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ROYAL COMMISSION
ON
LABOUR IN INDIA

EVIDENCE

Vol. II.—Part 2.

AB, DELHI
and
MERWARA

ORAL EVIDENCE

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN BEFORE THE
ROYAL COMMISSION ON LABOUR IN INDIA

PUNJAB
THIRD MEETING
KHEWRA

Monday, 21st October, 1929.

PRESENT

The Rt. Hon J. H. WELCH (Chairman)

The Rt. Hon V. S. SRINIVASA
SASTRI, P.C.

SIR ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.

MR. A. G. CLOW, C.J.E., I.C.S.

MR. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

MR. JOHN CLIFF.

MR. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

MISS B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,

I.M.S. (Medical Assessor).

MR. S. LALI JOSHI

MR. A. DIBDIN.

} (Joint Secretaries.)

**ALI HAIDER and HABIB KHAN, representatives of the
Khewra salt miners.**

The Chairman. We have carefully considered your petition* which was presented to us yesterday. The duty of this Commission is not to deal with detailed grievances which there may be in this and other working places in India. Our duty is to see if we can suggest here and elsewhere a system whereby all these grievances may have a proper hearing and be dealt with in a proper way. One of the paragraphs of your petition asks that the committee of the miners might be elected by yourselves.

B-1. Has that request been put before the management of the mine before to-day?—We have made the suggestion several times, but no heed has ever been paid to it.

B-2. In your petition you say that a change in the system of payment took place about a year ago, and I to understand that the miners would wish to go back to the old system?—That was better than the present system of work and payment, we consider that that would be better than what is being done at present.

B-3. Do you consider that you receive less on the average under the new system than you did under the old?—The old rates were not sufficient to meet the cost of living and the present rates are even less.

* Not printed

B-4. Am I to understand that the miners would be prepared to elect a committee who should speak for them on their grievances to the management?—Yes, we are prepared to do so.

B-5. The first paragraph of your petition relating to the question of the property in the mines is not a matter with which this Commission can deal: it is a legal question, which, if there are any rights that have not been observed, should be taken to the law courts?—We have mentioned the fact that we have these rights in the mines in order that you should appreciate that though we have owned this land for some time, we are not well treated even as labourers.

B-6. *Mr. Sastri*: In the petition the statement is made that outdoor work is not given to you miners, but that you would like to take it up: is that correct?—We are prepared to do the outdoor work if we are given sufficient wages.

B-7. Is it not a fact that you miners have been used for generations to indoor work and that you have an aversion to doing work outside?—We miners are accustomed to work inside the mine and we cannot work properly outside, but in order to get a living we are prepared to do so if sufficient wages are given.

B-8. I did not understand what was said about the houses in which you live, that if you repair or rebuild a house you have to execute some document?—Yes, we have to execute a bond in favour of the Salt Department that the house belongs to the Department and we cannot build without the permission of the Department.

B-9. So that it is not only the mine, but the whole of the house property here that now belongs to Government?—The conditions laid down in the deed are so stringent that even for ordinary faults miners can easily be turned out of the houses. Previously no bond was demanded, but now the conditions laid down in the agreement are such that miners can be ousted at any time even for an ordinary fault.

B-10. What is the daily average wage that a miner gets?—Four miners working together get Rs. 4-8 a day.

B-11. Do you mean that four miners work together?—Only one miner is shown as the actual miner, and he has three others to assist him; the output of the four is taken as the output of one miner and the payment is made in one miner's name.

B-12. Do those three other miners include the wife and children who may be labouring?—It includes their wives and their sons or others who go and work in the mines.

B-13. You have not yet told me the average wage; would it come to 12 or 14 annas?—It would come to 10 annas: the utmost they can get is 10 annas.

B-14. In other words, if instead of engaging their own wives and children, they engaged other miners, they would pay them 10 annas?—They are paid equal shares. Our wages are paid on output. The output is sometimes 4,000 maunds and sometimes 6,000 maunds. If the output is small we get less wages.

B-15. Are the miners usually able to employ their wives and all their children above 13, or is there a certain amount of unemployment?—There is unemployment; the miners do not get sufficient work here.

B-16. Do the miners take advantage of the school that is established here for their children?—Arrangements for education at this place are not so good, and the miners cannot afford to send their children to a school which is 5 miles away.

B-17. Is it a Government school?—There is a private school under the District Board.

B-18. I understand there is a desire on the part of the officers to employ miners' children as clerks; do you take advantage of that?—When we get no education, how can we get our sons employed as clerks? And those who are educated have been given no employment here.

B-19. *Sir Alexander Murray*: In reply to Mr. Sastri you said there was unemployment and you said you were willing to work outside. Why is it necessary to bring convicts to do the loading rather than to employ you; why will you not do this work instead of the convicts?—We are prepared to do it if that work is given to us.

B-20. At what rate of wages?—We are quite prepared to do that work at wages a little higher than are paid to the convicts, because, after all, being prisoners, they are prepared to do it for a smaller wage. We are prepared to do that work if no restrictions are placed on us and we are allowed to complete the work; but we are compelled to work for a few hours in the morning and then continue in the evening for 8 annas a day. Such restrictions should not be made.

B-21. You have never been asked to work for 8 annas a day where the convicts have been working for 10 annas a day, have you?—We were offered the same wages, but that work could be done by three persons and they insisted that we should engage at least 6 persons.

B-22. If they engaged three persons they would have to pay three times 10 annas, which is 30 annas; whereas if they engaged six persons, they would have to pay six times 10 annas, which is 60 annas?—More wages should be given per person if the work is being done by three persons than if it were being done by six persons. The miners would not engage their children on this work.

B-23. I am not talking about women and children; I am talking about these men. Why is it that convicts have to be brought in here to do that work when there is a lot of men seeking employment?—There was a strike in the year 1921. Before that we dare not make any complaint. After the strike of 1921, the Officers of the Salt Department tried to oppress us in every way and this work was stopped. We are quite prepared to do this work if it is given on contract or we are given good wages.

B-24. How long have the convicts been coming here?—For the last 6 or 7 years.

B-25. There is also unemployment in the mines; there are far too many miners and there is not sufficient work to go round. Supposing there are 500 miners, and there is only work for 400 miners, would you prefer that 100 miners be put out of the mine altogether and only 400 kept in the mine, or would you prefer that 500 be kept in and get less wages?—All the miners depend entirely on the mine; they cannot be turned out. If they were turned out, where would they get employment? They also should be given work in the mine.

B-26. I might have put it in this way: your sons are growing up and there is not sufficient employment in the mine for you and your sons. Why do you not get your sons to do the outside work, or some other work, so that you can continue to work in the mine?—They do not get the work outside the mine, so that they have to go to the mine.

B-27. *Mr. Ahmed*: Since 1921, when you struck, the Government have employed convicts to carry salt to the railway trucks?—Yes.

B-28. May I take it that Government have punished you in this way and you have incurred great loss thereby?—We do not know why it was done.

B-29. *The Chairman*: Is it quite clear that before the strike of 1921 miners were doing the work of loading the trucks outside?—We used to do the loading work, but when there was great demand for labour others used to be called in by the Department.

B-30. *Mr. Ahmed*: But if the work is offered to you now, you will be anxious to do the work as you did before 1921?—We should be given more wages than are at present given to the convicts; they have no children and we have to support families.

B-31. I understand that out of the Rs. 3-6 which you are paid for a tub of salt weighing 40 maunds you have to pay certain expenses amounting to 14 annas per tub, which leaves about Rs. 2-8 per tub?—Yes.

B-32. So that you get Rs. 2-8 per tub, there being no further expenses? That is clear wages.

B-33. If you do not get good salt and it is stoney, the Government officials of the salt mine reduce your pay?—We are paid nothing for the rock or stone that is extracted by us; we have to extract it at our own expense.

B-34. What will be the percentage of rejections from the tubs?—About 25 per cent.

B-35. To load 40 maunds of salt you require the work of four persons for two days?—Yes.

B-36. Then I take it that 8 labourers get Rs. 2-8 for a tub? That is so.

B-37. If you divide Rs. 2-8 by 8, what will it be per head?—5 annas per head per day.

B-38. Is it the fact that all the workers have not got wives and children to help in the work of loading, and so they sometimes engage outside people?—Yes.

B-39. And you have to pay those outside workers a share of the Rs. 2-8?—Yes.

B-40. In what proportions do you share the money with such outside workers?—The payment made to outside people engaged by us is made by measurement.

B-41. What is the system of measurement?—Re. 1 is paid for a cutting 6 ft. long and 1 ft. deep.

B-42. If as a result of the cutting you do not get salt, but get stone or half stone and half salt, what is the position then?—We are paid nothing for stone or rock.

B-43. Is rock or stone entered in the note-book which the officers give you?—That is not shown in the note-book.

B-44. Since when have you been receiving lower wages?—Up to last year our wages were better than they are now.

B-45. Since the accident, when your houses were destroyed, I understand you have petitioned the officers to be supplied with Government quarters?—That petition was made but no action was taken on it.

B-46. Would you like to elect your own committee of management?—Yes.

B-47. You do not desire to elect a lambardar, but would prefer to elect your own men?—That is so.

B-48. Do you think that if you had had a good committee consisting of your own elected representatives, you would not have been so harrassed?—Yes.

B-49. You have said that in view of the present cost of living the wage that you now get is not sufficient for the maintenance of a family?—That is so.

B-50. And unless higher wages are paid, it is very difficult for you to go on?—That is so.

B-51. Am I to understand that you have to pay for medical attention out of your own earnings?—If we go to hospital we do not pay anything, but if we call a doctor to our own house we have to pay the fee. For instance, if a man's wife is ill the doctor does not come without a fee.

B-52. You have to pay for the doctor, and have you to pay for the medicine as well?—We pay nothing for the medicine.

B-53. Where do you get the medicine?—From the local hospital.

B-54. You say the school is 5 miles from here and if you send your children there it involves expense?—Yes; Rs. 10 or Rs. 12 a month.

B-55. And you cannot afford that expense?—We cannot.

B-56. You therefore expect, as a matter of necessity, that Government should provide for the education of your children?—Yes.

B-57. As you do not get sufficient wages, you incur debts with the sowkar?—Yes.

B-58. It is therefore evident that since you are indebted, it is not possible for you to buy your daily necessities from outside and store them for a year?—We cannot.

B-59. I suggest that if you started a co-operative society, with Government assistance, you would be benefited because money would be supplied at lower rates of interest?—If the money were advanced by Government at lower rates of interest, we should welcome it.

B-60. It is one of your grievances that there is no provision of pure water for drinking?—Yes.

B-61. Certain Government lands were given to you for building your quarters?—No land was given to us for building.

B-62. Were not some lands given to some men?—I do not know. We are living in houses built by ourselves.

B-63. But some of you probably wanted certain lands from Government to build your quarters?—We desire that that land should be given to us outside this dangerous area.

B-64. You do not like the system of payment through contractors; you would prefer that your wages should be paid to you direct and not through a middleman?—The miners should be paid direct.

B-65. I understand some of you work 12 hours and some 11 hours, but it is stated somewhere that you only work 8 hours; which is correct?—We sometimes have to work as long as 16 hours.

B-66. The workshop employees are supplied with quarters by Government?—That is so.

B-66. And you would expect that Government should supply you with similar quarters?—Yes, we also want such quarters, with electricity and water.

B-67. It is said that the Workmen's Compensation Act is inoperative and that there is in fact no employers' liability with regard to accidents?—That is so.

B-68. *Duran Chaman Lall*: Would you prefer to get a minimum living wage?—Yes, we would prefer that.

B-68. *Mr. Chow*: At present I understand that there is not enough work for all the men?—No.

B-70. Then why do you bring your wives into the mines?—We are very poor, and instead of getting other men we take our wives with us.

B-71. But there are other men sitting idle in the village?—If we give work to other people there will not be sufficient for ourselves.

B-72. How many hours work do you get at present, on the average. I do not mean machine work?—Eight hours.

B-73. The work seems to be sufficient?—We do not get sufficient wages. We work for eight hours, but there is salt-dust and rock for which we get paid nothing, and we have to waste a lot of time.

B-74. What is the usual rate of interest charged by money-lenders in the village?—It varies from one to two rupees per month per cent.

B-75. *Mr. Joshi*: Are there any difficulties in your getting land for cultivation?—We cannot get any land for cultivation.

B-76. What is the difficulty?—We cannot purchase the land ourselves, and there is not enough land here.

B-77. But say a mile or two away from here?—All the holdings are small here.

B-78. It is stated by Mr. Hoyle, the Commissioner, Northern India Salt Revenue, that the miners would not like a scheme for sickness insurance. If a scheme, by which they can get some wages during sickness, is prepared, would you like it or not?—We would prefer that scheme.

B-79. Will you pay, say, one pice in a rupee if you get your wages during sickness?—We would not like to pay anything from our own pocket, because even now we do not get sufficient for us to live.

B-80. I understand that your wages will not be so much if women do not go underground; but is there any other objection to the Government making a law that women should not work underground?—We have no objection to that.

B-81. *Miss Power*: In your petition you refer to the committee of four men. Who elects those four men?—They are appointed by the General Manager of the salt mines.

B-82. The workers have no say in the appointment of those four men?—No.

B-83. Has that committee of four men no power to deal with disputes as regards the workers' conditions in the mines?—They have no powers.

B-84. So that if the workers want to make representations about their conditions they have to do it either individually or collectively among themselves?—Everybody has to do it individually.

B-85. *The Chairman*: We have heard what you have had to say and what you have told us will have our consideration when the time comes for us to make our Report. With regard to some other individual petitions which have been handed to me, those will be sent to, and dealt with by the General Manager. They are not matters which this Commission can entertain.—We should not be victimized for what we have said to-day. We are afraid that the Government Department will not treat us properly for giving this evidence.

The Chairman: As a Royal Commission we should take into very serious consideration any victimization of any kind of anyone who appeared before this Commission.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

A representative of the workshop men of the Khewra Salt Mines.

B-86. *The Chairman:* We have a memorandum* from the labourers in the Engineering Section of the salt mines.

The Secretary read the memorandum.

B-87. *The Chairman:* Who prepared this memorandum?—A general meeting of the labourers of the Engineering Section was held, and this petition was drawn up by their common assent.

B-88. When was the meeting held?—On Saturday last.

B-89. Did you word the petition?—Yes, I had to translate it into English.

B-90. On behalf of the men you have presented this petition in English?—Yes, in English, but the ideas have been taken from what the men said.

B-91. When a petition is handed in only a few minutes before we sit, it is difficult for us to do more than to say that we will take into consideration what you have asked in the petition. How long have you been employed in the engineering shop?—From the 10th March 1927. My colleague has been employed for about 5 years.

B-92. Have you represented to the management of the mines these proposals which you have submitted to us?—Yes. This petition of ours has been read over by the Engineer in charge.

B-93. Your petition has only just come into my hands. You will understand that it is not possible to examine you on this petition, but we can perfectly well understand it, and all I can say is that it will have our consideration, with the others that we have received.

B-94. *Diwan Chaman Lall:* What was the reason why you were taken off the monthly rates and put down to daily rates?—We have never had monthly rates. We have always been paid on the daily system.

B-95. There is a statement here to the effect that you had been put down to the daily rates. Since when?—The daily system has prevailed from the beginning.

B-96. Would you like to be put on monthly rates?—Yes, all of us. Then we would be paid for all Sundays and holidays.

B-97. Do I understand that formerly you used to get paid for Sundays?—Yes.

B-98. Were you consulted before this change was introduced?—We were not.

B-99. Did you make a protest to the authorities against this change?—Yes, all of us made protests verbally to the authorities, but they said that since the Act had been introduced they could not help it.

B-100. Suppose a system were introduced whereby a small sum were to be deducted from your wages, and if you fell ill you were given a certain proportion of your salary—sickness insurance: would you be willing to contribute towards that?—Yes, quite willing.

B-101. How many men are there working in the workshop?—More than 200 men.

B-102. How many quarters have you provided for you?—I have not got the exact number, but I think it is not more than 30 quarters or so.

(The witness withdrew.)

* Not printed.

Mr. A. L. HOYLE, I.C.S., Commissioner, Northern Indian Salt Revenue, and Mr. C. H. PITT, Manager, Khewra Salt Mine.

The Chairman: Mr. Hoyle, I think we need only trouble you with that part of your memorandum which refers to Khewra. There will be one question about Rajputana. I suggest that we take Khewra first. You have been present at the Commission and have heard the evidence just given to us. There are one or two questions I would like to ask you on that.

B-103. Have you been aware of the suggestion that the miners should elect a committee?—What they said just now is an absolute misstatement, namely, that they have represented it many times. The whole petition was definitely not spontaneous. The suggestion about an elected committee is not a genuine one of the miners at all. They have never represented it once. They have never represented that as a complaint to anybody.

B-104. If they took steps in a proper orderly manner to have a committee of representatives, you would be willing to hear it?—Most certainly. It would have every consideration. We should be most ready to hear any suggestion they might wish to make. We could not undertake naturally to agree to it, but we should be perfectly ready to hear what they have to say.

B-105. Of course you could not undertake to give everything that was asked for, but you would be willing that a committee should be elected amongst the miners, a committee which should continue in existence in some regularized form and which should from time to time bring to your notice anything which was thought to be wrong by them. You would have no objection to that?—Yes, I do not think I would have any objection to that

B-106. I understand you to tell the Commission that a good deal of what has been stated in the petitions presented to us really is at variance with the facts?—It is, both in the way of suppression of the truth and a misstatement of the truth. For instance, they told you that their houses were destroyed owing to our action, and they said that Government ought to give them land and give them free houses. They omitted any reference to the fact that Government had given free grants. They were called "irrecoverable advances", because that sounds rather more economical of public money than calling them "grants". But Government has given a grant of Rs. 500 to a very large number of these men to build houses for themselves outside the danger zone. We have provided altogether for this purpose an expenditure of about Rs. 57,000, out of which about Rs. 30,600 has been already expended. I think the petition was unfair in that it suppressed any reference to that.

B-106 (a) Is there any other point that you wish to put forward? I do not want to bring in the point about the land because you have ruled that out, but I might mention briefly that the whole matter was threshed out years ago by the settlement officer, and they have not a shadow of a right. Then they referred to some documents, that is, agreements they have to sign. Mr Pitt could show you a sample. Really it was introduced some years ago as a means of retaining some kind of hold on them, or rather as a means of controverting any claim that they might put forward to be the owners of the land. They are not the owners of the land. We thought it would be a good thing that that should be recognized. Their figures, I should think, with regard to their earnings are open to dispute. They are paid at the rate of Rs. 3-6 per tub load of salt, and they made out that that represents about half a dozen people. As a matter of fact one man can fill a tub load of salt in a day. One of their figures struck me as very much out. The number of miners working they say is 2,667. The actual number is about 1,100. They said that they used to be paid far better before than they are now, under the old measurement system. The present rate of payment, *viz.*, Rs. 3-6 per truck, was fixed after a very careful examination of all the factors entering into the matter, and calculations have been made

which show that actually they are paid rather more than they were under the old system, after allowing for everything. A few months ago some of them were rather vocal on the subject of this rate. They liked the system. They all preferred this system, but some of them said that the rate was rather low. Calculations were made and explained to them, and since then they have been very careful not to say anything further about this rate for fear that Government might enquire into the question more closely and reduce the rate. What this man said just now about preferring the old system, I can assure you, is not a representative statement of opinion. Miners have, as a body, expressed themselves in favour of the present system of payment in preference to the old.

B-107. What do you mean "as a body"?—The representatives of miners. Frequently the men come up to me and talk to me in a body, and opinion has always been expressed in favour of the new system. These two men unfortunately are not representative miners.

B-108. Then it would help you really in your work if they had representative men with whom you could talk on these questions and explain when a change was going to be made, so that you might be sure what the opinion of the miners as a whole was?—It is rather difficult to say to what extent it would help. It might help. Anyhow I do not know of any objection to it. It is an experiment which might be worth trying.

B-109. It was stated to us just now that the work of loading into the railway trucks done by convict labour was instituted after the strike in 1921. Is that the case?—It was introduced during the war. (Mr. Pitt) I cannot give you the exact year; but during the war imported salt could not get into India owing to the lack of shipping, and this mine had to work at a very high pressure. The whole country was working at very high pressure. The only labour that was available of any kind was jail labour.

B-110. That is quite clear. You required all the men who were miners or who would go into the mine to be there, because of the demand?—Yes.

B-111. Since then the demand has reverted to what we may call the ordinary demand?—Yes.

B-112. The result of that is that some miners have not full employment with the present output?—Yes.

B-113. They have told us to-day that they would be willing to do this work of loading railway trucks at a cost not greater than that you are at present paying. Is that the case?—(Mr. Hoyle) In connection with that, the experiment was tried in 1927, and Mr. Pitt has on record many statements from the men that they did not want to take on this work. (Mr. Pitt). That is so.

