapas* was to be taken into account. About 65 maunds of cotton is ginned daily. For this the contractor gets Rs. 28-7-0. He pays As. 12 per day to gin-feeders (all women) and Rs. 1-8-0 per day to other coolies who are all men. He employs 12 men and 8 women and, therefore, his total payments are Rs. 24 per day and he saves Rs. 4-7-0 per day for himself.

**Dearness Allowance.**—This is paid only in one factory which combines ginning with spinning and weaving. The rates are as follows :—

Those who earn Rs. 20 or less in a month—Re. 0-10-6 per rupee.

Those who earn over Rs. 20 in a month—Re. 0-8-0 per rupee.

In the same factory, an attendance allowance of Rs. 3 per month is paid to those workers who have been absent for not more than two days but this is given only to workers in the spinning section and hence does not concern us.

**Overtime.**—Only in one newly established concern, overtime is worked. No registers are maintained but since overtime is worked only on Sundays, and daily payments are made, the difficulty of calculation does not arise. Since that is a very new concern, this may be excusable for the time being. In other concerns no overtime is worked. In no factory are fines imposed or deductions made. In three factories, all workers except the technical staff are paid every week on Mondays, the technical men being paid monthly, by the 7th. In the fourth factory, the wage-period is one month and payments are made by the 7th. Sundays are not worked in any cotton ginning factory. Besides, some

of the festivals are also observed as holidays. It may be noted here that workers are paid neither for Sundays nor for holidays, and hence when a factory does not work, its workers go elsewhere and engage in old work.

### III.—Working Conditions.

*Shifts and Hours of Work.*—The position as regards shifts and hours of work can be seen from the following table :—

TABLE 30.  
*Shifts and Hours of Work.*

Unit	No. of Shifts	Hours.	Spreadover
1	3	8 a.m. to 4 p.m. 4 p.m. to 12 midnight. 12 midnight to 8 a.m.	8 hours.
2	1	2.30 p.m. to 12.30 a.m.	10 hours.
3	1	8 a.m. to 1 p.m. 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.	11 hours.
4	1	Do.	Do.

As stated earlier, cotton ginning is not the main industry in any of the above concerns and it often happens that even when the factory is working, ginning section may not work. There are no overlapping shifts in the ginning section of these concerns.

*Ventilation and Lighting.*—There are three main rooms in a ginning factory and their conditions may be described separately.

1. *Line-shaft.*—This is usually an underground room where wheels are installed. Round these wheels leather belts are wrapped and these are connected to the ginning machines in the room above. The distance between one wheel and another is very small, about 2', and these wheels are at a distance of 3 ft. from the wall of the room. The *Mochi* (Cobbler) has to move between one wheel and another, or between the wheels and the wall of the room. It is his duty to arrange the belts on the wheels and to repair any damage to the belts. Very often he has to go and repair belts or to arrange them while the machinery is working. The man has to be very very cautious and has to wear close-fitting garments. One would expect that such a room would be properly lighted but in all the above factories lighting arrangements were very unsatisfactory. In a room whose dimensions were 30 ft. by 16 ft. two bulbs of only 25 watts each were provided. The light was absolutely inadequate. The result is that quite a few accidents occur in these rooms though they are seldom reported. If the cobbler has loose *dhoti* or turban on, these get caught between the wheel and the belt and in his effort to extricate them, he entangles himself. There are no arrangements for ventilation in this room and the inside of the room is very dirty, dingy and damp. It is surprising that no objections are ever taken to these unhealthy conditions.

2. *Opener-room.*—This is not a closed room and hence lighting in the day is adequate. It is not necessary to work the opener at night and, therefore, artificial lighting is not required. Ventilation is also good but air near the opener is dusty and there is no arrangement for removing the dust.

3. *Ginning-room.*—This is the most important room in the whole factory and it is here that ginning is done. All concerns in this centre have ordinary rolling ginning machines. In other centres ginning machines with saws have been installed. The size of a room having 16 gins in it, is 40 ft. by 20 ft. Under the Factories Rules of the Punjab one window per gin is required. This requirement is met everywhere. The general appearance of the room is very

dirty, and it is exceedingly difficult to remain in it for long. The gin-feeders, who were all women, had wrapped pieces of dirty cloth round their noses to filter the air. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with dust and cotton particles and there was no arrangement to clean the air inside the room except the windows in the walls. Exhaust fans were not found in any of the concerns whether big or small. There was adequate floor space per worker, about 15 sq. feet, and inside the ginning room there is not much congestion. No effort was made to keep the room clean and dirty rags, etc., could be seen lying here and there. There were no special arrangements for protection against heat but it may be mentioned here that since none of the factories work in the summer season, this is not very objectionable.

*Shelter.*—There was a shelter only in one factory. Others had no place where workers could sit or rest during the rest intervals. The size of the shelter in the above-named factory was 43 ft. by 50 ft. and it was all pucca brick work. A couple of wooden benches were also placed there. If one keeps in mind that there are 700 workers in the whole factory, it would be apparent that one shelter of the above-noted size is very inadequate. Further, the room was seldom cleaned though the factory employed 8 sweepers. In other concerns workers squatted in dirty places to take their meals. Some of them went to their houses.

#### IV.—Welfare Activities.

*Sanitary arrangements.*—Before giving the number of latrines and urinals, it is necessary to say that sanitation is deplorable in all the ginning factories. Everywhere there are service latrines and they are cleaned only once a day at the most. This means that for the whole day they remain dirty and foul smelling. Besides, the number of urinals and latrines is very inadequate and whenever the Factory Inspector is able to inspect the factory, he comments very adversely on sanitary arrangements. The following table will give some idea of the inadequacy of the sanitary arrangements.

TABLE 31.

#### *Sanitary Arrangements.*

Factory.	Daily Number of workers.	Number of latrines.	Number of urinals.	Number of taps.
I	62	2	Nil	2 Hand pumps
II	40	7	2	5
III	35	4	2	2
IV	(700 in all) 14 in Ginning Section.	25	18	2

There are separate latrines and urinals for men and women only in two factories.

The management is entirely unenlightened and seldom very kind or sympathetic towards employees. Hence it is that welfare activities are conspicuous by their absence in these factories. Only in one factory there are suitable arrangements for storing drinking water. A tank has been built and there are a number of taps so that workers have as difficulty on this account. In other concerns, the proprietors said that, in summer, water was kept in earthen pitchers. In no concern was there a dispensary or a doctor but an ill equipped first-aid Box was found every where. Besides, these factories are situated in the suburbs of the town and no conveyance is available. There are no telephone connections either. Hence when there is an accident, medical aid is bound to be delayed considerably. In one

factory only a qualified compounder on Rs. 40 p. m. is employed but serious cases are sent to the hospital in the city. There are no canteens or creches in any factory nor are there any facilities for the education of adult workers. There are no grain shops anywhere. One factory has installed a Radio set with loud speakers for workers' entertainment in the evenings.

The proprietors of these concerns regard any expenditure on welfare activities as inexcusable waste. Generally the plea is that workers misuse facilities granted to them. The management is entirely unenlightened and seldom very kind or sympathetic towards employees. Hence it is that welfare activities are conspicuous by their absence in these factories.

#### V.—Housing.

In the case of two factories no housing accommodation is provided. In another, only the technical staff is housed by the owners, free of rent. This is a new concern and skilled workers being brought from different districts, it was necessary to give them living accommodation. In the fourth concern, housing is provided to about 300 workers out of a total of 600 and the percentage, therefore, is 50. The supervisory and technical men are given rent-free accommodation but the workers are charged rent.

*Types of houses.*—There are three types of quarters. Single quarters are one-room tenements, without verandah and built in lines. Flooring is of mud in all the quarters. Re. 1 is the rent of these rooms which have mud floor and also mud walls. The second type is with *pucca* walls and Rs. 1-8-0 is charged as monthly rent. The third type consists of family quarters with Rs. 2 per month as rent. These quarters have a closed verandah (10' × 6') and there is some privacy in these. There are separate quarters for women workers. Rent for them is Rs. 1-8-0 per month. Generally, women have some other relative of their living with them in the quarters. No woman worker is housed, who has no relative to live with them.

Almost in half the quarters (single-room tenements) two to four persons live. If separate cooking arrangement has to be made and two *choolhas* are built inside the room, conditions become very bad. There is no regulation against subletting and though the quarters are rented out only in the name of the workers, three or four persons may be found living in one room. There is, therefore, congestion caused largely by sub-letting.

*Sanitation and water-supply.*—There are only three hand-pumps and two wells at the disposal of these 300 workers, and there are no bath rooms either for men or for women. Women were seen bathing under open taps. There were twenty five latrines in all and some were kept separate for women but they were extremely dirty. No sweepers were employed for these latrines separately and the result was that by noon the receptacles became full, making the vicinity unbearably stinking. White-washing and disinfection had not been done for ages and the general appearance of the quarters was very dirty.

Some of the workers complained that in providing accommodation, just claims were often disregarded and only those were allotted rooms who had the *backig* of some influential employee of the concern. In some cases a little "tipping" seemed to do the trick! However, there are no objective criteria for providing accommodation and it is entirely at the discretion of the managing director.

The houses provided for the supervisory and technical staff, besides being rent-free are also better. In each there are two rooms (10' × 8', or 12' × 10'), one kitchen, one bath room, one latrine and one hand pump. Most of them, however, look old and dilapidated. There are a few newly-built *pucca* brick houses which are **inhabitable**.

### VI.—Trade Unions and Strikes.

There are no Trade Unions or Works Committees in any of the concerns and this is not surprising in view of the fact that this is a seasonal industry. Unless stable labour can be maintained, possibilities of the formation of any union are meagre. As a rule, the employers look askance at all attempts to form unions and hence no union has so far been formed and hence the workers cannot conceivably go on strike.