B-114. That again would be a suitable matter to discuss with the men if you had a regular committee of them?—Yes.

B-115. So that you might be quite sure of your ground in attempting any further experiment. One can understand that you would not like to change your system and then change back again, but you would be willing to consider that in the same way if they represented to you through a regular channel?—I think so. Most certainly.

B-116. *Mr. How:* The figure of men employed here is 1,100. I take it that there has been no substantial change since 1927?—No.

B-117. A considerably lower figure is given by the Chief Inspector of Mines in his Annual Report,—presumably an average, which is reduced by the fact that he averages it over the whole year, while they work for only ten months?—I have not seen his figures, but I should think that is probably the reason.

B-118. As regards the hours of work, what control is exercised by the management over the hours during which the men work?—Practically none. They really come and go as they please. They go away for their midday meal at the time which suits them, and they leave the mine in the afternoon

when they feel they have done enough, and they want to.

B-119. It would be open to them to do what he wanted?—I suppose it would. That is not the point.

B-120. There is no system by which the Mine Act extends to which the provisions of the Mine Act apply to hours?—No. It could be devised. We could be doing it.

B-121. My point is, there is no system by which we have not any system of checking when the men's hours go off.

B-122. Is there really any check of the hours? If he chooses to turn out more than that, it is his own look out?—Quite.

B-123. So that is there not a tendency to have some of the men are lazy, and I understand that they work very hard for a time they will not work so hard, rather spasmodic in their method of work?—Mr. Pitt. I do not think it increases unduly, because when a miner goes to work he is put on loading stations ready to go to work. He can be stolen by any of his friends, so that he has a large stock. Until the salt is put into the trucks, it is not

B-124. You could secure the present condition of labour force without working them harder?—Mr. Pitt. Yes, Sir. I should say so. We hope to meet the demand for way freights are being reduced with a view to getting it on more distant markets than we send it to now. We do so without overworking anybody.

B-125. We discovered this morning that there is a shortage on fresh workers. For example, we met one of the men here a few months ago. Would it not be better to have a system of the general underemployment which appears to be the case?—Work in the mines here is a fairly steady one. If it were being taken on, it would simply mean that more men would rarely come of themselves. I have seen a number of miners are a very conservative folk. They are not a happy family arrangement that they have got to be in conditions. I think it would probably cause more trouble than it started keeping the boys out of the mines would be worth enough.

B-126. What is the average time at present when the salt is cut and the time that it is loaded into trucks?—Mr. Pitt. It depends entirely on the miner; but the maximum, I think, would be three days.

B-127. As regards holidays, we have seen a suggestion that the passing of the recent Act has altered in some respects the position as regards holidays, but that Act—the Mines (Amendment) Act, 1927—did not in its terms do so. Can you explain that?—(Mr. Hoyle) It is not so. The mine is always closed on Sundays and on certain other holidays. It has not made any difference at all.

B-128. In other words the position in respect of holidays now is much the same as it was five years ago?—Exactly the same, I should say. (Mr. Pitt) We have enforced the limitation of hours of working days very much more strictly in the last four years. This applies to the workshop.

B-129. I should like to ask one question on Rajputana. You suggest in your memorandum that the Workmen's Compensation Act being inoperative, there is no employer's liability in cases of accident?—(Mr. Hoyle) No legal liability.

B-130. Do you in practice give compensation on the scale of the Workmen's Compensation Act or do you give no compensation?—I cannot remember any case. There has been no such case in my time; nobody has applied for it. We have not given compensation.

B-131. *Mr. Joshi*: Will you explain what are the exact functions of the committee of four which you have appointed?—(Mr. Pitt) The existence of the committee was due originally to the fact that the old measurement system was very complicated, and there was invariably trouble between different members of the gang with regard to how much exactly was due to each man. It is very difficult indeed to measure proportionately each man's space. We found also that the men in charge of the working chambers were not to be trusted, because they would generally favour their own relatives. Therefore this committee was appointed to settle disputes in the mine about measurements. They do very little work indeed now. They do practically nothing as regards sanitation, or anything else.

B-132. Were you ever at any meetings of the committee?—We endeavoured not to be. Our intention was that the committee should represent, so far as possible, the opinion of the community.

B-133. Is it true that the committee does not function?—It functioned very well indeed. In four years I have only had three appeals from its decisions. Under the old measurement system there were frequent cases; they would decide possibly an average of two cases a week. Very rarely were their decisions at all unfair or unjust.

B-134. In view of the fact that there is a difference in the statement made by the workers as regards wages and the statement made by Mr. Hoyle, can you give us a more detailed statement of wages?—(Mr. Hoyle) I can give you figures showing how the rate per tub of Rs. 3-6 has been arrived at. (Mr. Pitt) I have it here. It is a long and complicated statement.

B-135. I want to know the actual number of miners employed and the total wage bill paid over the whole year.—Very well.

B-136. You give the figure of 50 rupees as the average wage. Does that include or exclude the deductions which you make?—The figures are very approximate. We have given 30 and 50 rupees.

B-137. I want to know whether these figures are inclusive or exclusive of the deductions?—They are net—excluding deductions.

B-138. As regards housing, we are told that you lay down the condition that whenever a man does not work in the mine he cannot live in the house. Out of the total cost of the house, what would be the amount of the Government grant and what would be the amount invested by the workmen themselves?—(Mr. Hoyle) You are talking of cases in which we have given one of these "irrecoverable advances" to a miner to build a new house?

B-139. You make a provision that a man must leave the house if he does not work in the mine, though you expect him to build his own house. I want to know whether it is a fair condition, if the miner has to invest a large amount of money to build his house, to turn him out of it if he no longer works in the mine?—(Mr. Pitt) There is no such condition.

B-140. You do not ask the man to leave the house, even if he does not work in the mine?—No. The lease provides for the ejection of a disobedient tenant.

B-141. What is the meaning of "disobedient"?—One who does not obey orders in the mine, or other points of discipline in the village.

B-142. I want you to consider this from the point of view of the workman. He is expected to build his house. If he builds his house, and if he invests his money in it, the condition on which he can be evicted must not be a light condition, such as disobeying orders in the mine.—(Mr. Hoyle) I think some provision is necessary against mutiny or indiscipline. We give them the site of the house free.

B-143. *The Chairman*: Does the Rs. 500 of which you speak cover the whole cost of building the house or not?—No. (Mr. Pitt) The Rs. 500 was

only given in the case of houses which collapsed due to a bad subsidence which we had in the village. In the case of a man wanting to build a house he builds it at his own cost without any advance from us.

B-144. *Mr. Joshi*: In that case is it just for you to put conditions on him?—He has built it on our land here, and with our stone.

B-145. *Mr. Cliff*: As I understand it, you give the miner a site, the miner erects a house. If that man ceases to work in the mine, legally you can compel him to give up possession of the house. Is that correct?—(Mr. Pitt) Yes.

B-146. *Mr. Joshi*: Will you explain why you brought on convict labour? We have not now got convicts in the ordinary sense of the word. These men are probationers. They are long-sentence men whose terms have nearly expired, and they are released on ticket-of-leave. During the war we had regular convicts who, instead of breaking stones in the jail, came and stacked salt in our depôt and lived under jail conditions. The men we have now are ticket-of-leave men. They are released on probation and they work here under the supervision of a Convict Reclamation Officer.

B-147. When there is unemployment here, why should you get these men from outside?—The men who came and gave evidence just now said they were willing and anxious to work in the depôt. That is not so. The experiment was tried in 1927, and the miners would not do it. A month ago I was approached by the miners that they should be allowed to do that work. I said "Very well, I will call for tenders"—which is what we are always required to do in connection with all Government work. We called for tenders, and not one miner or gang-man tendered for that particular work. They were not sufficiently interested even to put in a fairly high figure on the off-chance of their getting it.

B-148. As regards this strike, I am anxious to know whether as a result of it, the wages were increased?—Yes, they were.

B-149. You thought the strike was justified, and the wages were low, and therefore higher wages were necessary?

B-150. *The Chairman*: Was not the time of the rise of wages the time when the cost of living went up very considerably after the war?—I cannot speak of that definitely, as I came here actually while the strike was in progress.

B-151. *Mr. Joshi*: The wages were increased after the strike?—Yes.

B-152. The representative of the workmen said there were not sufficient quarters for them. Do you accept that statement?—(Mr. Hoyle) We are short of quarters for everybody. We keep on building as fast as we can but we cannot get enough money in our budget to build houses for everybody.

B-153. They also mentioned they had not sufficient work. When some men leave do you appoint new men in their places, or are you taking steps to reduce the number?—We do not reduce the staff unless we find that there are definite economies which can be made.

B-154. Can you give us a full statement of your pensions scheme; how many members there are; what contributions are made by them; what contributions are made by you; and how many men are receiving pensions?—(Mr. Pitt) I can let you have a report to-morrow morning.

B-155. Will you tell me why, if your workers accept a pension scheme, they should also not accept a sickness insurance scheme?—I should think probably they feel that enough cuts are made from their pay as it is, and they do not want any more made. Further, this is not a favourable field for grand-motherly legislation. They are a self-reliant and a very conservative lot of men.

B-156. But they like the pension scheme?—No. It is called a voluntary contribution fund but it is really not very voluntary.

B-157. I find in the report of the Chief Inspector of Mines that your hours are mentioned as 48, and the maximum 50, while in your memorandum

the hours are rather more than 48 a week, and 50.—(Mr. Hoyle) I must apologize for that. It is a mistake in my written memorandum. It should be 8 hours, instead of 10.

B-158. I want to know why you do not observe the Act as regards hours?—It has never been the custom of the men here to work for more than the permissible hours under the Act, and therefore we do not feel under any obligation to compel them to do what they are already doing.

B-159. One man just now said that sometimes they work even 16 hours. The maximum allowed under the Act is 12 hours?—I heard him make that statement and it surprised me. It is entirely untrue. He might have been referring to the workshop, about which he does not know anything. In the workshop they do at times have to work overtime.

B-160. You state in your memorandum that there has been little marked change in the general efficiency of the workers in the past ten years. Did you make that statement after comparing the figures of production with the number of men, or is it your general impression?—It is more Mr. Pitt's general impression than mine. I have only been in charge of the department for 18 months, so I am not in a position to judge; but I consulted Mr. Pitt on the subject and that was the impression he had formed.

B-161. I find a remark in the report of the Chief Inspector of Mines to the effect that the production in your salt mine is going up. I take it also that the efficiency is going up?—(Mr. Pitt) The population is also increasing.

B-162. Are any efforts being made to mitigate the misery caused by unemployment by finding some supplementary occupation for these people?—I have spent a considerable time in corresponding with the Punjab Government on the subject of grants of land—not free grants of land, we can hardly expect that, but as to whether concessions could be made to our men in the matter of leases of land. There is a colony in the Punjab in which a good deal of land has been put up by Government for sale. I wrote some time ago to the local Government of the Punjab enquiring whether they could give any special concessions in view of the hardness of the case, that these men were, a good many of them, out of employment, and I undertook that they would make a fairly good type of settlers. I asked the Government to see what they could do about it. I have lately had a reply; they have slightly modified their terms; they have made their terms as to instalments a little easier.

B-163. *Mr. Cliff*: What are the terms?—I think they pay the purchase price in 14 annual instalments. I tried to get them to agree to 20 or 25 years, but they said they could not do that. The first instalment is cash down. I could give you the figures, but I was not prepared for the question and I have not the file with me.

B-164. May I put this figure to you; the first instalment is Rs. 2,500; is that correct?—That figure does not sound familiar to me. I am not sure you have got it right, but I have not the figures with me.

B-165. These figures were given to me by an officer in the mine.—(Mr. Pitt) It is something like that.

B-166. What is the holding?—(Mr. Hoyle) It is one square, which is 25 acres.

B-167. *Mr. Joshi*: Are you able to give us some information about this co-operative society which takes contracts for labour? Have you got a report of this society?—No, I am afraid not. It works under the Registrar of Co-operative Societies for Ajmer-Merwara. At the head of it is one of our Superintendents; he is put on deputation as Chief Manager of it. I am afraid I can give very little information about it; we do not get any reports at all.

B-168. *The Chairman*: Is not a report sent to the Registrar?—So I believe, and he inspects it like any other society.

B-169. There will surely be an annual report?—Yes. You could obtain that from the Registrar of Co-operative Societies of Ajmer-Merwara.

B-170. *Mr. Joshi*: You have referred to a certain Superintendent of yours who is now managing this society?—Yes.

B-171. My impression was that this Superintendent was doing some contract work. He, being a Government servant, that was not really allowed; this fact came to light after some time, and then he in order to continue his own work started a co-operative society and became the Chairman?—No, not so far as I know. It is absolutely above-board now, anyhow. The same Superintendent is not now in charge of it; the man who was in charge of it has gone on leave; he was taken ill a few months ago. What you are describing sounds rather underhand; I had not heard of that. The Society is officially recognized by the Government.

B-172. Looked upon as an experiment it is really a very interesting experiment?—Yes.

B-173. It is a kind of labour society in which the society takes the contracts. I was asking you about its origin; I want to know whether that state of things has now changed and whether it has now become a real co-operative society?—Oh, yes. We are only dealing with it as a contractor for the supply of labour. It is composed of local people of fairly substantial means, I understand.

B-174. *The Chairman*: Can you obtain for us a report of this interesting society?—Yes, I will send for it.

B-175. *Miss Power*: In your written memorandum you say “The advantages of the Workmen’s Compensation Act were not at first fully understood by the work people. They now understand them, and claim compensation whenever it is due. Six claims were paid in the last three years”. Are we to take it that only six claims were paid but that more claims were put forward, or that all claims put forward, which amounted to six, were paid?—I think really every claim that was a valid one has been paid. I remember there was once a case which came up and which we found did not come under the Act; it was the case of a man who was employed by the mule contractor; when he was working in the mine, in the tunnel, the mule stepped forward, hauled the truck over his foot and it was crushed.

B-176. That would be an exceptional case?—Yes. We made the contractor pay. I tried to get Government to agree to treat it as an exceptional case, since as a matter of fact it did not fall within the Act.

B-177. Are any of these six claims to which you refer claims in respect of women?—I can have that looked into; I am almost certain one is.

B-178. You say in your memorandum: “The rate of accidents for the past three years is—fatal ...1 per 1,000; serious.....47 per 1,000.” You tell us that the number of persons employed in the mine is approximately 1,100. In view of those figures it seems strange that you should say that only six claims were paid in the last three years. Can you reconcile those two statements?—Perhaps there is a fallacy there. In the first year very few claims were submitted because the work-people did not understand the Act at first.

B-179. Then are we to take it that this statement that only six claims were paid in the last three years is not correct?—I think there must be some mistake about that. This statement was prepared in a great hurry.

B-180. What machinery have you for notifying any accident involving absence for longer than ten days?—The doctor at the hospital sends a report of every case that is sent to him.

B-181. That is when they go to the hospital; but there are people who do not go to the hospital when they are injured?—I think they all go to the hospital if they are injured in the mine. If they are injured outside, in the road, we do not know anything about it. They invariably go to the hospital after accidents.

B-182. You mean serious cases?—(Mr. Pitt) All accident cases go to the hospital. The people who do not go to the hospital are people who are suffer-

ing from illness; and sometimes a hospital case which is progressing fairly favourably is taken away from the hospital before it should be.

B-183. In every case where a worker, male or female, is absent from the mine for more than ten days because of an injury sustained in the mine, is his or her claim put forward under the Workmen's Compensation Act?—Yes.

B-184. Yet in spite of that there are only a small number of claims made in three years, even if we do not accept the figure of six claims?—The reason for that, I think, is that for the first year after the Act came into operation we did not know very much about it; the workers certainly did not know and they did not put in any claims.

B-185. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Has Government insured under the Workmen's Compensation Act?—No.

B-186. They do their own insurance?—Yes. As a Government concern we must make it a point of paying in every single case.

B-187. *Miss Power*: In the workers' memorandum* reference has been made to the fact that the system of payment now in vogue through *lambardars* is a comparatively recent system, and previous to that payment was made to the miners. Can you tell me why that alteration was made?—I do not think that statement is quite correct. The same classes of workers who were paid individually under the old system are paid individually under the new system. For instance, driving of tunnels had to be paid for through one man; there is no other way of arranging it.

B-188. You mean that you have invariably paid through the *lambardar*?—Yes.

B-189. There is no alteration?—There has been one alteration in the case of roof work; in working a roof under the measurement system we paid individually but we now pay through the gangmen.

B-190. The workers complained that sometimes the trucks were not weighed, that they were told that there was so much waste. Would it not be possible to associate a workers' representative with whoever is responsible for weighing the trucks? As you know, that is done in the English mines.—(Mr. Hoyle) Only a percentage of the trucks are weighed; we have a weigh bridge outside the mine, but it is not used for every truck by any means. They are paid on an estimated content of 14 maunds in the tub. Actually the tubs are over-loaded so as to balance out the waste, the marl and impurities of various kinds. Then the actual amount of salt issued from the mine is subsequently ascertained by the issues from the depôt. There is always a slight balance in favour of the miners and that is distributed to them *pro rata*.

B-191. What proportion of the 1,100 workers are women?—(Mr. Pitt) More than a third. We can give you exact figures.

Sir Alexander Murray: 396 are women.

B-192. *Miss Power*: In your memorandum, with regard to hours, you say. "Nine hours for surface and ten hours for underground labour, with the exception of female labour which works from four to six hours daily." The women are only employed underground, are they not?—Yes.

B-193. Are we to take it that those women are not working more than four to six hours a day?—It is very exceptional that they work longer hours.

B-194. What is one to understand when they say that their women remain with them during the whole of the time they are down the mine? What are the women doing during the rest of the time? Do they leave men hewing and go off?—Yes; the men go into the mines at about 7 o'clock in this weather. The women will draw water and do their household work and go down the mine at about 8 o'clock to 8-30. They then carry salt till about 12 o'clock or 12-30; after that they go home and get the food ready for their men.

* Not printed.

B-195. *Sur Alexander Murray*: It would appear from your return to the Inspector of Mines that you give these women full pay for doing that?—There is some mistake in the returns. A lot of our mine returns are all wrong; I happened to be on leave at the time.

B-196. *Miss Power*: What arrangements are made to see that none of the young persons employed are under-age, that is, under 13?—Our staff has instructions that no child under 13 is to work, and any doubtful cases are sent to the Kewra hospital for examination; the doctor is the final authority to say whether a child is under or over 13.

B-197. How soon after a child's first employment is he seen by the doctor?—I do not think we usually examine our children.

B-198. If you do not usually examine your children how do you know whether they are under-age or not? Is it left to the father?—It is left to the parents; we have no actual machinery.

B-199. But if it is left to the parents, is it not common sense to suppose that a father who wishes to employ a child under-age is not likely to bring him forward to you to be inspected by the doctor?—Our own staff would take the case up immediately, and the gangman would be fined or punished in some way. We have had very little trouble with regard to breaking that particular rule; they do not seem to want to break it.

B-200. I see you say you have no welfare schemes?—No.

B-201. Can you tell me what supervision you exercise over women who are doing the carrying work immediately before and after child birth?—(Mr. Pitt) None whatever.

B-202. You mean a woman can work till practically the last moment if she pleases?—Yes.

B-203. And she can return on any day she pleases after the birth of her child?—Yes. We have no machinery of any kind. We find that the people very much resent any interference with the female labour.

B-204. Is any wage payment made to the regular workers when they are off work on account of child birth?—No.

B-205. They simply lose their wages for that time?—Yes.

B-206. So that the presumption is that they will return as soon as they can?—Yes.

B-207. Is any supervision exercised over the weights that these women carry?—No.

B-208. Have you any idea what the average weight is?—The load is supposed to be 40 lbs., half a maund. It is often above that and sometimes below it.

B-209. Have you any idea what the maximum weight is likely to be?—I should think it is never above 60 lbs.

B-210. You refer to the removal of a certain percentage of the women from the mine every year so that women will be completely removed at the end of a ten years' period. What effect do you think that is likely to have on the remuneration of the men?—It will have very little effect. We could stop all the female labour in two years.

B-211. Then who would you put on to that work?—We should use machinery.

B-212. So that the only reason why you do not use machinery now is because the women's labour is cheaper than any sort of machinery?—No, it is because the people want to use female labour.

B-213. Do you mean to say that you may be using a more expensive method by employing the women when you could do it more cheaply by machinery? Are you being philanthropic to the women, or is it because the women are cheaper than the machinery?—The question has never arisen.

B-214. It has arisen now?—Yes; now we are taking it up, and we shall very easily replace female labour with cheap machinery. In fact it is hardly machinery at all; it means just an ordinary chute.