### VII.—Working of the Labour Acts.

All the four factories surveyed come under the Factories Act and while all employers claimed that the provisions were being complied with, one has only to visit a factory to see the extent of evasion. Attendance registers do not show the designation of the worker. Pay rolls are kept in a peculiar way so that checking of incorrect entries may be impossible. Entries are made in pencil at first so that manipulation may be possible later. The Secretary of the Amritsar Labour Federation complained that the Payment of Wages Act was being disregarded in most of the concerns and payments were made only at the convenience of the proprietors. As will be stated later, there have been only two cases where compensation was paid during the last 10 years. It transpires that cases of accidents are seldom reported and this seems to be true because under the conditions actually seen in the factories, accidents are likely to occur with greater frequency.

*Occupational Diseases and Accidents.*—No machinery exists for detecting this and no workers are aware of their rights. Even the proprietors of three factories were entirely ignorant of the law on this point. Bronchitis may be the most probable occupational disease here (though not in the strictly legal sense); but as long as the industry remains seasonal and there is no periodical medical examination of workers there are no possibilities of its being detected. In one factory alone, two accidents have so far occurred. One occurred in 1939 and in this case the whole arm of a coolie working on the opener was crushed. He was pushing *kapas* into the machine when his hand was caught in between the circulating roller and the machine and was crushed before the machine could be stopped. The whole arm had to be amputated. The compensation was Rs. 400, and since workers were not insured against accidents, the proprietor had to pay it. The amount was fixed by mutual agreement but under the law it would have been nearly 50 per cent. more. In the same factory another accident occurred in 1944. Again an opener-coolie was involved but this time the man lost only two fingers and was paid Rs. 150 as compensation.

### CHAPTER VIII.—SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

It has been estimated that at present there are about 120,000 workers employed in this industry. After the entry of Japan into the present war, the Eastern market for India's ginned cotton collapsed with the result that there has been a downward trend in employment in recent years. The export of cotton bales dwindled during these years from about 2,947,000 bales in 1939-40 to 300,900 in 1942-43. The Central Provinces and Berar combined with Bombay Khandesh—the black-soil region—accounts for 55 per cent. of the total number of factories and about 37½ per cent. of the total number of workers employed. The other important Provinces are Madras, the Punjab and Sind, although the industry is found scattered in some other Provinces and States. The industry is mainly seasonal and excepting Hubli in South Bombay, the factories work intermittently. However, according to the cultivation of cotton, the season differs from region to region. It has been found that on an average the factories work for about 150 days in the year. The industry has two main peculiarities. In the first place, it is generally found combined with other industries, e.g., rice-milling, oil-milling and groundnut

decortication. This is in a way advantageous to the workers, as in most cases they can be switched off from one to another occupation according to the availability of work. The second peculiarity is the Pooling System found in most centres. This system is being increasingly favoured by employers in order to concentrate production in a few factories so as to eliminate waste and competition. But it appears that the system has proved somewhat harmful to the workers' interests. Though Madras had prohibited it, in other Provinces there is no check upon this system ; and there is evidence that even in Madras, it flourishes surreptitiously.

### Employment.

Most of the workers are unskilled and excepting Sind in most Provinces the labour force is highly unsteady and migratory. The workers not only move from factory to factory but from industry to industry. The tendency to migrate has been aggravated in recent years by higher wages available in bigger towns and under military contractors. The size of cotton ginning and pressing factories is generally small, but in one or two cases it has been big enough to give employment to as many as 300 to 400 workers. Workers are generally recruited by dealer-merchants or by contractors. Before the War, no recruitment agencies were necessary. The workers just presented themselves at the gates. The dearth of workers is responsible for the new system of recruitment which requires *sardars* and contractors to visit the villages. In Sind, for example, almost all cotton ginning and pressing labour is obtained from outside the Province. Technical staff also is not available ready at hand and has to be imported from distant places and are paid travelling allowances. During the slack season, workers have to fall back on other resources. Most of them go back to land while some have their private businesses. The number of workers joining other industries is also considerable. All unskilled workers are temporary. Even amongst the technical staff at certain places the tenure of service lasts for the season only. This is particularly so in the C. P. and Berar and Khandesh. Such of the workers as are permanent are entitled to special privileges, like leave with pay, etc. In the smaller factories, there are no Standing Orders governing the relations between employers and workers. Managers have their own way in matters of dispute. Even in large firms, in spite of such rules and orders, much depends upon the will of the management and little use is made of the rules and orders.

### Wages and Earnings.

The wage level is highest in Sind and Madras. The higher wages in Sind and Madras may be due to higher efficiency as also to local demands for labour from competing industries. As can be seen from the following table there is a wide range between the highest and lowest paid among even the unskilled workers.