B-215-16. Your case is that the chutes would be cheaper than the women at approximately 4 to 6 annas a day?—It will not affect us at all. The miner is responsible for delivering the salt into the truck; what means of transport he uses does not concern us. A number of them use Kashmiri labourers in the winter when Kashmiri labour is cheap. They get a Kashmiri labourer for 4 or 5 annas. We are not concerned with that.

B-217. What will you do during this gradual withdrawal of women labour?—We shall gradually go over to machinery; as women are withdrawn so we shall replace them by machines.

B-218. Have any of them been withdrawn already since the passing of the Act?—No.

B-219. When does the first year come when you will be withdrawing a percentage?—I think it will come next year or the year after; it is spread out over a period of years.

B-220. You are doing it gradually year by year?—Yes.

B-221. *Dewan Chaman Jall*: Can you give me any figures showing the cost of production per maund?—Certainly.

B-222. Will you also give me the cost of labour separately?—Yes. I am just making a very elaborate statement for the Tariff Board who are going closely into this question. Would you like to have that?

B-223. Certainly I should. I am concerned as to what is the actual cost of production per maund and out of that the total that is spent on labour. Perhaps you would be kind enough to put down in a separate column the actual cost of the supervising staff?—Yes, the indirect charges.

B-224. I notice there has been a great deal of unemployment and under-employment here. Would you be in favour of instituting some sort of scheme of unemployment insurance in order to relieve distress?—Theoretically, yes.

B-225. I mean a contributory scheme?—(Mr. Hoyle) Theoretically, I think it would be a very good thing. But practically as applied to Khewra, I should have a great deal of hesitation in adopting it because, as I have already remarked, the miners are the most conservative people in the world. They probably would not take kindly to any further cut from their pay. I should not be very much in favour of trying to introduce it.

B-226. Do you mean to imply that you have objections to it on financial grounds?—I certainly think there are financial difficulties.

B-227. Would you like time to consider it, and will you let us have your views on the subject? It is probably unfair to put this question to you at this stage.—I would not mind giving you a note on it at some time or another.

B-228. Would you be in favour of a scheme in which the employee did not make any contribution?—I think that would be slightly unreasonable.

B-229. Have you any plans for putting an end to the unemployment that exists at Khewra?—It is difficult to think of a ready-made plan. I have told you what we have done as to land. Attempts have been made to get them into the army; they are a good type of fighting men, as you can judge from what you have seen of them. In fact, they are the same type as is generally recruited from the Punjab I believe. But unfortunately the army has definitely said on various occasions that they do not want them. (Mr. Pitt) We have been able to get a certain number of men into the army and into the police. We have also lately been fairly successful in encouraging them to take up local contracts. We are very pleased to say that they, in fact, built the office in which you are now sitting; a number of gangmen took the contract for it and employed quite a number of miners on the less skilled jobs. About two years ago we started quarrying gypsum, and that gives steady employment to about 15 to 20 men. (Mr. Hoyle) Our chief possible

means of lessening unemployment is increased outturn. Our outturn is limited only by the demand. We have a large quantity of untapped salt in the mine, and we could increase our outturn by 50 per cent. without the slightest trouble if we only had a market for it. The Central Board of Revenue after a good deal of difficulty have succeeded in obtaining from the railways concerned certain concessions in the matter of freights. If we can get further fairly substantial concessions we shall be able, we hope to get our salt into Calcutta and the markets of Bengal, and then we can expand a bit.

B-230. Has the duty levied on salt anything to do with the rate of consumption?—No, not at all, because after all it is very small. Whether it is Re. 1-4-0 or Re. 1-8-0 per maund, it cannot affect the consumer's family budget very much. One maund of salt, I fancy, is more than enough to keep a whole family going for a year.

B-231. You say in your written memorandum, with regard to staff organization—"Relations generally are satisfactory. The miners have no hesitation in bringing any grievances to the notice of the Mine Manager or General Manager." Are these grievances sent to you in writing?—Yes. I understand they are most regular in coming forward and having their grumble about things.

B-232. Were these grievances of a general character, or were they specific?—(Mr. Hoyle) There was a fairly frequent complaint about the rate that had been fixed for the tubs. When I am here on tour they generally come up and talk to me about their grievances. (Mr. Pitt) My office gets about twelve vernacular petitions a week from the workers.

B-233. Does not that show that there is need for some sort of machinery being set up which would deal with the grievances of the men as they come up?—Yes, and co-ordinate them a bit; I think that might be a good thing; it might possibly weed out the more irresponsible of the grievances. I fancy that some of these grievances were probably individual personal quarrels about the allotment of spaces and that sort of thing; they have feuds now and then between themselves about the allotment of spaces in the working chambers and things of that kind.

B-234. You say that the gangmen elect annually a panchayat or committee to deal with small local disputes. Will you let us have any records of these gangmen's committees, if they are written down?—I am afraid there is nothing of that sort. The question is usually referred to the Committee and they say they have heard the evidence and have decided that so and so has no right to such and such a chamber.

B-235. You say that the physique of the mining community as a whole is somewhat below that of agricultural labour in the Punjab. What are your reasons for saying that?—I have no real evidence except just walking about the country and seeing the two different classes of men; one is rather impressed by the fact that the miner is slightly weaker than the ordinary man who works on the land.

B-236. What do you think that is due to?—I suppose working in the dark is not so healthy as working in the open air. I think it is also due to in-breeding; the hereditary clans who work in the mine are rather exclusive and inter-marry a lot among themselves.

B-237. Would you also put it down to the fact that they probably do not get enough to eat?—We are told that they do not get enough vegetables to eat. As you have observed, there is no green stuff in this neighbourhood.

B-238. Have attempts been made to grow vegetables here in order to provide for these people?—The difficulty is the water-supply; the water comes from about three miles up the gorge and is just sufficient for drinking and bathing purposes. There is very little available for cultivation and certainly not enough available for making a big vegetable garden such as would be needed for this community.

B-239. May I take it that by spending a little money you could provide a sufficient water supply here at Khewra?—No. A great deal of money has

been spent and every drop of water that we can get here has been brought down.

B-240. Could you not build a reservoir for this purpose or sink tube wells?—No.

B-241. You give the figures as to the number of patients attending your hospital. In 1926 I see the number was 8,288, but by 1928 it has gone up to 13,245. Has that increase in the number of cases attending your hospital any relevance to your statement that the physique of the average miner is lower than that of the agricultural worker in the Punjab?—That increase is almost entirely due to the personality of the Assistant Surgeon. I think that low attendance in 1926 was unsatisfactory; it was not at all a matter for congratulation. The fact was that the people did not appreciate the advantages of medicine and did not attend hospital when they ought to have done so.

B-242. What is the total mining population of Khewra?—It is very difficult to get the exact figures.

B-243. I see there are said to be 2,000 men engaged in the rock salt industry in the Jhelum district?—It is rather more than that; a special census which was taken about four years ago, I think, gave the whole population as over 3,000.

B-244. The patients at your hospital in 1928 are 13,245 males and 6,860 females; that gives a total of about 20,000, which means over six attendances in a year by each individual?—The attendance is not limited to the people living in the village. If there is a popular Assistant Surgeon in charge people will come from all the neighbouring villages to be treated.

B-245. May I take it that substantially it is the population of Khewra that attends?—Khewra including the sub-villages.

B-246. You have said that the idea of a pension scheme is not favoured. Is it a fact that the decision as to whether a benefit shall be given is left in the hands of the leaders?—Yes, in a way.

B-247. I see that, under the head "Welfare" you say that the recipients are chosen by the gangmen and lambardars in consultation. A man who contributes towards this fund has no inherent right to a pension out of the fund; he is entirely at the mercy of the gangmen and lambardars?—The Mine Manager invariably attends the meeting. When we have enough money in the fund to pay out, say, a dozen more pensions, we convene a general meeting of the lambardars, gangmen and a few of the more responsible miners, and the Mine Manager attends. From what I have seen, they are fair in their judgments.

B-248. If a man contributes towards this fund that gives him no inherent right to get a pension?—No.

B-249. Has that something to do with the unpopularity of this scheme?—Possibly. Any scheme here is unpopular if it stipulates that there shall be a cut in wages.

B-250. You have made a statement as to the failure of the co-operative society. Why did it fail? You say that the shareholders took no interest in it. Is it a fact that the management in charge of the co-operative society failed?—I fancy the management was selected from the shareholders and the managing committee took no interest in the shop.

B-251. That was one of the main reasons why it failed?—Yes.

B-252. Some time ago there was a subsidence or collapse of houses. Was there an enquiry into that and is the report of that enquiry available?—There are several reports available; it was reported on by nine or ten people.

B-253. Was not a Government official put in charge of the making of the report?—The Inspector of Mines reported on it; the Consulting Engineer to the Government of India reported on it; the Chief Controller of Stores, who is an all-round engineer, also reported on it.

B-254. Let me have what you consider to be a representative report.—I will let you have all of them.

B-255. You said in your memorandum that the miners would object to the shift system. On what is the opinion based? Have you consulted the miners?—(Mr. Hoyle) They have been questioned again and again about this kind of thing. I also have innumerable reports.

B-256. But you have no reports from the miners themselves in regard to this matter?—I do not think they have put anything in writing as to their not wanting the shift system.

B-257. With regard to the payment of wages you say that payment is sometimes delayed from one day to 14 days and that in exceptional cases periods of from three weeks to one month have elapsed. Why is there no uniform system?—There are certain classes of workers who like to be paid at certain intervals and others who like to be paid at other intervals. Some like to be paid monthly and some fortnightly. About 12 months ago we made an enquiry and so far as practically possible, paid each class of labour at the interval at which it desired to be paid.

B-258. In some cases the wages have been in arrears as much as a month?—Yes.

B-259. I dare say you would be in favour of legislation which would make prompt payment of wages feasible?—I do not think legislation is necessary here. That long delay is not the kind of thing that happens regularly. In the ordinary course wages are paid punctually.

B-260. Among the miners is there a preference for weekly payment?—I cannot give you the figures off hand, but they are on record.

B-261. During the last nine years how many accidents have there been in the blasting factory?—We had a bad one in February of this year; there was one in 1918 and one in 1916 I think.

B-262. You have had several?—There have been three within the last thirteen years.

B-263. Were there residential huts adjoining the factory?—This factory was really a temporary residence of the powder contractors. The powder contractors are not employees of ours, but they were allowed to settle on land of ours for the purpose of manufacturing their powder. Their predecessor built himself a house on our land and during the period he held the contract he both lived and manufactured his powder in that house. His contract ended in 1919 or 1920. Since then the contract has been held more or less in partnership by three different men; they and their families were allowed to live on our land in this building which has been left behind by the former licensee.

B-264. On numerous occasions the blasting factory has been blown up, but nevertheless dwellings have been permitted to be built adjoining it?—I think the report you wish to see is the report of the Chief Inspector of Explosives.

B-265. I should like to see the report of the sub-divisional officer?—I should not think there would be any objection to that.

B-266. On page 3 of the annual report of the Chief Inspector of Mines, dealing with Jhelum he says: "The District Magistrate states that the relations of the labourers and employers were not harmonious throughout the year. The hereditary miners of Khewra have had considerable grievances against the salt department and as a consequence thereof a conference was held in Simla in 1907." I should like to have the District Magistrate's report and the report of the conference held by the salt department in 1907 at Simla?—This is the first I have heard of it.

B-267. Have you not seen a copy of the Chief Inspector's report for that year?—No. What you call the blasting factory is not the property of the Government; it belongs to the contractors who get a licence from the District Magistrate for the manufacture of powder. We used to allow

them to live on our land. The factory does not exist any longer and we are not allowing them to rebuild there.

B-268. Will you kindly supply me with the number of men working in the workshop and the number of quarters available for employees working at the workshops?—Yes.

B-269. Have you in your experience anywhere in India come across any factory or mine in which convict labour or semi-convict labour has been employed?—No, I cannot think of any at the moment. I should think that probably there are some; I should not be prepared to say there are not.

B-270. Do you favour a system of that kind?—I have not quite made up my mind. The Reclamation Officer is constantly writing and asking us to report in favourable terms as to the excellent discipline and training of his men. But I am not fully convinced that it is quite so excellent as he would have us believe. I am not quite prepared to pass a final opinion on it. Of course it has been a convenience in a way, as our miners will not work in the depôt.

B-271. Would it not be better to use electrically run locomotives rather than the present system?—It would be much better on all grounds.

B-272. *The Chairman*: I understand you have applied for authority to instal electric traction in the mines?—A scheme has been put forward and has been carefully scrutinized by the experts of the Indian Stores Department. Their report has been further scrutinized by my staff in Khewra. I have finally sent it back to Government asking for sanction to include the necessary funds in my budget for 1930-31.

B-273. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Under section 17 of the Indian Mines Act, you have to provide latrines and water. Is there any such provision?—There are latrines of a kind, but they are not used.

B-274. Do you provide water inside the mines?—(Mr. Pitt) yes, we have to provide water for the mules and they use the water in the shot holes.

B-275. *Mr. Cluff*: What have you to say as to the complaint of the work-people that they can only obtain water at a restricted period?—It is perfectly true that the period is restricted, but we are all restricted.

B-276. Are they restricted to thirty minutes?—The time given was not true; they get a supply for about four hours daily from stand pipes, and hydrants in the village.

B-277. For what period of the day?—Two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening. The time is varied according to the supply available. At present, just after the monsoon there is no trouble whatever; the only really troublesome months of the year are April, May and June when water is rather short.

B-278. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Am I to take it that Section 17 of the Act has not been complied with?—It is being complied with.

B-279. Under Section 17 you have got to provide drinking water in the mine itself?—It is provided. It is not provided through taps; you cannot have fresh water running about a salt mine, but there are tanks which are sent in. There are also latrines.

B-280. Do you think it would be a good thing if provision were made in the Workmen's Compensation Act to compel you to send in a return of the accidents that happen?—I do not see any necessity.

B-281. *The Chairman*: Do you report all your accidents to the Mines Department?—Under the Mines Act we are required to send immediate notice of any serious accident or any accident that is likely to be serious. A serious accident is one that keeps a man from work for 21 days. If it is likely to be serious or if it is fatal a report goes in within 24 hours.

B-282. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Would you be in favour of reporting any sort of accident that is suffered by a worker?—No, I think the law is fairly good as it stands. Any sort of accident may mean just a scratch. If

such small matters were reported the work of the Mines Department would increase enormously; it would create a mass of correspondence.

B-283. But in the absence of trade unions would it not be better to have a report?—You have that report in the office of the Inspector of Mines.

B-284. But that is only of serious accidents?—I think that is sufficient.

B-285. *Mr. Cliff*: There has been handed in a file of correspondence which has taken place with the Punjab Government as to your application for land for miners. Would it be convenient to prepare a memorandum on this subject for the Commission?—Yes I will prepare a precis.

B-286. Are you directly responsible for the conditions of labour of the work-people, fixing their rates of wages and their welfare?—Yes, in a way I am responsible for all that goes on in the Department. Almost everything except unimportant routine detail comes up to me.

B-287. *The Chairman*: How far have you a free hand, without getting the consent of some higher authority, to make changes in the conditions of the workers?—Practically every change has financial implications of some kind or another. My financial powers are very circumscribed. Therefore almost everything has to be reported to the Central Board of Revenue which is really a branch of the Finance Department of the Government of India. For instance, the fixing of the rate of payment for tubs was sent up to the Government of India for approval.

B-288. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you ever previously handled large numbers of industrial workers?—No, I have not. This is my first experience of being in command of them.

B-289. Since you became Commissioner how many times have you visited Khewra?—I think this is my fourth visit.

B-290. Are you satisfied that the conditions at Khewra are as they ought to be?—It would be rather a sweeping statement to say that they are. Almost anything will admit of improvement.

B-291. Did you hear the evidence of the representatives of the miners this afternoon?—Yes.

B-292. Did it strike you that their complaint was a demand for security?—Well, they ended up by asking for security and saying they hoped they would not be ill-used for having made uncomplimentary references to their officers and the Department.

B-293. I am not thinking of victimization; I am thinking of the whole petition?—It is a little difficult to judge that petition dispassionately because of the way in which it is conceived. I mean it was grossly unfair. For example, they said that Government ought to have provided them with houses when the subsidence occurred, absolutely suppressing the fact that Government had given them irrecoverable advances. No doubt there is a good deal in that petition that is deserving of consideration and enquiry. I am quite certain that it was not a spontaneous petition. It was drafted I believe, by a pleader on behalf of the men. The new system of payment is preferred by the miners as a whole, but at first they had a little grievance about the rate. Then the rate was recalculated, the details were explained to them and they said no more about it, being evidently afraid that Government would now proceed further to enquire into it and the rate would be reduced. The statement in the petition that the rate was too low, I am inclined to think, was not a spontaneous idea of the people for whom that petition nominally stands.

B-294. *The Chairman*: Were the men consulted before the new system was put into operation?—(Mr. Pitt) Yes, it was explained very thoroughly to them and the general body did not seem to be at all antagonistic to the new system. There was a little bit of argument about what they were to be paid per tub which was our unit. There was also a certain amount of argument because under the old measurement system they were paid for

carrying salt up to different heights. Payment of that kind is impossible under the system of payment by weight, or it is only possible with the aid of very complicated calculations. Our endeavour was to evolve a very simple system. The old measurements and calculations used to take six weeks to work out occasionally.

B-295. I understand it was explained to them before it was put into operation?—It was. After it had been in force for some time we made an experiment on a working place, calculating the amount due to the men by measurements and by weighment; in fact we made two experiments. In both cases we found they were paid more for a given quantity of work by the weighment system. We showed them these figures; they were rather frightened that we should send these figures to Government and that the flat rate would be reduced.

B-296. *Mr. Cliff*: I think you said it was explained to the 'general body' of workers. What does the expression, 'general body' cover?—The people who are sitting round here are a fairly general body.

B-297. One body of which you have spoken consisted of four members of a committee of lambardars and the men who were literate. Can it be said that the explanation was given both before and after to the whole of the miners?—Did they appreciate what you were doing before you did it?—It was not given to the whole of the miners.

B-298. If an explanation was not given to the whole of the miners, is it not natural that when a system which they had not been able to appreciate was introduced, there should be objections?—It was explained to the gangmen, lambardars, and the heads of the families, who were asked to explain it to the people who worked in their gangs.

B-299. What is the function of the lambardar in the mine?—He has no real function in the mine.

B-300. So that for our purpose we need only consider gangers in the mine?—Yes.

B-301. How many gangers have you in the mines?—41.

B-302. You pay wages to these gangers?—No.

B-303. To whom do you pay wages?—Wherever we can we pay wages individually, our payment system provides for individual payment of the ordinary excavation work which forms the bulk of our outturn.

B-304. When you speak of individuals you are referring to registered miners?—Yes.

B-305. So that as far as the registered miners are concerned, for the great bulk of your work you pay them weekly?—Whenever practically possible, yes.

B-306. Can you give me some rough idea of the proportion whom you pay directly?—I could give you the proportion of the total wages which are paid individually and paid to the gangers.

B-307. The explanation was given to the gangers. It was given before the change was decided on?—Yes.

B-308. Was any explanation given to the miners of whom I understand a considerable proportion would be affected?—Yes, wherever possible.

B-309. By you?—Yes, I was Mine Manager at the time and personally explained to as many work-people as possible what was going to happen; because the weighment system postulates the use of the small account book and we had to explain carefully to each man what that book was for.

B-310. Why was this change desired?—(Mr. Hoyle) It was for audit reasons really. The result of this measurement system was that the people did not get fully paid up for long periods. It was a thoroughly faulty method. For that reason the new system ought to be greatly preferred by the men, because their payments were frequently delayed under the old system

B-311. What is the number of registered miners?—(Mr. Pitt) It is just over 600.

B-312. Is the number of women about 350?—Something like that.

B-313. How many are engaged in the shops and loading platforms?—1,100 is the number working underground. I think our figure is wrong here.

B-314. Am I to understand that there are still 150 to account for underground?—Not as many as 150.

B-315. May I take it that there are 950 underground or must I take it that it is 1,100?—I am sure that there are not 1,100 underground, because that number includes workshop people.

B-316. Have you got a muster roll of the actual number of people underground?—Yes.

B-317. Does that include persons under 13?—Yes. The trouble with some of our information is that the whole thing had to be done in three or four days. It was not possible to check the figures.

B-318. *Mr. Clifff*: You say: "The total permanent labour force including miners, workshop hands and some of the semi-permanent labour is about 1,100 (including women) at Khewra." What is the number underground?—The number underground is about 500 miners. The whole 600 are very rarely working. There would possibly be between 300 and 360 women and there would be another 20 to 40 men on transport work.

B-319. Does your muster roll show how many youths over 13 and under 18 years of age you have employed in the mine?—Our register of miners includes practically all the able-bodied males in the village.

B-320. I understand it is your view that there are more miners employed than is necessary?—Yes, that is the case.

B-321. What number would you say would be adequate for your output?—Unfortunately we are just going to change our output. For the output up-to-date which is about 30 lakhs of maunds a year, 400 men would be ample.

B-322. If a miner chooses to bring a woman or a man there is no restriction on him?—No.

B-323. He could do that?—Yes.

B-324. Have you more men engaged in the workshops than are necessary?—No.

B-325. Is that for economic reasons?—The men in the workshop are paid daily wages.

B-326. Therefore you do not employ more than you actually require?—No.

B-327. Is it any concern of yours that there are more people having the opportunity of working in the mines than are required?—We encourage them to take up other branches of work and not to go into the mine.

B-328. Provision has been made that by a certain date women shall be excluded from the mines?—Yes.

B-329. And yet you tell me that you are permitting new women to go into the mines?—Yes they go at present.

B-330. Does it appear to you that in order to prevent friction and trouble it is well to discourage them now?—These people are very very sensitive about their womenfolk; the less one interferes with their womenfolk in any way whatever, the better.

B-331. However sensitive they may be, if the law is operated at the prescribed year, they will have to put up with it?—Yes.

B-332. Do you not think it would be advisable that there should be no new entries of labour into the mine?—I think it would be.

B-333. I understand you to say that on the loading platform, *i.e.*, discharging of the small trucks, you have asked the people to tender and you have

not received any tender. Have you tried to employ them at daily rates of wages?—No.

B-334. Have you ever thought of taking youths who are growing up and as they are growing up encourage them on that class of work at a daily rate?—The miner is rather a snob in his way and to descend from a skilled worker to a worker in the depôt would be a distinct loss of prestige and respectability.

B-335. Is not that responsibility upon you to find employment here wherever possible?—We feel that responsibility.

B-336. Have you in any way sought to train the boys who are growing up?—We have a number of sons of miners employed in the workshop. There are a number of them on our electrical installations. Wherever possible we put them in.

B-337. Will you tell the Commission the number that you have trained and your views on the success of the experiment?—I cannot give you the actual figure.

B-338. Is it a dozen or twenty?—At least 20.

B-339. What opinion have you formed as to the success that has attended this scheme?—It has been quite successful.

B-340. What do you mean by "semi-permanent labour"?—Permanent labour is the hereditary mining caste. Purely casual labour is labour which is recruited for construction work. If we want to build a bungalow or an office or something like that we recruit purely temporary labour to do that work.

B-341. Taking semi-permanent labour, are they employed regularly throughout the year?—Yes.

B-342. What proportion of the people employed about a mine are not subject to factory legislation?—The Mines Act covers everything including workshops.

B-343. Do all the employees specified in these categories come under the Workman's Compensation Act?—Yes.

B-344. Does that include contractors' men?—Not in relation to us. The obligation in that case is on the contractor and not on us.

B-345. The employee has a legal right against the contractor?—Yes.

Mr. Clow. And also against you, the principal.

B-346. *Mr. Cliff*: Under the head "Wages" in your memorandum you apparently make an analysis of the cost of living of a family. Can you tell me how that is made up?—(*Mr. Pitt*) Yes, I have the detailed figures here. It is a very difficult thing to get the figures of the cost of living.

B-347. Will you put in those figures?—Yes. I will not guarantee their accuracy.

B-348. Have you ever considered accepting liability under the Workmen's Compensation Act in the mines that are in the Indian States?—No, we are not legally liable, but undoubtedly if we had a serious accident which was due to employment in our Department we should consider the matter and try to get Government to sanction some compensation for it as a special case. We once got sanction from Government for the payment of compensation to some labourers who lived near the edge of the lake and whose huts caught fire from the sparks of the engine which was hauling our salt. I give you that as an instance of the kind of cases in which we thought fit to ask Government to sanction compensation.

B-349. Can you tell me whether a case has occurred in the Indian State for which you would be liable if it were in British India?—I cannot remember such a case.

B-350. You agree that you are morally responsible?—I agree that we should consider whether we ought to pay. I do not know that I am prepared

to admit it straightway as a general principle, but I certainly think we ought to consider in such cases whether or not we are morally liable.

B-351. (*Col. Russell*): I understand you had employed here for several years a trained dai or native midwife?—Yes.

B-352. Why did she leave?—(*Mr. Pitt*) She reached the age limit and retired about two months ago.

B-353. Since she retired in June has any attempt been made to get a substitute?—Yes.

B-354. But you have not been able to get one?—We have applied to four different places. I have been offered lady health visitors at rather high salaries, which I do not think Government will pay.

B-355. During her last seven years' work in Khewra the figures that I got this morning from her own registers show that the cases had steadily diminished?—Yes.

B-356. Was that due to her old age or was it due to the fact that the women did not want her services?—She was a most unsatisfactory woman; she was not supposed to take any fees, but she took very high fees for attending cases. She was very dirty and lazy.

B-357. Then I take it that the fall in numbers was not due to the unwillingness of the women to make use of her services?—To some extent.

B-358. I am aware of the fact that the people here are very conservative; but would women welcome the development of that kind of work or let me say, general welfare work, if it were initiated by Government agencies like the Salt Department.—We are thinking of having an experiment on the lines of having a health visitor to come and tour the neighbourhood.

B-359. Although a health visitor is under consideration, so far you have done nothing further about it, because of the high salaries that these applicants are asking. Have you asked Government whether they will sanction the salary of a fairly highly paid woman or not?—It is still under consideration.

B-360. Whose consideration?—I think the file is in my office at present. Correspondence is going on between my office and the Commissioner's office as to the replacement of a dai and the possible appointment of a health visitor.

B-361. Do you think that is an important question as regards the health of the women in connection with the mines?—(*Mr. Hoyle*) Do you mean from the economic point of view?

B-362. No, from the point of view of the welfare of the women?—My own opinion is that it would be a good thing. In other parts of India I have seen some welfare work which has been done with an industrial population, and I think the effects were extremely good.

B-363. You will admit that that kind of work is bound to increase the comfort and happiness of the population?—It seems so from what I have seen of it.

B-364. There is no sanitary inspector employed here?—No, the Director of Public Health goes round from time to time.

B-365. Probably he would get to a station like this about once in two years?—Yes.

B-366. Have you any body regularly on the staff to see that sanitation is carried out?—No.

B-367. Do you not think that it would be an improvement if such an appointment were made?—I should think it would be a very good thing.

B-368. For instance, I understand that the whole of the night soil and refuse from the hospital is dumped into the gorge about 150 feet below the hospital. Do you not think the inspector, if he were here, would prevent that happening?—He probably would. I am not opposed to it. I am really thinking of the Finance Department of the Government of India.

B-369. If you put up such a proposal, surely they could hardly refuse it?—Fortified by the recommendations of this Commission, I dare say it could be done at a later stage.

B-370. I have noticed there was a considerable amount of fairly obvious anaemia not only among the workers themselves, but among the boys. That may be due to deficiency of vegetables as was suggested; but is there no disease in the population which may be a cause of the anemia?—I do not think there is any disease which is particularly common here more than in other places.

B-371. Do you not think that the appointment of a sanitary inspector with a certain amount of anti-malarial training would be of advantage in that respect?—Yes, undoubtedly.

B-372. Water supply is brought down in pipes?—(Mr. Pitt) Yes.

B-373. How is it collected at the top?—There is a dam built across the head of this gorge.

B-374. You told Mr. Chaman Lall that the water supply could not be increased. Is that an engineering impossibility?—It is not an engineering impossibility; it could be increased at prohibitive cost.

B-375. That is a matter of opinion; but if the reservoir could possibly be increased you would have a large water supply available?—No, the limestone will not hold water. There is almost nowhere to build a really large reservoir. It would give us a better water supply for perhaps a fortnight in the hot weather.

B-376. At present do the women have to carry the water from the taps to a very considerable distance?—Yes, they carry it to the top of the village.

B-377. Would it not be possible to have branch pipes so that it may run into the village?—The ground is all saline and invariably where you have a hydrant there is wastage.

B-378. That could be carried away by a drain?—It eventually finds its way into the soil and causes subsidence.

B-379. That could be avoided by putting in pucca drains?—But there is no pucca ground to put it on. We find it inadvisable to extend the water-supply more than necessary on a salt area.

B-380. How much drinking water do you provide in the mine for the workers?—We send in two tubs of about 25 c. ft. capacity.

B-381. That is 600 gallons?—Yes.

B-382. Each day?—Yes.

B-383. *Mr. Ahmed*: The workers in the mines inhale a certain amount of brine which injures their health?—(Mr. Hoyle) Of course the air is not quite as pure as the air outside; on the other hand it is kept pretty well in circulation.

B-384. The air is comparatively bad?—Yes, compared with the outside air.

B-385. That injures the health of the workers?—I should prefer to take medical opinion as to that. I am not really fitted to express an opinion.

B-386. If sufficient capital and a sufficiently large market were given to you could you utilize the services of the unemployed?—I am not quite prepared to say that I could do so immediately. We do not yet know how the consuming public will take to Khewra salt which we are trying to put on more distant markets; and there are certain kinds of work which these men do not seem to take too regularly.

B-387. Have you sufficient space in the mines to utilize the services of these unemployed people here?—There is undoubtedly sufficient space.

B-388. Do I understand you will be able to go on with your work here steadily for fifty years?—I think easily.

B-389. With regard to persons being elected on the committee you now realize that it is a better system for you to elect them than to nominate them because you yourself said that these two men who came here this afternoon were not representatives of the miners?—Certainly.

B-390. You say they told us things which were not the opinions of the workers?—Yes.

B-391. For that reason it is better for you to get an elected body?—I have already said that I think it might be a good thing.

B-392. In 1921 there was a strike on account of the low wages paid to the workers. You say that the workers were estimated to have lost a large sum in wages. But you say in another paragraph that there was no particular loss to the industry?—Yes; the miners lost three months' wages; they were replaced, to some extent, by outside labour.

B-393. Is it not a fact that the high officials drew salaries for those three months and therefore there was a loss to industry?—No, because the miners were replaced by Pathan labour.

B-394. What do you mean by saying that there was no particular loss to industry?—What was intended was that the industry was not held up and other labour was secured.

B-395. Do you consider that the co-operative system is beneficial to the workers here?—The co-operative society of which we have spoken exists from our point of view merely with the object of supplying labour; it is not a co-operative society of our people; it is a co-operative society of local persons of a fair degree of substance who recruit labour.

B-396. *Sir Alexander Murray*: The particular industry with which you are connected here is not a typical industrial undertaking?—No.

B-397. The troubles you have here are not troubles incidental to an ordinary industrial undertaking?—No.

B-398. The type of labour with which you are dealing is not typical labour; it consists of these hereditary miners?—They are quite different from ordinary labour.

B-399. I think you will agree that special consideration ought to be extended to these workers in connection with unemployment?—Yes.

B-400. I understand you have brought down here about 160 ticket-of-leave men?—It varies; it is anything from 100 upwards.

B-401. You house them free of cost?—Yes.

B-402. How much are you paying them?—We pay them piece-work; it works out at about Rs. 15 to 16 a month; it varies with the output; they can go up to Rs. 20 or 22.

B-403. It is said that in this part of India one out of every eight men of military age enlisted in the army during the war, but in this particular area—the Salt Range—one out of every three men went into the army?—Yes.

B-404. Do you not think it is your duty here to do your utmost to give employment to such men rather than to convicts?—I would like them to take the work on but they will not do so.

B-405. But do you not think that you as the General Manager could talk to the men and explain to them that it is in their own interests to do that work instead of bringing in outside labour; would not that be better than that they should go about starving?—They are not starving.

B-406. I cannot reconcile the figures you have given us with the statistics of the Inspector of Mines.—I am afraid our return must be hopelessly wrong.

B-407. Will you therefore give us some figures dealing with 1927-28?—Yes.

(The witness withdrew and the Commission adjourned to Lahore.)

PUNJAB

FOURTH MEETING

LAHORE

Thursday, 24th October, 1929.

PRESENT:

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

The Rt. Hon. V.S. SRINIVASA
SASTRI, P.C.

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt.,
C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. HARKISHAN LAL, Bar.-at-Law.

Mr. R. W. TAYLOR, DIRECTOR, East India
Carpet Co., Amritsar.

Dr. K. C. Hiteshi.

Mr. M. A. Ghani, Bar.-at-Law.

Pt. RAM AUTAR, Vice-President, North-
Western Railway Union.

Col. C. WALTON, D.S.O., Agent, N.-W. Rly.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C.

Miss SIRAJ-UD-DIN

Mrs. DAGMAR CURJEL WILSON. } (*Lady Assessors.*)

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S. } (*Joint Secretaries.*)

Mr. A. DIBDIN. }

(*Assistant
Commissioners.*)

**Mr. W. R. WILSON, I.C.S., Revenue Secretary to the Government
of the Punjab.**

B-408. *The Chairman:* Mr. Wilson, you are the Revenue Secretary to the Government of the Punjab?—Yes.

B-409. Will you tell us how long you have held that office?—For the last two years.

B-410. I take it from the memorandum submitted by the Punjab Government that out of a population of 20 million only some 51,600 come under the provisions of the Indian Factories Act?—I think that is the case.

B-411. Namely, in round figures, 43,300 men, 7,500 women and 783 children?—Yes.

B-412. Analysing those figures, cotton ginning and pressing is the staple industry employing 31,335 workers who look upon this, for a period of four or five months in a year, as a side line to agriculture. Is that so?—Yes.

B-413. Of the remaining 30,000 factory workers, 18,000 are in Government employment—13,629 in railway workshops and 4,743 in Government factories; so that only 12,000 factory workers are left in private industrial employment outside cotton ginning and pressing?—Yes.

B-414. Of the 7,534 women working in factories, 7,123 are employed in cotton ginning factories, leaving only 411 for other employment?—Yes.

B-415. So far, therefore, as factory labour is concerned, apart from ginning factories, Government is far and away the largest employer?—Yes.

B-416. Has the Punjab Government any considered policy with regard to labour questions?—There has been no formal pronouncement or definite formulation of a policy that I know of. I think the object of Government is to endeavour to enforce the provisions of the Factory Act, the Workmen's Compensation Act, and such legislative measures as apply to labour.

B-417. Is it anticipated that the new power supply will lead to an expansion of industry in the Province?—That is so.

B-418. At present the scarcity of coal makes the Punjab practically a non-industrial province?—Yes, the coal such as there is in the Salt Range is not suitable for industrial purposes. There is hardly any iron except a little in Patiala. We have water and something is to be made of it in the hydro-electric scheme.

B-419. Therefore it might be said that the Punjab Government has the advantage of an almost clean slate in industrial matters with a prospect of considerable developments in the near future?—Yes.

B-420. Has any attempt been made to co-ordinate the activities of the various Government Departments concerned? In the preface to your memorandum I observe that industrial matters are divided between four different portfolios of one Member and three Ministers?—Some subjects are Central and the Local Government is acting as an agency. The Central subjects are in the portfolio of the Hon. Member for Revenue; for example, regulation of mines, development of any industry that may be declared by the Central Government to be suitable for Central control in the interests of public service, and control of production, supply and distribution of any product about which the Central Government may similarly declare to be under its control in the interests of the public—these are the main Central subjects. In the Provinces the industrial matters that are called reserved, i.e., welfare of labour including housing, accident insurance or other insurance, smoke nuisances and settlement of disputes, are under the Hon. Member for Revenue. Then there is another head electricity, boilers, factories and gas. These are the four heads under the devolution schedule relating to labour which come under the portfolio of the Hon. Member for Revenue. Development of industries, including technical research and industrial education, is a transferred subject that is dealt with by the Minister for Education. Labour questions which can be differentiated from industrial development, and subjects such as welfare of labour, housing, and settlement of disputes, are in the portfolio of the Hon. Member for Revenue, they being Provincial subjects, reserved. Medical and public health are transferred subjects in charge of an entirely different Ministry.

B-421. It seems very complicated?—It is rather. Medical and Public Health and Education used to be under one Minister three or four years ago. Now "Education" and "Industries" come under the Minister for Education and Medical and Public Health have been put in a separate portfolio, the portfolio of the Minister for Local Self-government.

B-422. What is the meaning of 'public works' in the portfolio of the Minister for Agriculture?—It refers to the execution of public works such as roads, and buildings and works of general public utility carried out by the Public Works Department, including the hydro-electric scheme.

B-423. I take it from what you told us that there is at present no means of co-ordinating these departments in their various relations to industrial questions?—Not so far as Medical and Public Health are concerned. We do so, for instance, in such questions as the planning out of a colony town or in the matter of framing factory rules; we consult the Director of Public Health in such matters.

B-424. I mean with regard to the framing of a policy in view of the coming development from the hydro-electric scheme and thinking ahead so

that the Punjab may become a model to the whole of India in its future industrial development.—The supply of power is three or four years ahead, and when it does come, it will simply operate to replace the local sources.

B-425. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: You have referred to the evening classes for the workers regretting that there are no philanthropists here who would institute such classes in the Punjab. Do you consider that the provision of such evening classes is likely to be a success unless you have compulsory education?—In rural areas where there is no compulsory education a movement has been in force for the last five or six years to provide night classes for adults, of course in the vernacular and primary education. These schools may be good in some places; they may be bad in other places. But in the rural areas there is a distinct endeavour on the part of the Education Department to supply some facilities in the way of primary education for adults. I think that that is largely a rural development and the progress made in that development has not been so great in the towns as in the country.

B-426. That bears out what I have heard. Where there have been attempts to start evening classes in industrial centres they have not been patronized. So that your point is that such classes at the moment are more likely to be successful in rural districts.—They have been tried in rural districts up to the present, as far as I know.

B-427. You say: "As for possible means of securing increased efficiency, the main appeal to the worker can only reside in an improved method of remuneration which will give him a fair share in the increase of output." Do you mean by that that you are likely to get a workman to increase his efficiency if you increase his remuneration?—If you give him an interest in the concern he would increase the production, because that would put something in his own pocket.

B-428. I thought that was a platitude. In other parts experience has been that increased remuneration has often not led to increased output; if anything it has led the workmen to do rather less work.—That is news to me.

B-429. That is not so in the Punjab, at any rate? I do not quite understand table No. 7 in the Government Memorandum, which gives the number of seers per rupee of rice, maize, wheat, etc., over a period of years. From this chart it would appear that in the last few years these products were the cheapest in 1923 and had then with a few setbacks risen yearly. Is that so? Is it a fact that in the Punjab foodstuffs have been rising in prices practically from 1923?—From this chart it would appear to be so. Possibly in other parts of India they have gone down.

B-430. I ask that because we have had cost of living figures in other parts of India where these figures have gone down during that period, or at any rate have not gone up.—From this chart it would appear that as the expenditure of the worker on food is as high as 60 per cent, the cost of living has gone up in the last six years.

B-431. It would appear that the cost of living has gone up in the last six years?—Yes.

B-432. And yet in the report it is mentioned that the drop in wages has been due to lower cost of living. I cannot quite see how the cost of living could have gone down while your foodstuffs have gone up. Who issues the chart?—This chart was prepared by the Director of Land Record's office. The Director of Land Records keeps an account of food prices.

B-433. Have you any idea as to how many districts he takes into account in getting these figures? It might be that these represent only a small number of districts and may not necessarily give the values all over the Province?—I think the system is that he selects districts representative of localities in the Province.

B-434. You are referring to the Workmen's Compensation Act in connection with forest work. I take it, whether it has been scheduled as hazardous work or not, that would not make the rates any different?—I

think that merely brings the work under the Act; the compensation that would be given to such work people would be on exactly the same scale as in other industries brought under the Act. The Punjab Government suggested to the Government of India sometime this year that forest fellings should be brought under the scope of the Workmen's Compensation Act. The Government of India said 'No.' Therefore compensation cannot be given according to the Act, but we adopt the same scales in giving gratuities under the Civil Service Regulations.

B-435. These rates which they receive are, according to your report, two or three times the amount which would satisfy those concerned?—That is the information I got from the Chief Conservator of Forests.

B-436. At the same time you are suggesting that the scale of compensation should be increased by 25 per cent. in respect of poorer paid workmen who only get a wage of Rs. 25 a month. I take it these men in the forestry work would not be receiving more than that?—No; they are usually working in out-of-the-way areas where labour is cheap.

B-437. Therefore they would probably be getting less than Rs. 25, and would come under the head of poorly paid workpeople?—Yes.

B-438. Therefore, if the recommendation you make were adopted, you would be increasing by 25 per cent. the amount which is, according to your statement, more than would satisfy them?—I would. The forest labourers are probably in receipt of poorer rates of pay than labourers in the plains.

B-439. That rather strengthens my point that although they are receiving poorer rates they are at present receiving two or three times the amount which would satisfy them. Your statement that the present scale amounts to two or three times what would satisfy them does not apply to other labour under the Workmen's Compensation Act?—No, it does not apply.

B-440. Yet these people are receiving less?—Yes.