TABLE 32.  
*Range of Wages of Unskilled Workers.*

Province.	Occupation	Daily average earnings.		
		Rs.	as.	ps.
C. P., Berar and Khandesh	Kapas pickers .. .. .	1	3	0
	Gin feeders .. .. .	0	5	0
Bombay (Gujerat) .. .. .	Kapas carriers .. .. .	1	13	6
	Cotton pickers .. .. .	0	13	3
Bombay (Hubli) .. .. .	Lasher .. .. .	1	14	6
	Gin feeder .. .. .	0	7	0
Madras .. .. .	Khalasi .. .. .	2	8	0
	Kapas picker .. .. .	0	7	0
Sind .. .. .	Jholiwala .. .. .	2	5	6
	Yellow picker .. .. .	0	12	3
Punjab .. .. .	Minimum between As. 6 and As. 12.			
	Maximum between As. 14 and Rs. 1-8-0.			

Amongst the technical staff also a similarly wide range can be observed. It seems while fixing the salary, the size of the factory, the nature of the work, seniority in service and the market demand for technicians are the main factors influencing consideration.

Dearness allowance is paid to the monthly-paid staff in most factories. There did not appear to be any definite principles on which this was based. Only in one concern it was based on the cost of living index of the Province. Bonus is paid in a very few factories and wherever it is paid, it is restricted to the monthly-paid staff and is dependent upon profits earned. Mention may also be made of the "yield" wage paid in one of the Tirupur factories to the mechanical staff for quantities of cotton ginned in excess of a standard prescribed.

Unskilled workers rarely do any overtime work. In some of the factories in the busy season, only the technical staff is called on holidays or are asked to work extra on the working days. During the investigations it was found that in very rare cases overtime payment was made according to the rules under the Factories Act. In certain cases, it was noticed that no separate register was maintained for recording overtime work. As regards deductions, it is true, though surprising, that no illegal deductions are usually made in these factories. The wage-period of unskilled workers is generally a week and of the technical staff, a month. No cases have been noticed of payment being withheld. In some places, payments were made on holidays. The usual holidays or rest days are the bazaar days in most factories. In others, Sunday is a declared holiday, while in some local ration days are holidays. On important festival days, such as Diwali, etc., the factories remain closed.

#### Working Conditions

In almost all the factories the single shift is worked. In a few factories (in Gujerat) there are two shifts. Occasional double shift is worked in some Tirupur factories, while there are three straight shifts in one Amritsar factory. In general, the working hours are 10 and the total spreadover 11 hours, but in C. P. and Berar and Khandesh, factories work for nine hours with an hour's recess. In some of the factories in this area, the spreadover is as big as 13 hours. Ventilation and lighting are poor in many of the factories in Amritsar and in C. P. and Berar and Khandesh. No factory seems to have taken any precautions to protect the workers from the dust evil. Shelters also are rarely provided, the usual argument being that they are not necessary as the workers lived nearby. Wherever latrines and urinals were at all provided, they were found insufficient in number and also extremely filthy. Arrangements regarding drinking water are also unsatisfactory. In many factories, drinking water is not even available. In some arrangement is made to supply water in earthen pots. But in one or two factories, even these were found empty and dry.

#### Welfare Activities

As may be expected, employers are generally apathetic so far as welfare is concerned. Medical facilities in a majority of factories were found non-existent, except for the first-aid box, which was generally ill-equipped and empty. In Mirpur Khas, a couple of firms have employed part-time doctors. A few factories in C. P. and Berar contribute to the local municipal hospitals where workers get free treatment. There are no other welfare activities worth the name. In spite of a large number of female workers in many places, creches were conspicuous by their absence.

#### Housing.

Imported labour to a great extent is provided with housing in Palej, Broach, Amritsar and Mirpur Khas. But nowhere is the housing quite satisfactory. The quarters are single-room tenements of the *kutchha* type and devoid of ventilation or lighting. Sanitary arrangements are extremely poor

To add to this, in many places, more than one family is crammed into a single room. In Amritsar, rent was found charged to workers according to the type of tenement. A large majority of factories, however, provide housing to their superior staff and these quarters are far superior to those for unskilled workers. A special mention must be made of the quarters provided at Mirpur Khas which are probably the best labour quarters in the town.

#### Labour Legislation.

The Factories Act, which is applicable in most cases, is disregarded in many ways and particularly in regard to sanitation, hours of work, overtime, payment for overtime, employment of children, etc. In Sind alone, it was estimated that as many as 2,000 children were employed. This preference for child labour is due to the lower wages of children. If there are some managers who are ignorant of the provisions of the Act, there are others who are negligent and careless, because of the inadequacy of the provincial inspectorates. Lastly, the Act is inoperative in several respects, mainly because of the light punishments imposed when employers are convicted for breach of law. The Workmen's Compensation Act also appears to be frequently infringed and disregarded. In most factories, workers are paid "hush" money so as to nip the trouble in the bud. At other places, minor injuries causing temporary disability go unreported and even in the case of major injuries, it is doubtful if workers ever get their full due. The Provincial Maternity Benefit Acts, though applicable in most places, do not appear to be quite successful. Either the employers as well as women workers are ignorant of the provisions of the Acts, or the women are dismissed at the first sign of pregnancy. At some places, they were deprived of the benefit on the ground that the qualifying period is not completed.