B-441. They are really worse off and they are more than satisfied?—If you like we could eliminate forest people from any general recommendation to increase the scale.

B-442. I was wondering whether any increase for the others could be justified in view of the fact that the poorer classes are more than satisfied?—Forest cases are comparatively rare—I think four or five in the year.

B-443. *Mr. Chow:* In your memorandum dealing with housing, you have stated that the workers would be only too glad to get any accommodation provided by the employer; but the need to provide accommodation is rare. What do you mean by 'the need'? Do you mean there are already satisfactory houses provided by private landlords?—The ginning factories are mainly in the colony areas where there is plenty of room, where there is no such congestion as you have in the older and bigger towns of the Province, and in laying out a factory town, the factory sites have certain places allotted for building quarters. There is no difficulty about getting land as there is with the older factories on account of the cost.

B-444. My point is that if they are only too glad to get any accommodation provided by the employer it looks as if there was need for accommodation?—In the towns they would like accommodation, but in the colonies where the ginning factories are, I do not think there is any need for accommodation of the ginning labourers.

B-445. In your memorandum you deal with the question of controlling the construction of new factories, and you say that the Central Government held the view that the most that the Government of India could do would be to ask the Central Legislature to pass an enabling measure. I think I am right in saying that the Government of India took the view that it would be better therefore to leave the whole thing to the Provincial Legislature?—No local Legislature, to the best of my knowledge, has legislated in any Province. The Government of the United Provinces has framed certain rules for municipal towns and District Board areas.

B-466. What I would like to get from you, if possible, is the reasons which have prevented the local Government from putting forward a proposal for legislation?—As far as the Punjab is concerned, when Bengal and Bombay and other more important centres have done nothing themselves, we propose to confine ourselves to trying to amend the Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories Act and the Rules thereunder in order to get more control over conditions affecting the comfort of the labourers in the main class of factories in the Punjab—the cotton ginning and pressing factories.

B-447. *The Chairman:* This is a question of controlling the construction of factories?—Yes. There are rules for controlling the construction of cotton ginning and pressing factories under the Cotton Ginning and Pressing Act.

B-448. *Mr. Glow:* You have had a very serious accident in Amritsar lately, when a factory fell and killed several people?—That was due to the factory not working for more than two years, and with the very opening of the work the top storey came down.

B-449. Do you consider it necessary that before a factory starts work, or starts to work again after an interval, there should be some control over its construction?—That suggestion has been made and Government has suggested. I think that before a factory starts after not being used for a year, it should be inspected by the Inspector of Factories.

B-450. At present you have no power, except in so far as Municipal Act gives the power, to prevent an unsuitable building being used as a factory?—Yes, but on account of that accident it is now proposed to take power.

B-451. By legislation?—I do not know whether our factory rules will admit of amendment to bring it within their scope; but if necessary, by legislation.

B-452. So that I take it that the real reason for the inaction here is that other more important Provinces have taken no action?—That is one of the reasons.

B-453. In your memorandum, dealing with "Health", which I understand, is not entirely endorsed by the local Government, you say that the Committee which dealt with the provision of sickness insurance came to the conclusion that if the legislation was to be sanctioned it must be Central. Is that view shared by the local Government?—Yes, I think so, as far as I remember.

B-454. Could you give us the reasons?—A certain amount of money is necessary for embarking on a scheme of this nature.

B-455. Central legislation would not necessarily mean a Central subvention?—As far as I remember, the local Government said that they would have no objection to bearing the administrative expenses of any scheme that might meet with general approval throughout India.

B-456. But not the contribution?—The contribution was left indefinite for consultation with other Provinces and the Central Government, if ever headway was made.

B-457. *Mr. Abel,* Chief Inspector of Factories, has given us some very striking particulars of what appear to be extraordinarily inadequate fines for repeated serious offences against the Factories Acts; there was one instance in particular in which a man who was discovered four times in two years employing children illegally was fined on the last occasion in two cases Rs. 25, having been much more severely fined on his second offence. Did the local Government consider the question of applying for an enhanced fine?—I do not know whether the case was brought up; I do not think so. It would not come to me; I would not see it.

B-458. Is it correct that when a man is convicted in a case like this, it is not possible, even after conviction, to bring to the notice of the Court the fact that he has been previously convicted?—Do you mean after the fine has been imposed?

The Chairman: I think Mr. Abel could best answer that question?—*(Mr. Abel)* The point has been raised in a Court by defending counsel, that

there being no provision in the Act by which an enhanced fine can be imposed, it is not possible to state in the complaint that there is a previous conviction.

B-459. But after the Magistrate has decided to convict?—In such cases I always send on to the local Government a resumé of the actual case and point out that the fine has been inadequate. In one or two cases I have asked the Deputy Commissioner of that particular district to call for a revision in the Court; but only in one case have I been able to get a revision. Usually the Deputy Commissioner prefers not to alter the case.

B-460. In your memorandum reference is made to five fatal accidents in 1925 in five cotton factories. I take it you mean cotton ginning factories?—(Mr. Wilson): Yes.

B-461. Nothing in the form of compensation seems to have been paid and you say Government asked for a further report. Was that report received?—Not to my knowledge yet.

B-462. Then do you consider it is necessary to have some means whereby workmen or their dependents who are unaware of their rights, as was presumably the case here, should be enabled to make claims or stimulated to bring claims?—I think these cases are under consideration, but there has been considerable delay in setting them.

B-463. They have applied to the Commissioner?—I fancy they must have, though I have not received a further report.

B-464. In your memorandum you discuss the question of legislation on the subjects of fines and prompt payment of wages. Your conclusion is that "Legislation to assure prompt payment to factory employees is needed". You have not apparently considered the question of how it is to be enforced, which is the crux of the question?—Would the enforcement be more difficult than the enforcement of many of the other provisions in the Factories Act?

B-465. Possibly not; but when you are dealing with fines you state that legislation is not likely to be of much use on account of the illiteracy of the average worker. I do not see how the position is different as to fines and payment of wages in this respect. My point is that if it is possible to legislate effectively in order to assure the prompt payment of wages, it should be equally possible with regard to fines; the difficulties of enforcement are the same?—Yes, there are difficulties. I only mention the fact that if possible there should be some provision for securing more prompt payment of wages, because, as far as I can make out, most of the small strikes that are reported by the Director of Industries are simply due to the fact that wages have been delayed a month or five weeks.

B-466. But I gather the local Government have come to a conclusion favourable to legislation to secure the prompt payment of wages, but unfavourable to legislation in respect of fines?—The local Government have come to no such conclusion.

B-467. Since the introduction of the Reforms have you ever had any labour measure before the Legislative Council?—None to my knowledge, but I have only been in the Council for two years; there has certainly been nothing in that time.

B-468. Does the Board of Economic Enquiry receive a grant or assistance from Government?—It received a consolidated grant; I think it is Rs. 18,000, and it appoints its own investigators.

B-469. *Mr. Joshi*: Is it the policy of your Government not to take any measures with regard to labour questions until communism appears on the scene?—We are not an industrial Province. There was a strike at Dhariwal in the beginning of last year, and there was some labour unrest in the North-Western Railway workshop at the beginning of the year; but with those exceptions during the last two years at any rate happily strikes have been few and far between.

B-470. But did you not have strikes on the railways, and is it not the duty of the local Government to look after the welfare of labour whether

they be the employees of the Central Government or of a private employer?—I think the railways have taken considerable steps this year to do what they can to remedy any grievances railway labourers may have; they have I think started a Labour Bureau and they have special labour officers appointed this year.

B-471. I want to know what the local Government proposes itself to do as a Government, because labour welfare is one of the duties of the Provincial Government. You say there are not many strikes; are you going to wait until strikes become numerous?—We hope there will not be many strikes. This is an agricultural Province, it is not industrial yet and is not likely to be for a long time.

B-472. What is the general attitude of your Government towards trade unions?

Mr. Sastri: It is stated in the Government memorandum—“The Punjab Government has no hesitation in admitting that in industries on any considerable scale trade unionism and combinations are indispensable”.

B-473. *Mr. Joshi:* Are you acting up to that view?—Trade unions are registered. When they apply for registration any representation they may make, if they wish to make a representation, about any pending matter receives its due measure of attention. But the trade unions in the Punjab are such fluid bodies. They are only in their infancy. The membership changes. They are absorbed.

B-474. Is the policy of your Government such that the work of the trade unions is encouraged, or is it such that the work of the trade unions is discouraged or obstructed?—There is no discouragement or obstruction.

B-475. As regards housing, do you think more and more factories will be erected in the Punjab, or do you think it will remain a wholly agricultural Province?—I think that for many years it will still be an agricultural Province, with the exception of whatever developments may be brought about by hydro-electric power.

B-476. Do you think, even if the number of factories is small, slums may arise if care is not taken about the matter of town-planning?—I do not think it is very likely.

B-477. There are in your Province 725 factories, and at present you have one Factory Inspector. I understand you propose to add one more?—Yes.

B-478. Do you think a staff of two inspectors will be sufficient to deal with 725 factories?—Three-fifths of the factories are seasonal. The present Factory Inspector has also got his own assistant who inspects factories. As far as the welfare of the operatives is concerned, every District Magistrate is himself an inspector; and recently limited powers have been given, in every district, to selected officers to inspect factories with a view to seeing that the hours are not too long, and that women and children are not illegally employed—all the human part of the inspection as distinct from the technical part. So that the Inspector of Factories has really more assistants than would at first sight appear. There is a proposal that he should also have a fully qualified second Factory Inspector with effect from April next year.

B-479. *Lala Harkishan Lal:* Can you give us the difference between the rise in prices and the drop in wages? Do you think that the failure of the crops for the last 3 years is responsible for the all-round rise in prices of imported goods?—I think that has a good deal to do with it.

B-480. The suggestion has been made that with the advent of hydro-electric power there will be an increase in the industrial life of the Punjab. Do you think that the lack of coal supplies in the Punjab is the only cause of lack of industrialism in the Punjab, or is there any other cause which retards that industrialism?—We have got the water, but we have not the coal or the iron which is necessary for any industrial development.

B-481. Can skilled labour for textile work be obtained in the Punjab?—It has to be imported from Ahmedabad.

B-482. All the textile mills have had to import their labour from outside?—That is the case regarding skilled labour.

B-483. Do you know also what difficulties there are with regard to capitalization of industries in the Punjab?—There are great difficulties, because money flows to the acquisition of land instead of being put in industry in the Punjab.

B-484. With the introduction of hydro-electric power, would capital come more easily into the Punjab?—The hope is there.

B-485. Something has been said about slums arising around ginning factories. Are you aware that most of the ginning factories are outside the towns?—They are generally.

B-486. Do you know that generally there is plenty of land attached to ginning factories, even in Multan, Hissar and Ambala, which are all very ancient towns?—It may be so. I have no personal experience.

B-487. Is it not a fact that labour, as such, does not form the portfolio of any member of the Government, and is not a separate subject?—Industrial matters affecting labour are in the portfolio of the Member for Revenue—I mean the settlement of disputes, housing and welfare of labour.

B-488. If there was trouble in the Public Works Department with a contractor, would that be dealt with by the Member for Revenue?—No case has arisen, but I think that would be a matter for consultation between the Member for Agriculture and the Member for Revenue.

B-489. As a matter of fact, labour troubles are very few in the Punjab, and therefore there has been no provision made specifically for dealing with labour?—Very few references come to me in connection with labour apart from questions arising out of the administration of the Factory Act.

B-490. *Mr. Taylor*: In your memorandum under the heading "Education" you bring into prominence the question of child education with particular reference to the children employed in carpet factories in Amritsar. You say "Industrial areas being mainly in municipalities or small towns children not in employment come under the control of the system of compulsory education". Do not children who are employed come under the same system?—It depends upon the rules. There are exemptions. Exemptions can be given, if claimed. I ought to say that this first sentence is rather misleading, because Municipalities have not as yet adopted compulsory primary education as a general rule.

B-491. Does the Amritsar Municipality enforce compulsory education?—They agreed to adopt it two years ago, but whether or not it is in force yet I do not know. I do not think it is.

B-492. I am under the impression that one or two wards have compulsory education?—A beginning must have been made by this time, but how far it is general I cannot say.

B-493. Presumably, if certain wards of the Municipality have compulsory education, the onus for sending the children to school falls on the parent or guardian of the children rather than on the employer?—Yes, in the absence of any rule prescribing the procedure to be adopted for any children employed in any factory within that area.

B-494. You say "No special arrangements exist for the education of children employed in factories". In those wards where education exists it is presumably not necessary for the employers to offer special facilities?—It depends on the scheme. It is possible that children employed in factories would not be able to fit in any education proposed for them within the ordinary curriculum of the municipal schools.

B-495. You go on to say towards the end of your memorandum—"But the factory owners shelter themselves under the opposition of the master weavers to any such restriction of hours." I am under the impression that the Hon'ble the Revenue Member sometime back met a deputation of the master weavers in this respect. I was not present at the meeting. Can you tell me whether this impression was gained by the Hon'ble the Revenue

Member after that meeting?—As far as I remember, there was a tentative agreement arrived at at a meeting held last year that children in the Amritsar factories should not be allowed to enter the factories unless they were nine; that from the age of 9 to 12 they should not do more than five hours' work; and from the age of 10 to 15 should not do more than 8 hours' work with a break in between; and some arrangements should be made, if possible, in the factories for half-time education. It was hoped that some sort of arrangement would be come to to make it unnecessary to provide for special legislation for the children in the Amritsar factories. Then, I think, on the representation of the factory owners at Amritsar it was requested that the Hon'ble the Revenue Member should see a deputation of master weavers. I do not know whether the master weavers are the parents or the contractors, but these master weavers saw the Hon'ble Member for Revenue in September, and they pointed out that they could not afford, at the rate paid to them by the carpet factory owners, to dispense with the employment of children. The fact was reported to the Government of India, and we asked that certain enquiries should be made from the United Provinces. An inquiry was made and the Government of India has said that the whole matter should be left to the advice of the present Royal Commission. That, I think, is the position at present.

B-496. Is it, in the view of the Government, more expedient that the children should receive education in the factories rather than attend the municipal schools which are in close proximity?—Yes, I think the local Government probably holds that the schooling should be part of the wages if possible; that the accommodation and the provision of classes should be, if possible, in the factory.

B-497. You say "the factory owners shelter themselves under the opposition of the master weavers to any such restriction of hours, and the children continue their blind alley occupation." Is it the view of the Government that carpet weaving is more of a blind alley occupation than other weaving industries in the province?—That is not my experience. If I am not mistaken, the Deputy Commissioner reported that at the age of 14 the boys left their occupation and went elsewhere from the factory; he may be right or wrong, but I think I am not misquoting him.

B-498. *Mr. Ghani*: In your memorandum you have given us the prices of foodstuffs. May I know what machinery is provided by the local Government to arrive at those prices—how those prices are ascertained by the Government?—Districts are selected, representative of various parts of the province, towns as well, and the Director of Land Records keeps a record of, I think, current fortnightly prices.

B-499. Who reports these prices to the local Government?—Presumably that maid-of-all-works, the Deputy Commissioner.

B-500. May I know if the Deputy Commissioners of the Punjab themselves visit the various food-markets and ascertain the prices, or do they get those figures from some subordinates, for instance, the *Patwari*?—I may have been remiss; but I have never visited a food-market; I have taken the prices reported to me. The *Tahsildars* have a meeting fortnightly with the shopkeepers and managers and prepare a recognized rate for the locality.

B-501. May I know what is the policy of the local Government as regards the registration and recognition of trade unions of Government employees, in industrial and other concerns?—I do not think that they are registered.

B-502. May I know the reasons why the trade unions of Government servants are not registered while the trade unions of other servants are registered? I do not think I can give the reason.

B-503. *The Chairman*: With whom does the decision lie?—There has been an instruction, I think, from the Government saying that for the present unions of Government servants should not be registered.

B-504. *Mr. Ghani*: As regards the slums in the two biggest cities of the Punjab, namely, Lahore and Amritsar, may I ask you if the local Govern-

ment took any action against any Municipality of these two cities for improving those slums, or doing something to better the conditions in those slums?—That is more a question for the Secretary for Transferred Departments; but I do not know whether you refer to any instructions that may have been given by Government for tightening up municipal rules. I do not deal with municipalities, and I only know that there is some sort of town-planning scheme operative in Lahore, and it is hoped to get a town-planning officer next year. But these matters are not in my province.

B-505. In your memorandum you refer to the Lahore Improvement Trust. May I know if the Improvement Trust has done anything as regards the slums in Lahore where most of the workers live? Where do most of the workers live is a question I found myself unable to answer when I was trying to prepare this memorandum.

Mr. Harkishan Lal: There is no Improvement Trust for Lahore.

The witness: There is a body that is consulted in the matter of street alignment and matters of that sort; but "Trust" is probably a misnomer.

B-506. *Colonel Russell:* Dealing with the inspection of factories the Director of Public Health says "his proposal that District Medical Officers of Health should also be appointed Additional Inspectors in respect of their several districts was not approved by the Government." Can you tell me why that was not approved, because these medical officers would seem to be quite useful factory inspectors?—I do not think one wants too many Inspectors or Additional Inspectors of Factories in a district, and the local Government is more concerned to see that the factory rules and the Factory Act with regard to the hours of labour and the employment of women and children should receive, first of all, attention from Government.

B-507. Yes, but generally speaking, I think that the health conditions in factories are not quite satisfactory, and medical officers who are concerned in health work would obviously be more able to judge whether the health conditions laid down in the Act are complied with or not?—They would be able to do so, but the question is whether they would be in a position to make really practical suggestions.

B-508. Surely that depends on the personality of the individual health officer. You will not be surprised to hear that this method is being adopted in other Provinces?—It was decided for the time being that there was no such necessity, and that attention should be concentrated upon the two other matters.

B-509. Is there any Factory Inspector at present who is an expert in connection with health matters?

Mr. Harkishan Lal: Mr. Gill.

The witness: He is a Factory Inspector.

B-510. *Colonel Russell:* Obviously the Director of Public Health cannot inspect 725 factories; so that would you not admit that it would be better to have a District Health Officer an *ex-officio* Inspector of Factories?—I should not like to say off-hand; I should like to consider that.

B-511. *Divan Chaman Lal:* You mentioned that there are 2,000 schools with 5,000 pupils. Is not that figure incorrect?—There is something wrong there. There are about 20 industrial schools.

B-512. With regard to International Conventions you quote the statement made by the Director of Industries and say that that statement is ambiguous. I personally cannot find anything ambiguous in it. Will you explain it?—It says; "modify them". You must modify the articles, but it does not particularize in what way modification is necessary in view of local conditions, which is the whole point.

B-513. Does the Punjab Government accept the principle of sickness insurance for workers?—The Punjab Government has only said that it is a desirable thing, but there are financial considerations involved, and for the present they have said that they are willing to bear only the cost of administration.

B-514. According to the evidence we have got, out of every five visits paid by the Factory Inspector one has resulted in prosecution, which shows a very serious state of affairs?—Yes.

B-515. You further stated that there have been strikes, but not very many strikes?—I have not heard of any strike in connection with the cotton ginning factory.

B-516. I am not talking of the cotton ginning factory alone, but discussing the general question. You further say that the health of these workers is low. Do you not think under these circumstances that it would be necessary for the Punjab Government to concentrate attention on these matters which affect thousands of workers, by appointing a Labour Ministry?—I do not see the necessity for any Labour Ministry concerned simply with questions of labour alone.

B-517. Health, wages, education of the working classes, etc.?—I should not like to give an answer to that. That would mean a reorganization of the various departments and Ministries of Government; and labour only comes in in a casual fashion in connection with the problem of administration of factories, industrial development and the like.

B-518. Are there large numbers of workers working in small cottage industries in the Punjab?—You mean wood work, metal work, weaving and the like?

B-519. Yes, in such places as Ludhiana, Jullunder and other places?—You could get that from the census report.

B-520. This figure that you give of 50,000 could be multiplied a hundred times over?—This figure is only the factory figure.

B-521. It only refers to factories, so that if we take a broader definition of industrial workers the figure would be very much larger than 50,000?—Yes.

B-522. Probably you will have to multiply that many times?—Yes, very likely.

B-523. Would you admit that there is a large labour force in the Punjab whose welfare it is the business of the Government of the Punjab to look after?—In relation to the agricultural population, no. There are 21 millions in the Punjab.

B-524. Is it a fact that complaints have been made occasionally to the Punjab Government that in the matter of strikes, there has been a great deal of police interference against the interests of the workers?—I am not aware of any such. As I say I remember the strike at Dhariwal.

B-525. I particularly refer to the strike at Dhariwal. Do you remember having received a representation from the workers of Dhariwal that they were molested by the police and not allowed to organize their meetings and were interfered with in various other ways?—There was a representation that was sent to the Deputy Commissioner for enquiry, as far as I remember, about 18 months ago. He reported that there was very little truth in the allegation.

B-526. A question was put to you about the discouragement of trade unionism. Is it a fact that a circular was sent out by the Home Department of the Government of India suggesting to the Punjab Government that they should not register unions of Government employees?—I think so.

B-527. What action was taken by the Punjab Government in regard to that circular?—The formation of unions has not been objected to; in fact in the last few years several unions have been formed.

B-528. My question is about the registration of the unions and not about the formation; because no Government can prevent the formation of unions?—It was noted that registration should not be allowed for the present in accordance with the circular referred to.

B-529. Was any instruction given to the Director of Industries in regard to that?—In writing to the unions concerned it was noted that they should

not be registered. I cannot say off-hand whether the Director has any standing instruction or not as Registrar.

B-530. You would not be averse to the proposition, in view of the low state of the health of the industrial workers, of a separate Ministry of Labour being instituted?—I have never considered that question; I do not see the necessity for it.

B-531. In one part of your memorandum it is stated that there is no serious problem of unemployment; but later on you say that as far as unskilled workers are concerned, "the matter is entirely different, there appears to be a lot of unemployment and the labour turnover is high"?—May I point out that that is a quotation from Mr. Charles who is talking of the conditions prevailing in his workshops in Amritsar?

B-532. Do you agree with that proposition?—I think the labour turnover is high; but perhaps speaking from my own experience, I would be inclined to doubt the truth of the first part of that statement.

B-533. Has any enquiry, apart from the unemployment enquiry which was made into unemployment amongst the educated classes, been made into the question of unemployment of the working classes?—That unemployment enquiry was comprehensive. I do not think it was confined to unemployment amongst the educated classes. It was found that unemployment amongst the educated and literate classes was extreme, whereas it was not the case in the case of illiterate and labouring people. It was a general reference.

B-534. Suppose it is established that there is a great deal of unemployment amongst semi-skilled and unskilled workers, would you be averse to a system of unemployment insurance and the setting up of labour exchanges?—I do not think that the setting up of a labour exchange, as far as I can see, is needed. And the other question is entirely a matter of finance and funds.

B-535. *Mr. Cliff*: Would it be unfair to say that, apart from inspection, the policy of Government is a policy of inaction?—Inspection, and enforcement of such Acts and Rules as may be operative in the Province. The Punjab Government is not very closely concerned with what are called labour questions on account of the nature of the Province.

B-536. You say in your memorandum "Statistics of labour employed on open canals are not maintained". Do I understand that labour employed on canals is employed by the Government?—With the exception of a small staff of gangs for supervision and patrol work, the labour employed on canals is I think largely employed through contractors.

B-537. You have a very interesting paragraph in your memorandum on contractors. You say "The notable personage in India is the contractor". Do the Government of the Punjab pursue that as a policy of the line of least resistance?—It is a system that has been in vogue and is in vogue, and it is I think, for this Province, the best way of getting work done. It often perhaps may be the only way of getting work done.

B-538. What steps do the Government take to ensure protection for the labour engaged on the work which is done for them?—Such works being in the countryside or on the canals?

B-539. I do not mind if you take canals; I do not mind if you take forests; I just want one or more instances of the kind of protection which it is within the power of Government to give; which they commend in other people; which they say is desirable. Where does the Government put that into practice?—I cannot speak of anything specific. There is always a staff which exercises general supervision over the carrying out of any duty or the construction of any work. I suppose that ultimately the responsibility for the welfare of labour engaged on any particular work resides in the amount of supervision which the Government and the local staff can give, and does give.

B-540. That leads me to a word that you have used often in your examination. It is the word "hope". In answer to many questions you have

stated that 'it is hoped', or 'we hope'. Is it unfair to say that the policy of the Government is a policy of hope?—Every policy I think must have some ray of hope in it.

B-541. Looking through your memorandum and seeing the deferred hopes that there are in it, is it to be wondered at that the people may be sick?—Is there sickness at the moment in any violent form.

B-542. That leads me to another question. You seem to indicate in your answers to questions that there is nothing wrong until there is a withdrawal of labour, and there is no need of action until a withdrawal of labour has occurred. Is that the way you judge when people are sick?—If any representations are made by workers in any locality or in any factory that there is a grievance and they desire that Government should look into this grievance in order to settle possible disputes that might lead to trouble, then the Government does make an enquiry. If there are telegrams or representations from factories or from other places, if they seem to be such that an enquiry is needed, then the Director of Industries is asked to go and ascertain the facts with a view to a composition of whatever trouble may be brewing. I do not think it is right to say that Government waits till any dispute has flamed out into rather drastic action.

B-543. I did not say that myself. I rather took it from your own answers to questions that you indicated that there have been few strikes, and that you looked into things when strikes had occurred?—There are both processes. As a matter of fact some strikes are probably composed through the intervention of the Factory Inspector or the Director of Industries.

B-544. I am glad to note the assistance which has been given by Government officials, and the suggestion that they may be able to give further help. May I put it to you in this way. There will be a memorandum of evidence before the Commission to-morrow, in which this significant statement is made: "Illiteracy is even a greater bar than caste", in dealing with labour in India. Assuming that to be true and applying it to your last answer—the opportunity of making representations—may I ask you whether in fact there is an opportunity of making effective representations?—Effective in the results?

B-545. Effective in the sense that they are clearly expressed and may be clearly understood by those who receive them.

The Chairman: Do you refer, Mr. Cliff, to Government employees or private employees?

B-546. *Mr. Cliff:* I am just following Mr. Wilson in his own answers in regard to opportunities that the people have to make representations to the Factory Inspector in view of the illiteracy which exists?—I think in the matter of stating grievances, both orally and in writing, in spite of their illiteracy they are able to make representations which are intelligible and which can be understood. That is only my opinion.

B-547. With regard to compensation, I want you to return to Sir Victor Sassoon's question. Will you be good enough to state what is the compensation which the worker in the forest who I understand is earning 8 annas a day, would be entitled to?—It depends on the period of disablement.

B-548. What would he be entitled to per month?—There is a schedule under the Workmen's Compensation Act which is applied.

B-549. You have indicated that there is a lack of skilled labour in the Punjab. What has been done in the Punjab either by Government or by employers to train unskilled labour?—I do not think I can in this connection refer to the schools such as that at Moghalpura because I do not think those institutions are for the training of unskilled labour. There are industrial schools, which are of course schools for youths and not for adult labour.

B-550. Can you tell me how many craftsmen have been produced in this Province, either by Government or by employers?—I could not tell you. I may say that in the industrial schools, which are the only schools I can think of corresponding to those to which you seem to be referring, there

are about 4,000 students at the present moment, half of whom are the sons of artisans, metal workers, weavers and blacksmiths. There are these schools growing up which in the course of time we hope will become high schools, and then become institutions for the teaching of mechanical and electrical practice to the sons of artisans. At present we have only about 24 schools, one in each district, though it is hoped to increase very greatly the number of industrial schools with a view to bringing them up to the standard of technical institutes in the course of time, mainly for the sons of artisans and craftsmen.

B-551. Am I to understand that at the moment there are 2,000 pupils being trained as artisans?—About that. There is an Inspector of Industrial Schools.

B-552. *Mr. Ahmed:* Do you regard prompt payment of wages as being beneficial to the labourer?—Yes.

B-553. Are you in favour of payment weekly?—There are difficulties; I only say prompt as far as possible, not necessarily weekly.

B-554. Is the indebtedness of the workers due to wages not being paid promptly?—I do not say that, though if wages are not paid promptly it does tend to put workers into the hands of their food suppliers.

B-555. You have considerable experience of the rural districts?—Yes; I have very little experience of towns.

B-556. In the agricultural areas have co-operative societies materially assisted the cultivators?—Yes, particularly the agricultural tenant class and the peasant proprietor.

B-557. Do you propose to start similar co-operative societies for the poor people in the industrial areas?—There are in the industrial areas co-operative credit societies on the same lines as in the rural areas, but there has not been the same extension in the industrial areas that there has been in rural areas. The pace of progress in the co-operative movement has of late been slowed down simply in order to go safely and not take unnecessary risks. Although urban societies are on the increase, it is not possible to make very rapid progress.

B-558. You are in favour of gradual development?—Yes, with safety, both in the country and in the towns. There is also the Industrial Loans Act; that is for the promotion of industries.

B-559. With regard to the housing problem, are you in favour of quarters being provided for the labourers by Government?—I think Government does in its own factories supply quarters for the subordinate staff to some extent.

B-560. I am not speaking of the clerks and other officials, but the industrial workers?—It depends on the acuteness of the housing problem in the immediate neighbourhood. There may be need for it, but in most cases the need probably does not exist because you have not got so much concentration in towns.

B-561. Do you think it would be advisable to have a separate Department of Labour?—I have not considered that question and could not give any definite answer, but I do not think it is necessary.

B-562. *Sir Alexander Murray:* As regards the question of the advisability of having a separate Labour Department, I notice that according to the 1921 Census, the number of workers employed in organized industries was only 0.25 of the total population?—It might be 0.2 per cent.

B-563. If your figure is correct, do you think such a percentage would justify yet another portfolio being added to the Punjab Government?—I do not think so.

B-564. Is there much unemployment amongst unskilled workers?—Not amongst unskilled workers; I think perhaps there is among semi-skilled workers.

B-565. If that is so, why are so many skilled workers from other Provinces finding their way into the Punjab?—Possibly the local people have not got

that particular skill. I saw a complaint the other day from second and third grade engineers, as they are called, who get certificates from an appointing board here. They complain that their wages are only in the neighbourhood of about Rs. 40 or 50 a month. Whether that is true or not I do not know.

B-566. You mean more or less skilled workers?—Yes.

B-567. The Punjab is what is called one of the immigrant Provinces: on balance, more people come into this Province from other Provinces than go out of this Province?—Yes; they come from the North-West Frontier Province, from the United Provinces and from Rajputana. We require a lot of tenants in the new colonies.

B-568. In the memorandum of the Punjab Government there is the statement: "The pitch of wages paid in the Punjab would appear to be higher than in the United Provinces, for example, and this partly accounts for the influx of labour from Central India." So that labour seems to be attracted from other Provinces?—Yes.

B-569. Then you say in your memorandum "The employer however really dictates his own terms". How can he dictate his own terms if the demand for labour is in excess of the supply?—I do not think the two propositions are incompatible or inconsistent; I mean the employers may dictate their own terms to the ordinary employees, but at the same time the pitch of the wages in the Punjab may be higher than in other Provinces.

B-570. In answer to Lala Harkishan Lal you said that apart from the unemployment question in industrial labour there is scarcity of capital in the Punjab. For instance, the great bulk of the industrial labour in Bengal consists of workers who are imported from outside; in some of the large towns, practically 90 per cent. of the labour employed is imported from other Provinces. So that there is really nothing to stand in the way of industrial development of the Punjab so far as labour is concerned, because, if you follow what has been done in other Provinces in India, the workers would go to the Province where conditions are attractive?—Yes. Capital is extraordinarily shy in the Punjab of going into any sort of industrial enterprise.

B-571. I notice, for instance, in Bengal of which I know most, that the jute, tea and coal industries were started with foreign capital, so to speak. Can you not get somebody with sufficient confidence in the Punjab to put the capital down for industries here?—It is a matter of hope; the Dhariwal Mills, I think, have got a certain amount of foreign capital.

B-572. *Mr. Sastri*: With regard to the children employed in the carpet industry at Amritsar, the condition of things you describe is to be found in other Provinces as well?—In the United Provinces, in particular.

B-573. In Madras as well. May I ask whether it has come under your observation that parents pledge their children for labour for a space of two or three years? Have you noticed that sort of thing?—No; I have not been in these factories myself and I have never heard of pledging of labour for a period of years.

B-574. I have known cases?—I saw a reference in the correspondence once, not to the master weavers which I take to mean the parents, but to the *kedars*.

B-575. I shall probably repeat that question to the Inspector of Factories. With regard to child labour in these small industries I believe it is one of the most deplorable features of our industrial organization. It seems to me that it needs very careful attention of Government, and I commend that part to your special notice?—The problem has been or will be specifically referred to this very Commission. There are difficulties, because it is said that on the delicate work the children's fingers can do what adults cannot do so well; and the parents also say that the family will be ruined if the children do not come in and co-operate. The payment is by piece-work. I cannot say whether the children work in a leisurely way. It is a problem.

on which the Government of India has sought the advice of this Royal Commission.

B-576. *The Chairman*: In regard to your last remark, do you recognize any international similarity in that argument in favour of the employment of young children? Have you heard it elsewhere than in India?—Yes; at the same time, I believe, in Persia and in Kerman, the problem has been solved and regular restrictions have been put on the labour of children on Persian carpets.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. W. H. AFEL, Inspector of Factories, Punjab, and Dr. R. C. RAWLLEY, Director of Industries, Punjab.

B-577. *The Chairman:* Mr. Abel, you are the Inspector of Factories here in the Punjab?—Yes; and also for Ajmer-Merwara and the North-West Frontier Province.

B-578. A very large area?—It is indeed.

B-579. And a large industrial population is included in that area?—Exactly; it is a very big area.

B-580. How long have you held that office?—Since 1920.

B-581. I need only put three or four leading questions to you on your memorandum. Dealing with the extent of welfare work, you remark "One of the reasons for this" (that is, that little is being done by the employers except in one or two of the bigger mills) "is that the operatives are frequently changing from one factory to another; as a result neither employer nor worker get to know each other well, and little thought is given for anything beyond the work of the day. There are however one or two exceptions in this respect to be found". I take it from that that you would consider that any means which would achieve greater regularity in the labour force would be of advantage both to the workers themselves, and to the employers?—It would indeed; but the factory population of the Punjab consists mostly of agricultural workers who work in factories during the time when there is no agricultural work to be done, and, as a result, immediately their work in the fields requires their attention, they leave the factory and go up to their fields to work. When they come back, possibly they find that their places have been filled and they go to another factory.

B-582. I am suggesting that if it were found possible to secure a greater regularity of work, the worker returning to the same place and the same job, the worker would attain a greater skill and there would also be a greater opportunity for an understanding between the employees and their employers?—Yes, that is so. I think it would also automatically lead to more welfare work being done by the employer for his worker.

B-583. Therefore the extreme changeability of labour probably is one of the factors which lies in the way of welfare work for the benefit of the workers?—Yes.

B-584. May I draw your attention to your remarks on the Factory Act and its enforcement? I take it you strongly recommend to us that the Act needs strengthening with regard to penalties for repeated offences?—Yes.

B-585. You tell us that an improvement of the Act in that respect would facilitate your work in enforcing on the employers a strict compliance with the Act?—It would very much facilitate our work.

B-586. Then you say that "if it were possible to have a Public Prosecutor attached to this Department such difficulties will be greatly minimized"?—That is so.

B-587. That we will certainly take into consideration. Dealing with the Workmen's Compensation Act, you make some valuable observations with regard to the difficulties of the workers in obtaining that to which they are entitled under the Act. You have not, in this paragraph, made quite the same clear suggestions to us as to how the Act could be improved. But I take it that your point is that there should be some advisor at the service of the worker who has been injured?—That would be extremely useful to the worker. I am not really concerned with workmen's compensation; I merely collect the returns at the end of the year and pass them on to the Director of Industries. But these remarks are formed from the workers who have appealed to me to endeavour to see their claims settled. Actually I have no authority and I take no great interest; I merely advise what they should do and pass them on to the Director of Industries.

B-588. But you do not suggest that in addition to your duties you should occupy the place of an advisor?—No, not at all.

B-589. You again give us a valuable suggestion for our consideration—that sub-section (3) of Section 36 of the Indian Factories Act is defective and leaves a loophole which is taken advantage of by factory occupiers. We would carefully note your suggestion that it should not be possible for a factory occupier to change the working hours without a proper notice of the change being given to you. I think it is the practice in England that the factory inspector must be advised?—The advice already comes to the Factory Inspector, but since it is not necessary to send it until 36 hours after the change has actually taken place, it leaves a very big loophole for factory managers to change their working hours at any time.

The Chairman: We understand that, and we will carefully note your suggestion.

B-590. I note your recommendation to us that with regard to workers in carpet factories, especially boys, control is very sadly needed in this behalf?—Yes, it is.

B-591. Am I right in saying that the Government of the Punjab could bring these factories under the law if they chose?—They can do it. As the Act stands at present, it is possible for the local Government to extend the Act to all concerns in which ten persons are employed. That would cover many of these small industrial concerns; but it would not affect the whole of them. The difficulty is this: all of them being situated together, it would be unfair to bring one factory employing ten or eleven persons under the Act and leave out of the Act another factory employing only nine persons.

B-592. Does not this case of carpet factories refer more to ones which stand out of the Act because there is no motive power?—Yes, that is another point.

B-593. In your view which is the more important extension of the Act?—The carpet industry is isolated in practically one district, the Amritsar district, whereas other small factories such as the toundries, which are the principal offenders, and printing presses, are throughout every town; and the extension of the operation of the Act to these factories would affect more operatives than would be affected in the case of the carpet factory workers. I think that both are necessary.

B-594. As far as you know has there been any move on the part of the Punjab Government to use their powers in this respect?—Yes, there has. In the case of the cotton ginning factories the Act has already been extended to factories in which ten persons are employed. The same has been done in the case of ice factories. As far as carpet factories are concerned, they are not under the Act in any way at all, I have not a great deal of concern in them; I know some of them. There have been conferences arranged by the Government for the last three or four years at different times to think out some scheme whereby labour in carpet factories could be controlled. I believe it is before the local Government at the present moment.

B-595. In your memorandum you tell us that Government are considering making rules whereby prospective factory builders must get the plans of their factories approved before the buildings are erected. I take it from that paragraph that Government has power to do that if they please?—That I could not say. I do not think they have the power under the Factories Act. It probably would have to be a special Act, to be put before the Legislative Council.

B-596. Perhaps later on the Director of Industries will be able to tell us whether it is a municipal bye-law or a power under some general Act?—As it stands at present, it is only necessary for a prospective builder of a factory to get his plans passed by the Municipal Engineer of that particular district; but once they have been passed and the factory is put up, I find very little else ever happens to them. Possibly another storey or another wing is added, of which no notice appears to be taken by the Municipality. As a result we have factories collapsing. There is a certain clause in the Factories Act

which allows a factory inspector to prohibit the use of any part of a factory which he considers unsafe and we use that power to a certain extent. But it is very difficult to apply it, as one inspector has to inspect 700 factories and it would be impossible for him to tell whether the beam of a factory roof which is already covered up is safe or unsafe. It would put a great deal of work on the factory inspection staff.

B-597. You think that new factories should be subjected to control both in regard to health and safety?—Yes, before they are actually used as factories.

B-598. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Dr. Rawley, I notice that you are in favour of public employment agencies with a view to offering suitable opportunities of employment to unemployed workers. We have already had your figures as to industrial workers analysed and we find that if we take away those more or less permanently employed by Government and on the Railways, and if we take away those who look on the work in gins and so on as secondary to their agricultural work and, according to your own memorandum, are working only for two or three months in the year, there is only a matter of 11,478 men, women and children who would have to be looked after by a permanent agency. You say that the problem of unemployment may be regarded as a mystery; you quote Mr. Abel who says that where it does exist it is purely voluntary; and you also quote a committee which says that there is no unemployment worth mentioning among the uneducated classes. In view of the fact that you are dealing with a labour force which is only half as large as my own firm in Bombay has to look after, would you justify an increase in the bureaucracy by the appointment of an employment agency?—In my opinion there is unemployment in the Punjab. I am basing my opinion on one particular fact; that is that during the course of my experience as Director of Industries in the Punjab, there is hardly a day when a man does not turn up in my office, an engineer or a mechanic, who wants a job. We get applications from various classes of people, mechanics, wood workers, turners and fitters wanting jobs.

B-599. But the number of jobs available is under 12,000?—I have stated in my memorandum that these Factory Act reports do not give us the exact number of workers. 51,000 is not the real number of workers. If you calculate the actual number of workers it might even go up to one million. Of course the number employed in the registered factories is known but the number employed in unregistered factories is not known to us. These in my opinion are all industrial workers.

B-600. Are you in a position to know exactly when the factories which are not registered need labour?—If I were to conduct a research I could tell you definitely; but as it is I am giving you my personal observation. You go to any small village and there you find a small flour mill employing three or four men.

B-601. You are giving figures from 50,000 to a million. I take it that this is spread over the whole of your Province which is of the size of England and Scotland?—That is true.

B-602. Therefore you will have to have a number of employment agencies to begin with?—I shall have to start an experiment in Lahore or Anritsar or one of these towns.

B-603. When you go to the big towns the number of work people who are in need of employment would not approach anything like a million?—It may not; but still it will help the people to get jobs.

B-604. You cannot make an employment for the whole population. What is the population of Lahore?—Between three and four lakhs.