#### Miscellaneous.

It was seen that in most of the factories, workers suffered from bronchitis, asthma and T. B. This was attributed by medical practitioners in the localities investigated mainly to the nuisance of dust and cotton fibre which are inhaled by the workers during work. Accidents mostly occurred near the cotton-opener and the line-shaft. The workers are in the habit of putting their hands into the opener and if they were provided with wooden handles to push in the cotton, the accidents could be avoided. In the case of live-shafts, workers got caught in the machinery owing to inadequacy of the flooring space, lack of light and ventilation and improper clothing worn by them.

B. P. ADARKAR,

*Member.*

SIMLA,

The 1st August 1945.

## APPENDIX I.

**A Note on Pooling Agreements.**

Fairly early it was realised by the factory owners that the demand for cotton bales was not so large as could keep all the factories busy throughout the season, and the formation of pooling agreements was the only way out of the difficulty—from the viewpoint of the industrialists. The Indian Cotton Committee of 1919 (Report, p. 192) found the pooling system “in many ways objectionable and prejudicial to the interests of the cultivator.” The Royal Commission on Labour (Report, pp. 81-82) also considered this question and concluded that “for the abuses to which pooling gives rise, as for other evils, the proper remedy is the provision of an adequate inspecting staff.” During the course of the present enquiry it was confirmed that factory owners in all the important ginning and pressing centres throughout the country formed “pools”. The necessity of forming pools arises out of the fact that if all the gins and presses work throughout the season, the supply of cotton bales would far exceed the demand for them, thus depressing cotton prices and causing huge carry-overs. Apart from this, the overhead expenses incurred by the factories raise the average cost of production. It is, therefore, to obviate difficulties such as these that pooling agreements are entered into.

The nature of such agreements differs from place to place. At Lyallpur, for instance, some members of the pool do not work their factories for the whole season but share in the proceeds of the pool in proportion to the strength of their pressing and ginning machinery. In the next season, another group of proprietors do not work and the process is continued for the duration of the agreement. In such an arrangement those members who have to keep their factories closed do not make any payments into the pool but only share the profits. Payments into the pool are made only by those who carry on the ginning and pressing operations and the rates of payment are per maund of cotton ginned or per bale of cotton pressed. Arrangements are slightly different in the C. P. and Bombay centres—Amraoti, Akot, Khamgaon, Dhulia, Pachora and Hubli. In these centres it was found that all the parties continued working and divided the income of the pool among themselves in a proportion which corresponded to their respective strength of gins and presses. This, however, is a minor difference. The details of a typical pooling agreement are given below. These points are summarised from a Pool Agreement in force at Jalgaon (East Khandesh).

- (1) The contracting parties continue to be absolute owners of their respective factories.
- (2) They agree to work their factories during the contract period and to charge for pressing cotton into bales at a fixed rate of (say) Rs. 10 per bale; this is termed “the minimum pressing rate”.
- (3) Out of this amount (say) Rs. 8 is retained by the factory. This is termed “the retention amount”.
- (4) The difference between the two amounts (*viz.*, Rs. 2 per bale) multiplied by the number of bales pressed by each contracting party during the preceding month has to be paid into the Pool.
- (5) Contracting parties agree not to pay any rebate to their constituents either directly or indirectly, and if there is any breach of this condition, the party would be liable to a penalty of (say) Rs. 100 and the rebate amount is also payable into the Pool.
- (6) The weight of each bale would be 392 lb. net of cotton.

(7) The Pool money is divisible among the contracting parties, in proportion to their respective strength of presses.

(8) To facilitate full working of the presses, factory may be kept closed by rotation.

(9) Each of the parties concerned should submit a daily statement showing the number of bales prepared by such party on the previous day. The Pool accounts shall be prepared and circulated every month.

(10) On default of any party in payment of moneys due to the Pool, the Trustees of the Pool may file suits in the local Court. For the purposes of such suits the returns made by the party to the local Municipality or any other Municipality as regards the number of bales pressed by the party shall be conclusive evidence. The Trustees have also the power to terminate the agreement by giving notice, in the event of such default.

(11) The Accounts of pressing work done shall be kept by each party and shall be subject to inspection by the contracting parties or the Trustees at all reasonable times.

(12) The out-of-pocket expenses of the Trustees shall be paid by the Pool. If any of the party remove their press factory or close it, the agreement shall be terminated as to such party, but it shall be binding on the remaining parties.

(13) The collection of the press in charge from customers shall be a responsibility of the parties themselves.

(14) During the currency of the agreement the parties shall keep and maintain the factory in a good working order.

(15) None of the parties shall erect any new pressing factory, or add to, or subtract from the existing number of presses in each factory, although they can replace and repair all presses and machinery.