B-605. You could not get anything like employment for three to four lakhs of workers out of a population of three to four lakhs of men, women and children. What is the industrial population including those working in unregistered factories?—I must say that the Labour Exchange Bureau

need not confine its applicants only to Lahore town. They might get applications from Amritsar, Ludhiana, Gujrat and Rawalpindi.

B-606. In your experience of the people of the Punjab, if a man is out of employment, is he likely to go to look for employment?—He must go.

B-607. But we have evidence in India that if you want workers you have to send for them, because they will not come of their own accord. You have to send recruiters to their homes. We in Bombay tried as much as possible to employ men directly, but we found that we had to send jobbers to the homes of the people to bring them to the work. Is that not a fact?—I am afraid that is not my experience.

B-608. You disagree with your own statement that the problem of unemployment is a mystery; because in your view there is a large unemployment problem and there is a large number that could be employed?—I have given you the verdict of the Unemployment Enquiry Committee of which I myself was a member. As a matter of fact I did not agree with them on many of the points. I have to say that the problem of unemployment is a mystery.

B-609. I take it that this Province, as you will admit, is essentially agricultural?—Essentially agricultural.

B-610. I take it that generally speaking the inhabitants of the Punjab would prefer agricultural to industrial pursuits?—I am afraid I am unable to say whether or not that is true; it all depends on the wages.

B-611. It would be easier to get a Punjabi to go to a canal colony than it would be to get him to go to a carpet factory, because he has been trained to agricultural pursuits?—My experience is that all the people that I have engaged in the Government factories stick to their jobs, because they get higher wages with us than they would get outside.

B-612. If you have factories working all the year round, do you think that the workers who work now for a part of the year would prefer to leave their agricultural employment and become industrialists all the year round?—They are doing it at present.

B-613. Would they prefer to?—They may not prefer to do it; but they are doing it.

B-614. I take it that the gins work only for part of the year?—Yes.

B-615. You think they would prefer to take industrial employment which continued all the year round rather than go back to their land?—If they can get higher wages, they like to work in the mills.

B-616. All the year round?—Yes.

B-617. They would prefer that to using that as a secondary means of employment?—Quite.

B-618. May I take it that the Punjab has no natural facilities for the development of industries?—The Punjab has more facilities than any other part of India.

B-619. If you have got natural resources, and money can be made out of them, if you have a population that is desirous of working in such industries, I really cannot understand why available capital for the development of industries should have gone to other parts of India and have missed the Punjab. We have all as capitalists been told that in the Punjab, there is not a superfluity of population needing work, and that owing to your canal colonies the surplus population settles down in agriculture. We have always been told that they only like to work as part-time workers, and that therefore if we want to put up a factory here we would have to rely on imported labour?—You have to rely on imported labour in any part of the world when you start a new industry, because local labour is not trained in that direction.

B-620. Surely after a time local labour generally tends to take the place of the imported labour?—That is exactly what is happening in the Punjab

just now, in the case of the textile industry in particular. We started an experiment a year ago and we have been able to train about 30 to 40 weavers. But it is a very small concern. They go into the mill and learn from their fathers and relations. That is exactly what is happening here in the weaving industry. We have old loom weavers. These people are now learning to work power looms; they go to small factories in Jullunder and Ludhiana and our own factory here in Lahore, they learn work on the machines and after they have learnt the job they stick to it.

B-621. I notice in one part of your memorandum you state that husbands do not get employment in the same factories as their wives or fathers as their daughters. Why is that? Generally where you have women and children working they work in family groups?—That is particularly the case in ginning factories, where the men get better wages outside the factory, and the women work inside the factories.

B-622. Do you employ women only in the ginning factories. I have seen men also in the ginning factories?—(Mr. Abel). In the mechanical department and those departments where the duties are arduous.

B-623. Are the men in a minority?—In the Punjab 70 per cent. of the workers in ginning factories are women.

B-624. I notice that in your memorandum you say that a reduction in the maximum hours of work will have a salutary effect on the illiterate worker who regards the wastage of time as a mere matter of routine. This is different from what Mr. Abel says in his memorandum. He points out that in a 10 hour day the average worker does not do more than $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours of work. My experience agrees with that of Mr. Abel. Why should you think that if you reduce the time from 10 to $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours, you would get $8\frac{1}{2}$ actual hours of work, without any waste of time?—My opinion is based on experience in Sholapur. In our mills there, specially in the weaving section, I myself carried out a test. Before the introduction of this new Act we were working 12 hours a day. When we reduced the working hours to 10, I discovered by actual tests on the machine that the worker produced 10 per cent. more than he produced during the 12 hours.

B-625. Do you assume that if you continue to decrease the number of hours per day you would continue to increase the efficiency per hour?—No. What I mean is that when the maximum physical fatigue has been reached the worker cannot produce more by working longer hours.

B-626. I am inclined to agree with you. But here we are told that in a 10 hour day they are giving $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours work. Do you think the worker would prefer to give $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours strenuous work rather than give $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours work spread over a 10 hour day?—I should have split up the 8 hours to 4 hours in the morning and 4 hours in the evening.

B-627. Do you think you would get as much work as you now get in a 10 hour day?—Yes, that is my opinion and it is based on recent experience.

B-628. You have told us of a decrease in hours from 12 to 10, but your point was that in that case the men had reached the fatigue limit. If you now decrease from 10 hours to 8, do you think you would still increase the efficiency per hour?—That is my own opinion.

B-629. Have you known of any case in which hours have been decreased from 10 to 8, and the same amount of work has been done?—I made the experiment myself last month of 9 hours work per day in my own factory here—the Government demonstration factory. In the month of August our production per loom per day was about 9 lbs.

B-630. What material were you using?—Cotton and silk both. Working a 10 hour day we got a 9.2 lbs. production per loom per day. When we reduced the hours to 9, when they had to work intensively and look after the looms properly, I got a production of about 10 lbs. It may be due to climatic influences, and also because in August it was very hot here.

B-631. Has that been tried for two years? I am going to try it now.

B-632. You do not really know how it is going to work?—No.

Sir Victor Sassoon: Your experience has not been the same as that of others who tried the same experiment.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

The Commission adjourned till to-morrow morning, Friday, 25th October, 10 A.M., the evidence of these two witnesses being adjourned till Saturday, 26th October, 1929.

PUNJAB

SIXTH MEETING

LAHORE

Saturday, 26th October, 1929.

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

<p>The Rt. Hon. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P.C.</p> <p>Sir VICTOR SASSOON, BART.</p> <p>Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, KT., C.B.E.</p> <p>Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.</p> <p>Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.</p>	<p>Mr. JOHN CLIFF.</p> <p>Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.</p> <p>DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.</p> <p>Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.</p> <p>Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S., (<i>Medical Assessor</i>).</p>
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Mr. HARKISHAN LAL, Bar-at-Law.

Mr. W. TAYLOR, Director, East Indian
Carpet Company, Amritsar.

Dr. KARAM CHAND HITESHI.

Mr. M. A. GHANI, Bar.at-Law.

Pandit RAM AVATAR, Vice-President, North-
Western Railway Union.

Col. C. WALTON, D.S.O., Agent, North-
Western Railway.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C.

Miss. SIRAJ-UD-DIN.

Mrs. DAGMAR CURJEL WILSON. } (*Lady Assessors.*)

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S. } (*Joint Secretaries.*)
Mr. A. DIBDIN.

(*Assistant
Commissioners.*)

Lt.-Col. C. A. GILL, D.P.H., I.M.S., Director of Public Health, Punjab.

The Chairman: There are many things in your memorandum that demand a great deal of our attention and thought, but I think, at the same time, if my colleagues agree, the best way will be to ask our Medical Assessor, Colonel Russell, to open the examination, and then I imagine there may not be many questions to ask.

B-633. *Colonel Russell:* Is the housing condition of the industrial classes of workers in the Punjab satisfactory or not?—You cannot distinguish between the industrial classes and the classes from which they are drawn. The housing conditions, especially amongst the poorer classes of the urban population are not satisfactory.

B-634. Would you consider that a room measuring 8ft. x 12ft. would be fit for two or three people to live together?—No, certainly not.

B-635. What minimum accommodation would you suggest?—It is a question of light and ventilation; if the light and ventilation is satisfactory you can cut down the space. Without considering these factors I would not fix myself down to any actual space.

B-636. Have you got any plans approved by the Sanitary Engineer and the Director of Public Health for housing the workers who are in Government employment?—There are standard plans. As far as I know,

they have not been, in my time, approved by the Director of Public Health, but they may have been approved by my predecessors.

B-637. The argument is frequently used that the houses provided in the industrial areas are as good as, if not better than, those used by the workers in their own villages. Do you approve of this argument? Would you not rather insist that the worker should have a better house when he becomes an industrial worker because the new conditions under which he has to work are inherently different from the normal conditions?—I agree with that. In the villages, although the houses look bad, they are at any rate ventilated owing to the roofs of mud houses being permeable. But if you put that same man into a room with brick walls, back to back houses without ventilation, although the space may be greater than he was accustomed to in his village, he would not be living under such good conditions as he was in his village.

B-638. Do you associate the increase of tuberculosis with urban conditions?—It is particularly associated with urban conditions. In fact, so far as we know, most of the tuberculosis met with in the villages has been contracted in the towns.

B-639. You would be glad, I take it, if all plans for the erection of new factories and accommodation for factory workers were sent to you for scrutiny and approval before erection?—Yes. I have asked that this should, in future, be done.

B-640. *The Chairman*: Have you any power to ask for them?—I have put in a representation that they should be sent to me as it is most important.

B-641. Have you any legal power to demand it?—No.

B-642. *Colonel Russell*: But it would be advisable for other Government Departments interested in labour to send you plans such as these?—Yes, I have asked that they should do it.

B-643. The same argument that was used in connection with the houses of industrial workers is used for sanitary conveniences. Would it not be better to have an improved type or an increased number of sanitary conveniences in the areas occupied by industrial workers?—Yes; there should be a proper lay-out of the area with an adequate number not only of sanitary conveniences but of ablution places and *dhobi ghats*.

B-644. Have you a Director of Town Planning in the Punjab?—A Town Planning Engineer has been sanctioned but he has not yet been appointed.

B-645. But until he is appointed these plans and lay-outs should be referred to the Director of Public Health?—Yes, and after too.

B-646. Is it sufficient for a factory of considerable size to have only a medical officer who visits once or twice a week?—I consider that there ought to be one sanitary inspector attached to larger factories who should report to the Medical Officer of Health who could come once a week or a fortnight as may be necessary.

B-647. It is very necessary to visit as often as possible?—Yes.

B-648. Do you think that in addition to medical work the employers should be asked to initiate welfare schemes, especially where women workers are employed?—I think it would be desirable, if it is possible.

B-649. Is it not a fact that welfare schemes will conduce to the improvement of health and efficiency among workers?—It is calculated almost certainly to do so.

B-650. Would it be possible to get Indians, both men and women, to take up welfare work of the kind indicated by you?—I think that it would be difficult; but I should think, in time, we shall be able to get some.

B-651. Is it not the case in the Punjab that you have already got a Women's Health School which turns out welfare and health visitors who have done successful work?—Yes; we are turning out eight Health Visitors a year at present.

B-652. But could not that be extended to general welfare work in industrial areas?—Yes.

B-653. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you make any distinction between men and women doctors in the matter of welfare work?—For maternity and child welfare work, we want women; for purely public health work, we require men; but the women are so few that I would use them all for welfare work amongst women.

B-654. *Mr. Joshi* : Are women so very rare in the Punjab or in other parts of India?—I cannot speak about other parts of India. It is very difficult to get eight suitable women together to do a health course every year; it is not easy to get suitable candidates at the present time, but we hope to overcome this difficulty gradually. We cannot extend our activities rapidly on account of lack of suitable women.

B-655. *Col. Russell* : Is there any Maternity Benefit Act in the Punjab?—No.

B-656. Is a pregnant women worker given any allowance for a period before and after confinement?—There is no legal enactment. I do not know what individual firms do.

B-657. Do you think that this should be introduced by legislation?—I do not like to express an opinion. I have not carefully considered the matter.

B-658. Do you agree with the Director of Industries, Punjab, who says that female labour is not essential to the industries of the Punjab and the effect of such legislation would be that employers would dispense with female labour?—I should think it would probably have that effect, but of course that is only a guess.

B-659. With regard to the question of sickness insurance, apart from the question of its possibility, I should like to ask you particularly with regard to the occurrence of epidemics, which you say are frequent in the Punjab, and whether you think there will be any difficulty in introducing a scheme for sickness insurance?—The matter requires very careful consideration, because if the whole population is affected, it will be financially impossible to run any scheme. But I have not yet considered the matter. I know that we were unable to introduce a system of notification for infectious diseases because the cost was enormous on account of epidemics. We only proposed to give 8 annas per certificate.

B-660. *Mr. Joshi* : If such a scheme is confined to factories and organized industries, will there be the same difficulty?—I presume it is not intended to apply it to the whole population.

B-661. *The Chairman* : You mean to say that the actuarial basis of such a scheme will be very difficult?—Yes, because other countries do not get such wide-spread and frequent epidemics as we do here.

B-662. *Col. Russell* : Do you agree with the Director of Industries that an average unskilled worker spends about 60 per cent. of his earnings on food alone?—From my experience I can say that it is about that figure.

B-663. Even then he does not get a diet sufficient either in quantity or nutritious in quality?—Assuming that a man gets 12 annas a day, the usual wage at the moment, with 60 per cent. of that amount he can hardly get enough.

B-664. Are there any mal-nutritional diseases in the Punjab?—There is malnutrition, but the so-called deficiency diseases are not very conspicuous. We do not get beri-beri and pellagra scurvy is not very common though we had an epidemic of it recently owing to deficiency of vegetables. Rickets does occur but is not a common disease in the Punjab. We get a fair number of cases of osteomalacia.

B-665. Is that not a deficiency disease, especially among women?—It is not necessarily due to deficiency of diet, because many of these cases of osteomalacia are among women who are in comparatively affluent circumstances.

B-666. You do not get osteomalacia among women of the industrial classes?—I am not in a position to say.

B-667. Is there a sufficient milk supply in the urban areas in the Punjab?—No, it is very deficient.

B-668. Do you agree that milk is an essential part of a vegetarian's diet?—Yes. The price of milk is high, and the ordinary labourer would be very much better off dietetically if he could afford to purchase it.

B-669. You say that an ordinary industrial worker is not able to purchase milk, sugar and ghee, which are essential for a suitable diet. Therefore to that extent his diet must be deficient?—Yes; his diet is undoubtedly deficient. He cannot afford to purchase these things out of his low wages.

B-670. What about vegetable *ghee* which I understand is imported into the Punjab in large quantities?—I am in favour of importing and selling this *ghee* in the Punjab, because it forms a very valuable addition to the fat supply of the Province. The trouble is that at present it is sold at the same price as the ordinary *ghee*. The ordinary *ghee* contains vitamins which are destroyed in cooking; if the vegetable *ghee* is used for cooking purposes, it will save much the natural *ghee* with its large vitamin content for eating purposes. So that I am in favour of the use of the vegetable *ghee* provided it is not sold at the same price as the animal product.

B-671. *The Chairman*: Have you no Foods and Drugs Act to prevent that imposition?—Yes. We have the Punjab Adulteration of Foods Act which is about to be revised, we hope that a better law termed The Punjab Pure Food Bill will be passed by the Legislative Council shortly. Under this Act it will be possible to deal with this question of artificial *ghee*.

B-672. *Col. Russell*: In your note you have given details of the number of calories that an ordinary working man gets for the amount he spends on diet. You have stated that he spends five annas a day. But in the examination of the diet of a worker in one of the railway workshops we found that he spends Re. 0-5-11 for his morning meal and Re. 0-4-2 for his evening meal; that is for him alone and not for his wife and children, while his pay is Rs. 26 a month?—Then he is spending a great deal. I worked out the case of a man who was earning As. 12 a day. I asked him what diet he was taking and worked out the number of calories he was getting for his money.

B-673. There is still another case of a man who spends Re. 0-7-2 for his morning meal and Re. 0-9-2 for his evening meal?—That is high for people on small wages.

B-674. Will you then take the jail diet as a reasonable standard? Yes, that would be a reasonable standard.

B-675. That costs without vegetables As. 2?—It is not a fair comparable figure. The jail diet costs As. 2-25. It is a very good diet, but you cannot compare it with the cost of the labourers diet, because the jails buy in bulk and at the cheapest rate of the market. Many things such as vegetables are got for nothing in the jails. The labourer has to buy his food-stuff in the retail bazaar every day or for two or three days at a time.

B-676. Your conclusion is that a man earning Rs. 16-8-0 per mensem has just sufficient to live on and no more?—Yes, in Lahore.

B-677. He has not enough to support a wife and children?—No, that is the general complaint. He can manage to live on that, but he cannot have his family with him.

B-678. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Does that include rent and other expenses?—Yes. His diet costs him Rs. 9-8-0 approximately and with the balance he can pay his rent and meet other expenses. He cannot keep a home and maintain his wife and children. They have to leave their families in the village. Of course Lahore is a little more costly than the rest of the Punjab.

B-679. *Col. Russell*: It is obvious that accurate figures are essential if there is any question of a minimum wage being fixed?—Yes.

B-680. And accurate figures are difficult to get?—Yes, they are very difficult to get.

B-681. You would not be prepared to accept the figures that I have referred to as typical of the workers' diet?—They are rather high for men drawing Rs. 26 a month.

B-682. Are there any statistics of value regarding the causes of absenteeism and sickness among industrial workers?—No, unfortunately we have not any.

B-683. Do you think it would be a good plan to collect these statistics and information relating to fatigue and rest periods necessary through an organization such as an Industrial Health Research Board?—I think a time will come when we must have something like that. We have not got to that stage yet; but certainly we must begin to do something about it at an early date.

B-684. How would you staff such an organisation?—At first we may have to have men trained in England.

B-685. You would send selected Indians to be trained in England?—Yes, as we have got nothing to go on here.

B-686. It has been the experience in England that shorter hours, within limits, and properly spaced rest periods, promote the efficiency of the workers and increase the output. Are there any reasons why that should not occur in India?—I should think that it is almost bound to follow that if you make conditions better for the worker, you will get some return in the way of greater output.

B-687. In your memorandum you refer to the carrying out of sanitary duties by local bodies. Have these local bodies shown much desire to work out their own salvation sanitarily?—I am afraid they have shown none, or very little.

B-688. Then you go on to say: "In short, in the absence of a public health policy, each individual has acted in the manner which appeared to him to be right." I take it this is evidence of the lack of co-ordination that you complain of?—Yes. The position is that things have changed very much, and at the present time administrative arrangements are not co-ordinated or adapted to this change.

B-689. Would you approve of a Ministry of Health for the purposes of co-ordination?—I think the time has come when we ought to have a miniature Ministry of Health, in which all problems affecting labour and health generally should be examined and dealt with.

B-690. To assist you in working a Ministry of Health, you would require a fairly wide Public Health Act. Have you any such thing now?—We have a very good Municipal Act, only it does not function.

B-691. Would you prefer a consolidated Public Health Act?—There is no immediate necessity for it, but in course of time we should have one.

B-692. You say that the welfare of the poorer classes should be a matter for the Ministry of Health. Do you want this to be dealt with by this Ministry or another?—By this Ministry.

B-693. Have you been able to get sanction for a sufficient number of medical officers of health?—Yes, we have sufficient for our needs at present.

B-694. You say that the Government refused to accept your proposal that district medical officers of health should be appointed additional inspectors of factories. Do you not think that that was a mistake? Let me put it in this way. A medical officer of health being a trained officer in public health work would be able to detect, point out and report on health conditions in factories far better than a Factory Inspector would?—Yes. We have medical officers of health in every district; and obviously if there is to be any inspection carried out in a systematic manner it must be done by the man on the spot. Assistant Directors and myself have only time to inspect factories occasionally, usually for some special reason.

B-695. Factory inspection is mainly to increase the health, safety and comfort of the workers in that factory. A medical officer of health would be the best person to do that work?—I proposed that he should do it; and possibly it will be done: up to the present time it has not been done.

B-696. You feel that it is not the function of the Director of Public Health to be constantly acting as a detective in regard to public health matters which are being wholly or partially dealt with by other Departments?—What we want is that these matters should be automatically referred to the Director of Public Health, instead of his having to find them out himself.

B-697. In railway systems would you be willing to leave it entirely to the Railway medical and sanitary staff?—Yes, I think so.

B-698. Their organization is satisfactory?—They are getting a complete medical and public health organization. Things have greatly improved from what they were two or three years ago. Before that they had no whole-time Chief Medical Officer of their own, and no public health expert on their staff.