(16) If there is any breakdown in a factory due to unforeseen circumstances, such party will nonetheless be entitled to receive their share in the Pool monies. The contracting parties can serve or otherwise dispose of their pressing factory, but subject to the same terms and conditions as mentioned herein, and the purchaser shall be bound by the terms.

(17) In the event of any new pressing factory being started in the locality during the contract period, the agreement shall be valid. If any dispute or difference arises as regards the Pooling Agreement, such dispute or difference shall be referred to arbitration, the decision of the arbitrator or umpire being final.

The interest in these arrangements from the standpoint of the present enquiry, lies in the effect which they have on the conditions of labour. This process of rationalization, there can be little doubt, cuts down employment considerably and the industrialist gains at the expense of labour. The main aim of those who form pools is to eliminate competition and to curtail supplies with a view to stimulate prices, and to maximise profits. In this way the total number of working days for all the factories is lessened—reducing the volume of employment. It may be said that where the effect of the agreement is to provide continuous employment for a longer period though to a fewer workers is favourable at least for that section of the workers. This arrangement, however, this hard that section of the workers which is deprived of work. It would, therefore, be in the interests of labour as a whole to disperse the economic stress over a large number of workers, unless alternative employment is made available to those who are thrown out of employment in the pooling arrangement.

## APPENDIX II.

TABLE 1.

*Rates of Wages paid in the Mirpur Khas Cotton Ginning and Baling Factories.*

				Unit 1.	Unit 2.	Unit 3.	Unit 4.	Unit 5.	
Engineer (m)	..	..	..	1	190 0 0	..	..	185 0 0	150 0 0
				2	195 0 0	..	..	190 0 0	150 0 0
				3	220 0 0*	..	200 0 0	3000 0 0	160 0 0*
				(per annum)					
Fitter (m)	..	..	..	1	55 0 0	50 0 0	..	50 0 0	..
				2	55 0 0	55 0 0	..	50 0 0	..
				3	75 0 0*	70 0 0*	75 0 0	80 0 0	..
Oilman (m)	..	..	..	1	25 0 0	20 0 0	..	21 0 0	35 0 0
				2	25 0 0	22 0 0	..	29 0 0	35 0 0
				3	35 0 0	25 0 0	40 0 0	45 0 0	45 0 0*
Cobbler (m)	..	..	..	1	30 0 0	45 0 0	..	35 0 0	..
				2	30 0 0	30 0 0	..	37 0 0	..
				3	40 0 0*	33 0 0*	55 0 0	60 0 0	..
Fireman (m)	..	..	..	1	35 0 0	25 0 0	..	29 0 0	..
				2	35 0 0	28 0 0	..	35 0 0	..
				3	42 0 0*	35 0 0*	45 0 0	49 0 0	..
Opener coolie (d)	..	..	..	1	0 10 0	0 9 0	..	0 9 0	0 10 0
				2	0 12 6	0 11 6	..	0 11 0	1 0 0
				3	1 14 0	1 11 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	2 0 0
Gin feeders (women) (d)	..	..	..	1	0 6 0	0 7 0	..	0 5 0	0 5 0
				2	0 8 0	0 9 0	..	0 7 0	0 6 0
				3	0 10 0	1 2 0	0 14 0	0 12 0	0 12 0*
Yellow pickers (d) (women)	..	..	..	1	0 5 0	0 7 0	..	0 5 0	0 5 0
				2	0 7 6	0 9 0	..	0 7 0	0 6 0
				3	0 10 6	1 2 0	0 12 0	0 11 0	0 12 0*
Jholiwalas—I	..	..	..	1	0 13 0	1 0 0	..	0 14 0	1 4 0
				2	1 4 0	1 12 0	..	1 1 0	1 8 0
				3	1 14 0	2 12 0	2 2 0	2 8 0	2 8 0
Jholiwalas—II (d)	..	..	..	1	0 12 0	0 12 0	..	0 12 0	1 4 0
				2	1 0 0	1 2 6	..	1 0 0	1 8 0
				3	1 10 0	2 1 0	2 2 0	2 6 0	2 8 0
Platform coolies (d)	..	..	..	1	0 10 0	0 8 0	..	0 8 0	0 12 0
				2	0 12 0	0 10 0	..	0 12 0	1 0 0
				3	1 6 0	1 6 0	1 6 0	1 6 0	1 8 6
Loading and Unloading (Contractor's) Labour (d)	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
				2	..	..	..	..	..
				3	2 4 0	3 2 0	1 12 0	2 0 0	2 4 0
Kapas handling (Contractor's) Labour (d)	..	..	..	1	0 14 0	0 12 0	..	0 10 0	1 0 0
				2	1 6 0	1 10 0	..	1 2 0	1 8 0
				3	2 4 0	2 8 0	1 12 0	1 12 0	2 4 0
Carpenter (m)	..	..	..	1	40 0 0	45 0 0	..	45 0 0	..
				2	50 0 0	45 0 0	..	50 0 0	..
				3	60 0 0	60 0 0	70 0 0	75 0 0	..
Women at the Press (opening bags) (d)	..	..	..	1	0 8 0	0 8 0	..	0 8 0	..
				2	0 10 0	0 12 0	..	0 10 0	..
				3	0 15 0	1 0 0	..	1 10 0	..
Men at the Press (d)	..	..	..	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	..	0 15 0	No press here.
				2	1 4 0	1 6 0	..	1 4 0	..
				3	2 4 0	2 4 0	2 4 0	2 4 0	..

\*Entitled to a separate dearness allowance also.

1. Average wages paid in 1939-40.

2. Average wages paid in 1942-43.

3. Average wages paid in 1944-45.

(m) Monthly-paid.

(d) Daily-rated.

## APPENDIX III.

## A Note on Two Factories in Baroda.

(Some scrappy information was available for 2 concerns in Baroda)

This note is based on the information supplied by the Government of the Baroda State as regards labour conditions in two concerns—(i) the Ahmedabad Advance Mills Ltd. Cotton Gin and Press Factory ; and (ii) the Baroda Ginning and Pressing Company, Ltd. From the information available, it would appear that labour conditions in these factories are much the same as in the C. P. and Berar and Khandesh, though the working season here is somewhat shorter and lasts from February to May.

## Employment.

Of the two factories investigated, the Baroda Ginning and Pressing Co is a big factory employing 225 workers daily, and the other one, *viz.*, the Ahmedabad Advance Mills Ltd., is a comparatively small factory employing on an average only 123 workers. The contract system is prevalent. Out of a total of 346 workers employed in the two factories, as many as 281 or 81.2 per cent. are employed by contractors. Nearly half the total employment in these factories consists of women. Details as regards employment are given in the table below.

TABLE 1.

*Figures for Employment.*

	Unit 1.						Unit 2.
	1939.			1944.			1944.
	Men.	Women.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Total.	Men and Women.
Employed and paid directly	1	1	32	34	3	37	28
Employed and paid by contractors	38	46	84	30	56	86	195
Employed through contractors but paid directly.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	69	47	116	64	59	123	223

Information regarding the length of service of operatives was not available but as all the workers are dismissed at the end of the season, no worker could possibly have more than a few months' continuous service to his credit. There is no system of graded or time-scale promotion in any of the factories, but the rates of wages at the time of recruitment are fixed after considering the cost of living in the locality. Labour turnover and absenteeism appear to be negligible in these factories. Workers prefer to work in the same factory for the whole of the season. The extent of absenteeism could not be ascertained due to the prevalence of the *badli* system and when a worker has to absent himself, he sends a substitute, usually one of the members of his family.

### Wages and Earnings.

No information was available regarding the rates of wages paid in 1939. Only the current rates were supplied and these are given in the following tables.

TABLE 2.  
*Rates of Wages (Unit 1).*

Occupation	Maximum			Minimum			Average.		
	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.	Rs.	as.	ps.
Engineers .. .. .	108	5	4	66	10	8	87	8	0
Fitters .. .. .	50	0	0	50	10	0	50	0	0
Firemen .. .. .	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Mochi .. .. .	45	0	0	45	0	0	45	0	0
Oilmen .. .. .	30	0	0	20	0	0	24	2	8
Carpenter .. .. .	60	0	0	60	0	0	60	0	0
Mate to Carpenter .. .. .	25	0	0	25	0	0	25	0	0
Cotton Carriers .. .. .	26	0	0	26	0	0	26	0	0
Seed Carriers .. .. .	16	4	0	16	4	0	16	0	0
Gun Attendants .. .. .	13	0	0	13	0	0	13	0	0
Sweeper .. .. .	13	0	0	13	0	0	13	0	0
Press Coolies .. .. .	26	0	0	26	0	0	26	0	0

TABLE 3.  
*Rates of Wages (Unit 2).*

Occupation.	Maximum.			Minimum.			Average.		
Drivers .. .. .	55	0	0	25	0	0	40	0	0
Engine Oilers .. .. .	25	0	0	14	0	0	19	8	0
Fitters .. .. .	55	0	0	30	0	0	43	0	0
Oilers .. .. .	22	0	0	20	0	0	21	0	0
Firemen .. .. .	32	0	0	32	0	0	32	0	0
Carpenters .. .. .	51	0	0	51	0	0	51	0	0
Blacksmiths .. .. .	35	0	0	35	0	0	35	0	0
Hammermen .. .. .	24	0	0	24	0	0	24	0	0
Cobblers .. .. .	43	0	0	43	0	0	43	0	0
Coolies .. .. .	23	0	0	15	0	0	18	10	8

No separate dearness allowance or bonus is paid in either factory. It was claimed that overtime work was never resorted to. Wages are paid weekly, though in one of the factories, the engineers are paid Rs. 650 and Rs. 400 for the entire season. The factories observe a weekly holiday, usually on Sundays.

#### Working Conditions.

Both the factories work one shift a day of 10 hours' duration. The spread-over is 11 hours, there being a rest interval of 1 hour between 1 and 2 p.m. The conditions as regards lighting, ventilation, floor area, etc., are reported to be satisfactory. The Ahmedabad Advance Mills Ltd. have built a shed (51' × 19' 16') for the use of their employees but most of the workers come from the neighbouring localities and they prefer to go home for meals. In the other factory no shelter has been provided.

### Welfare Activities.

The number of latrines and urinals in the factory premises is regarded as adequate. As regards water-supply, one or two wells are dug in each factory. In summer, cool water is supplied to workers in both the factories. In one factory, only a first-aid box is maintained; but in the other arrangements for medical aid have been made with a local M.B., B.S. private practitioner. Sick and injured workmen are sent to the doctor with a factory chit. At the end of the month the factory makes payments to the doctor on the basis of the number of cases. In the same factory, a restaurant is run by an outsider and eatables are sold to the workers at market prices. Also, in both the factories foodgrains like rice, *jowar*, wheat, *dal*, etc., are supplied to the workers at controlled rates.

### Housing.

In both the factories, free quarters are provided as far as possible to all and especially to those who come from outside the town. In one factory, the skilled hands are housed in one-room tenements. Rooms are 16'  $\times$  15'. There are 25 huts for ordinary workers also. In the other factory, six tin sheds have been allotted to the mechanical staff. Workers in these factories are not allowed either free oil or fuel.

### Miscellaneous.

The State has its own Factories Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, and Payment of Wages Act. Extracts from these are prominently displayed on the premises of the factories. No complaints were made about the non-observance of any of these Acts. Cases of occupational diseases had not been observed, nor, it is claimed, had any accidents occurred till the date of enquiry. There have been no strikes so far, nor have the workers been able to organize a union. In one of the two units, advance payment is made to the workers in case of necessity, but loans are not advanced. There are no other facilities for the workers.

## APPENDIX IV.

*A Glossary of Indian Terms.*

- Alhiwala*.—One filling loose cotton in gunny-bags.
- Ambaram*.—A Tamil word meaning heap.
- Atti*.—Useless cotton (yellow stains, etc.).
- Badli*.—A substitute worker.
- Barbandh*.—One filling the loose cotton in gunny-bags.
- Bardan*.—A gunny-bag.
- Bodh*.—A gunny-bag filled with cotton.
- Bodhwala*.—One filling the cotton in gunny-bags.
- Boja*.—Same as *bodh*.
- Bondri*.—A gunny-bag.
- Bondriwala*.—A gunny-bag carrier.
- Borah*.—A gunny-bag.
- Charakhawala*.—Gin feeder.
- Chhadiwala*.—Loose cotton (sometimes half-pressed cotton) bag pusher from opener to the box.
- Dabale*.—Cotton pressers or lashers.
- Dalewala*.—Worker carrying cotton to the gin.
- Dhagla*.—A heap of cotton.
- Dokra*.—A gunny-bag.
- Galwala*.—Ginned cotton carrier.
- Garwala*.—Worker breaking open the half-pressed gunny-bags and making the cotton loose.
- Gutteria*.—Raw and ginned cotton picker who picks cotton falling on the ground when it is being carried from one place to another.
- Kohiya*.—Ginned cotton carrier (from the godown to the pressing factory).
- Jariwala*.—Worker carrying gunny-bags to the press.
- Jholi*.—Bag.
- Jholiwala*.—Bag carrier.
- Judiawala*.—Raw cotton carrier.
- Kachhiwala*.—Raw cotton carrier.
- Kadiwali*.—A reliever.
- Katawala*.—Weighment coolie.
- Kavadiwala*.—Worker removing loose cotton from or throwing it into the opener.
- Khalasi*.—A general name given to odd coolies.
- Khandy* or *Candy*.—Avoirdupois unit of ginned cotton containing 20 maunds.
- Labadi*.—Weighment man ; or cotton preeser and lasher.
- Labariwala*.—Weighment man.
- Lariwala*.—Worker carrying half-pressed cotton to the pressing factory.
- Lachangwala*.—Worker filling cotton in gunny-bags.
- Mochi*.—Cobbler.
- Mukadam*.—Mate (male).
- Mukidamt*.—Mate (female).

*Pagri.*—Turban.

*Pala coolies.*—Workers employed in cleaning cotton.

*Palang.*—A wooden structure 12' × 6' kept in press factory in which Pala coolies can conveniently sit to make loose and clean cotton.

*Palledar or Pallewala.*—Cotton-bag carrier or a worker making cotton loose.

*Pombdiwala.*—Cotton picker (i. e., cotton which falls on the ground when the bales or bags are being carried to the pressing factory).

*Rali.*—Gin feeder.

*Reja.*

*Rejas.*—Female coolies.

*Sarkiwala.*—Cotton-seed carrier.

*Suriwala.*—Gunny-bag cutter.

*Tolewala.*—Weighment coolie.

*Vasalawala.*—Worker who cleans the cotton bale cover.