B-699. In your memorandum you mention an Urban Sanitary Board and a Rural Sanitary Board. If you have two Boards already, why do you want to create another Board, a Board of Public Health?—I want to amalgamate these two Boards, so as to have one Board for all purposes. I would have one Board of Public Health, and this would be done by amalgamating the two existing boards which are doing more or less similar work and whose work often overlaps. I have made this suggestion to Government and it may or may not be acted upon.

B-700. You stated to the Chairman that you had an Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act. Is it a dead letter?—I am afraid it is, it is very difficult to work, and this is the reason we are bringing in a Bill called "The Pure Food Bill."

B-701. You sent in a report on health conditions in the Khewra Salt Mines in 1922. Has any action been taken on that report?—I understand not; but I have not made an inspection there. The Salt Mines of course have nothing to do with the Punjab Government. The Salt Mines are under the Government of India, and the enquiry, a copy of the report of which has been supplied to you, was made at the instance of the Government of India. It was sent to them for action. I have no official knowledge about what action was taken but I understand that nothing has been done.

B-702. What was the anæmia, that you observed, due to?—I thought at the time it was due mostly to defective food, to malnutrition and lack of vegetables in particular.

B-703. Would you lay equal stress on the fact that the miners are working underground?—Yes, that has to be taken into account.

B-704. Is it of equal or less importance than lack of vegetables?—I should say that the fact that they are working underground, and doing very hard work, would necessitate a better diet.

B-705. I noticed when I was there that boys of 8, 9 and 10 years of age obviously suffered from the same degree of anæmia as the adults. They could not have got their anæmia from working in the mines, because they were under-age?—But they all go into the mines.

B-706. But they do not work in the mines?—They have to take the food for the miners.

B-707. But children of 7, 8 or 9 years of age do not stay in the mines for any period?—I should not be surprised if they did.

B-708. *Mrs. Wilson*: With regard to the nutritional value of artificial *ghee*, is it not the fact that in villages now it is the custom to mix artificial *ghee* with the real *ghee* and sell it as *ghee*?—Yes. If it is really mixed, it does not matter because 0.004 mg. of any vitamin is all you require; so that a little *ghee* will go a long way.

B-709. In 1923, when I was working under your predecessor, a recommendation was made by him to Khewra that they should employ a woman

health visitor. Have you had any correspondence on the subject?—No, I have never heard of it.

B-710. The health of women of the criminal tribes compares very unfavourably with that of women in hospitals; is the health of the men of the criminal tribes also bad and is there need of further care of criminal tribes?—Yes; the health of the men is also bad. The Commission will visit the criminal tribe settlement at Anritsar.

B-711. Is there sufficient provision for privacy for women in the houses in which the factory workers live?—I have not any information on that point.

B-712. Do the medical students here ever visit the health school in order to learn the value of maternity and child welfare?—Not that I am aware of.

B-713. The Association of Medical Women in India have made representations to your Department that maternity and child welfare should be more stressed in the education of medical students in the Medical College here. Have you taken any steps in that direction?—They have not made any representation to me.

B-714. Would you advocate that?—Yes. I think it is most important.

B-715. For that purpose is not it necessary that the examining body should put questions on those subjects?—I think the teaching of hygiene is of very great importance, and, like many other things, requires looking into and keeping up-to-date.

B-716. You have stated that to help the women from a health point of view, especially in factories in the Punjab, a health visitor is very desirable?—Yes, it would be a very excellent thing. At the Mandi hydro-electric works we have a welfare worker who is a qualified midwife and looks after the health of the women.

B-717. It is the opinion among certain Indians here that there would be more Indian women available for training as health visitors. I gather it is proposed to set up a new health school?—It is sanctioned, but owing to the recent floods it will probably be postponed for another year. The plans and estimates are ready and the scheme should have been included in the next budget.

B-718. In view of the temptations that might be put on a health visitor employed in a factory by the private staff, would you advocate the provincialization of the health visiting service?—I do not know whether provincialization is going to get over that difficulty, because it will still remain; it is a very great difficulty. Whether an individual is a Government servant or not will not affect the temptations put in her way.

B-719. If they do not get women on the local committees there is not much chance of good work being done?—I have represented the necessity of amending the Punjab Municipal Act to enable women members to serve on Municipal Committees.

B-720. *Mr. Joshi*: You state in your memorandum that the contractor often runs the *bania's* shop in the labour camp?—Yes.

B-721. Does it often happen in that case that the worker receives his wages not in cash but in the form of goods?—I think that is so, but I am not certain. I think it is very probable that is so, and it is very probable that he does not get his due.

B-722. He does not get all his wages in cash; he gets some in the form of goods?—Yes.

B-723. *Dr. Hiteshi*: You have told us that the great cause of anæmia among labourers and their children is malnutrition. Is it largely due also to the abuse of quinine?—I have not seen it in the course of 26 years.

B-724. Medical practitioners sometimes give a dose of as much as 60 grains of quinine at one time; do you approve of that?—That is rather a stiff dose; I have never known of it being given.

B-725. Your report shows that infantile mortality is very high; do you think vaccination is one of the causes?—No; if it had not been for vaccination the infantile mortality would have been much higher.

B-726. *Diwan Chaman Lal*: Should I be correct in saying that a manual worker requires at least two full meals a day to keep himself fit for the work on which he is engaged, and would you include in a meal meat, milk, wheat and vegetable?—I should think there are very few manual workers in India who get a diet of that kind. A good many do not take meat and get most of their protein from one of the staple food grains; they do not take it in the form of meat.

B-727. Is that because they cannot afford it?—Yes, sometimes, of course. Many have never taken meat.

B-728. But the Punjab is more or less a meat-eating province; meat is eaten by every Mahomedan and by many Hindus?—Yes, but a great many of the labouring classes do not eat meat at all.

B-729. If a man gets a meal of meat, bread, milk and vegetable, would that be a good meal for him?—It would not be bad, but it is entirely different from the diet to which these people have always been accustomed, and I do not know whether they would like it if they were put on to it.

B-730. They do eat bread and vegetables and drink milk; the only difference is that they do not eat meat, you say?—They are getting plenty of protein, but they are taking it in a vegetable form.

B-731. Supposing a worker could afford to get a good meal like that, would it be good for him?—If they could get milk or *ghee* in addition to the diet they are taking, they would not be doing at all badly; but the average diet of the low paid labourer is deficient in fats and carbohydrates. I think the diet is not unsuited to the country, but at present it is on the short side for many of the poorer classes.

B-732. Supposing on the average a worker were given 1 seer of milk a day, and he ate his *dal* and his *roti*, and a sufficient amount of *ghee* or butter, as the case may be, would not that cost much more than 8 annas a day, because 1 seer of milk alone would cost him 5 annas?—It would be a very difficult thing to supply the milk; the shortage of milk is very great. It would be very difficult and very costly to do it.

B-733. *Sir Alexander Murray*: I take it that the incidence of tubercular diseases to which you refer is the same in all large towns and cities whether industrial or not?—Yes; I have no means of separating industrial and non-industrial urban conditions; generally speaking, it is high in the towns, but it is not particularly associated with industrialism.

B-734. In reply to Colonel Russell you referred to epidemics in connection with the possibility of sickness insurance. For instance, within the last year or two there have been epidemics of cholera which have caused the death of over 100,000 people. Is this not so?—No; we had an epidemic of cholera which caused 12,000 deaths, but we had an epidemic of plague in 1924 which caused 250,000 deaths. In 1928 cholera caused about 7,000 deaths.

B-735. Malaria, of course, is very prevalent?—We get big epidemics of malaria. We are having a big epidemic now, but it is not in this part of the Province.

B-736. You sum it up by saying: "India is the great breeding ground of disease and the source of the world-wide spread of infection"?—It is to a large extent, especially in connection with cholera and plague.

B-737. That being so, would you agree that it would be very difficult to introduce any system of sickness insurance?—It would be costly and difficult on account of these epidemics.

B-738. *Mr. Ghani*: Have you appointed, particularly for the industrial areas, any sanitary inspectors or health visitors? Can you point out to me some industrial areas?—There are industrial areas within the municipal limits, but they are under the municipality; they have a municipal staff to deal with them.

B-739. As Director of Public Health, are you aware that the sanitary inspectors and health visitors generally visit only the houses and places where people live?—I have no information about that, but I hope that they inspect both.

B-740. I suppose you will agree that there are some very dirty slums in the big cities of the Punjab?—Yes.

B-741. What suggestions have you to make to put an end to these slums?—One suggestion that I have put up is that an executive officer should be placed in charge of every large municipal town, so that the Municipal Committee under whose charge public health comes will function more efficiently. At the present moment they are doing little or nothing; it is also necessary to provincialize the service of municipal medical officers of health. Until these things are done, I am afraid progress will be slow.

B-742. *The Chairman*: We have heard that in the main the people of this Province are rather above the general in India in the matter of physique?—Yes, I think that is admitted.

B-743. Therefore, when you speak to us of the deficiency of their diet in respect of milk and *ghee*, you of course want them to be still better than any other part of India?—I have shown in my memorandum on diet of which I will have a copy sent to you that the conditions of which I am speaking do not refer to the whole population. The rural population are very much better off than the urban; they have their own cows and food, fresh air and natural sanitation; so that the persons to which I have been referring are rather the poorer classes living in urban areas which embrace most of the industrial workers, I am not speaking of the whole Province.

B-744. That is to say, it is the same problem as we have in the crowded cities in England: there is a deficiency of milk and butter and things that are of the highest food value?—Yes.

B-745. And the problem is that those things are at present too expensive.

B-746. *Mr. Cliff*: Does that mean that it is a question of poverty.

B-747. *The Chairman*: That is what I am leading up to, it is a question of lack of means and also lack of supply; the supply is limited and very expensive?—Yes, it is those two things put together.

B-748. Do you consider that in the urban areas there is a deterioration of physique due to the causes you have mentioned?—I have not any statistical data to go on, but I should say that in my opinion the physique of the worker deteriorates as a result of prolonged residence in towns.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. R. J. S. DODD, Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Punjab.

B-749. *The Chairman*—You are Registrar of Co-operative Societies for this Province?—Yes.

B-750. Your work, in the main, is with Co-operative Societies in the villages?—That is where most of the societies are.

B-751. We are specially interested in the possibilities of co-operative societies in the industrial areas. Have you any experience with regard to them?—With one or two exceptions we have no co-operative societies among employees of a definite factory; but I cannot say whether any of the labourers employed in a factory in a town are members of a society elsewhere—in their home village for instance.

B-752. In your memorandum you speak of two co-operative printing presses?—The members of the society run the press for themselves.

B-753. That is different from a co-operative society in the general sense in which the phrase is used. The village co-operative societies are in the main credit societies?—Most of them.

B-754. A few are supply societies?—Very few.

B-755. With regard to your co-operative societies in the villages, have they made considerable progress in the last ten years?—Yes, both in number and wealth.

B-756. Then can you explain why, when people come to work in industrial areas, they should not accept and welcome the same co-operative system in the period of their urban life?—A co-operative society is really a business, and for it you need some stability among the shareholders; and if the people are working in a factory for a few weeks or months and then go away again, and there is no guarantee that they are going to return to the same factory, there is no chance whatever of being able to run a successful business amongst them. Another thing is that most labourers are either indebted or would like to be, and it is easier generally to be indebted to the local shop keeper than it is to be indebted to a properly run credit society; and the principle of a supply society is that all dealings are for cash. In England several co-operative societies have been ruined because they began to deal on credit. The same thing happens out here, but much more so.

B-757. Would you agree, then, that if the labour in the factories was regularized, and the same persons came back to the same work, although they might have their intervals in their village, that would give a better basis?—It would give a start. The mills at Dhariwal have a very successful society which does both supply and credit.

B-758. Is the reason of that because their labour is more regular?—They live there all the year round, and the management of the mills takes a very large part in the management of the society.

B-759. May I take it that one necessary factor for a co-operative society within a factory would be that there should be some personal help provided by the management?—Not necessarily. The essential is that there should be somebody to manage the society properly. It need not be the management. If the same labour were constantly employed there would be no reason why an intelligent labourer should not run it.

B-760. You have only this one instance to which to direct our attention of successful industrial co-operation in a factory in the Punjab?—Yes.

B-761. You can point to nothing of the kind in Lahore?—No. The Railway workshops at Mogulpura have a large society. The North-western Credit Society is open to the clerical staff also.

B-762. Does that come under your supervision?—It does ultimately.

B-763. Is that successful?—Very successful.

B-764. Do you see any reason why that should not be extended to larger classes of workers?—There is no reason except the character of the workers with whom one would have to deal.

B-765. Do you find the workers in the towns, as well as in the villages, slowly beginning to learn that they can become free men if they have the wisdom?—No.

B-766. The custom is so ingrained?—Our field staff know the conditions of the workers in the factories, and it is taken for granted in some cases that it would be useless and dangerous to try to start a society among them in their present condition.

B-767. You tell us that in the villages, where the people know one another and live with one another, you do get the basis on which real co-operative societies can be run?—Very much so.

B-768. That, I take it, is because they would know normally when a member was abusing his right, and would know when their own credit was being harmed by the misconduct of any of their fellows?—That is what we hope, and in many cases we get that. We do not get it always.

B-769. *Mr. Niff*: It is a question of ability and integrity. Is that how you sum it up?—Yes.

B-770. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Are you aware that the co-operative credit society run for the employees of the North-Western Railway is going on very satisfactorily?—Yes.

B-771. Also the credit co-operative society run by the Telegraph employees?—Yes.

B-772. Wherever the workers organize themselves they can run these societies successfully?—There is no inherent reason why they should not.

B-773. Provided assistance is given by the authorities?—There is no essential need of assistance from any authorities at all, so long as the people who associate themselves into a society are of the right sort.

B-774. *Mr. Olow*: We have been told by the Railway administration that under statute they recover debts from the pay bills up to half of a man's salary. It has been suggested to us that this power of recovery through the pay bill should be restricted or abolished. What would be the effect on general indebtedness of that?—I do not think I can answer that. I think it would very much retard the recovery of debts.

B-775. Would it be likely to diminish indebtedness?—Not a bit.

B-776. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: We have been told that the Railways cannot see their way to extend the co-operative society to the illiterate employees. In the rural districts I take it there must be a great deal of illiteracy?—The very small minority is literate.

B-777. The illiteracy of the rural workers does not prevent the co-operative society being successful?—No.

B-778. So that the point of illiteracy ought not to weigh with the Railway people?—I would not say generally yes or no. The villager is a different sort of man from the factory worker.

B-779. In other words the railway illiterate staff is more fluid, whereas the villager remains in the village?—Yes.

B-780. *Mr. Gregory*: Is it not a fact that the North-Western Railway administration assists in carrying out the duties of the co-operative society?—I cannot say. I have not seen the society myself.

B-781. Is it not a fact that the Secretary is an officer of the Railway?—They are all employees of the Railway.

B-782. Would it be possible to run the society without the assistance of the administration?—It may not be, of course; in the same way as a factory society.

B-783. *Mr. Ghani*: Co-operative societies exist among the agricultural classes in rural areas. The success of these societies is mainly due to the help given by your Department, and to the propaganda which has been carried on by your Department. Is not that so?—I think so, yes.

B-784. Can you not carry on the same propaganda among the industrial workers so as to make industrial co-operative societies a success?—It depends entirely on the character of the people who are going to be the members

B-785. Do you know that most of the industrial workers of the Punjab are drawn from the agricultural classes?—Yes, but an agriculturist employed in a factory is a very different person from an agriculturist working in his own village.

B-786. In what respect is he different?—Because he is not living at home.

B-787. From the co-operative point of view, what difference is there between an industrial worker and an agricultural worker when both belong to the same class?—The circumstances.

B-788. *Mrs. Wilson*. In view of the success of the one woman whom you have had attached to your Department, and in view of the fact that the women, for instance, in the cotton ginning, are drawn from villages, would it not be well for your Department to have at least an additional woman worker to work in the villages?—Already we have six sub-inspectresses, as well as an inspectress. They have been working for a few months each, and we have one in each of the central districts. In the middle of this last summer Government sanctioned the entertainment of a second inspectress, but we have not been able to entertain her at the moment because of the floods. I hope to get her next year.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. W. H. ABEL, Inspector of Factories, Punjab, and Dr. R. C. RAWLLEY, Director of Industries, Punjab.

B-789. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: You say in one part of your memorandum that there is more unemployment among unskilled workers than skilled workers, while at the same time in another part of the memorandum you say that generally there is no enough unskilled labour available when required. Can you tell us how you would correlate these two rather what might appear to be opposing points of view?—(Mr. Abel) The rural labourer does not care very much whether he works or not for any length of time; he will work for a week or two and then possibly rest for a few days. There always appears to be a surplus, or it appears to be very easy to get unskilled labourers.

B-790. May I take it that your unskilled labourer is not unemployed at the moment when he is called upon by the industrial organization; he is attending to his rural pursuit and leaves it and goes over to the industrial organization when there is a demand?—Yes; when he has no other land work to do, or when there happens to be work to be done in a factory. He can afford to leave the land for a few days or a week, almost at any time; he always has that to fall back upon when there is no work in the factory or when he has to do work on the land.

B-791. He is not really unemployed; he is merely changing his employment?—It would be nearer that, although he would have very little to do on the land.

B-792. There is no difficulty, you say, in getting unskilled labour when you want it?—I have never come across any instance where it was difficult to get unskilled labour.

B-793. So there is no necessity for an employment agency to be established?—For the unskilled labourer I should think not.

B-794. I take it there is difficulty in finding skilled labourers?—There is a great difficulty.

B-795. At the same time we are told that there is a superfluous pool of skilled labourers due to a reduction in the staff of the railways?—That is true. The railway workshops have reduced their labourers during the last two or three years; but the skilled worker in factories in the Punjab is mostly imported chiefly because he is expected to be a whole-time worker. The Punjabi has some interest in land; and whether he is getting more wages or not in a factory, when there is some work to be done on his land, he goes on to do it.

B-796. Would that apply to the skilled worker who has been axed from the railway workshops?—The skilled labourer who has been dispensed with from the railway workshops is generally an engineer or a mechanic.

B-797. The point really is that you have not enough engineering enterprises here to absorb the skilled workers?—That is difficult to say.

B-798. Would you say that there is a demand, which is satisfied by importing skilled labour from outside and which, if you had an employment agency could be met by the men who have left the workshops?—The man who has left the workshop is generally an imported man in the first place, who has settled down in the Punjab and probably has very little interest in land; whereas almost all other workers in the Punjab have an interest in land.

B-799. I appreciate that. What I am trying to get at is whether employment agencies would be of any use in securing jobs for the skilled workers?—I should say that there is a room for an employment agency to some extent for disposing of skilled workers, but not to a very great extent.

B-800. Messrs. Harkishan Lal and Sons in their evidence say that there are one or two unemployment agencies in the Punjab. Do you know anything about them?—No.

B-801. I find that you advocate extension of the Factories Act to places where more than ten workers are employed and use power. Will it not be

practicable to extend the Act even to places where you have a large body of labourers working although no power is made use of?—To avoid the Factories Act, they will work in smaller numbers.

B-802. Your objection to bringing them under the Act is that they would get round it?—Yes.

B-803. I have always understood that the difficulties in extending the Factories Act to smaller factories, which employ less than 20 men, were due to administrative difficulties and cost?—That is true to a very great extent.

B-804. But you are suggesting an extension?—I think it would be advisable.

B-805. Can you give us some constructive advice as to how these administrative difficulties could be got over? Would the cost not be too excessive?—It is much more difficult to administer the Factory Law to smaller factories such as would come within the purview of the Act than it is to the bigger ones, so that your administrative difficulties would be much greater and the cost would be considerably heavier. For instance, it is very much more difficult to apply the Factories Act to small bazaar workshops than a big mill.

B-806. Do you still maintain that the Factories Act should be extended?—It certainly should; it will take very much more staff than we have at present to do it.

B-807. Can you efficiently control these small mills or workshops?—Not very efficiently.

B-808. Would you, therefore, say that the success would be commensurate with the extra cost?—We would get some success; it is going in the right direction, I think.

B-809. You think that the extra cost would be justifiable?—Yes, I do.

B-810. What limit would you put to the number?—Up to 10; we are gradually doing that; we have done it in the case of cotton ginning and ice factories.

B-811. Would the cost of the department increase by double or treble?—I do not think it will be double; it would probably be 30 to 40 per cent. more.

B-812. Your recommendation is to lower the figure from 20 to 10?—I think that would be a good thing.

B-813. Would you include those factories which do not use power, or would you let them remain as they are?—If you apply it where there is no power, you would increase the cost a good deal more. I fear that the Act would be defeated even in that way. For instance, take wool picking industries where power is not used. If you apply any regulation to that particular yard or area, the occupier to overcome the difficulties of the Factory Law will split the workers into groups of 5 or 6 persons.

B-814. But would not the workers be worse off by working in smaller groups?—It would not make very much difference to them; it certainly would not help them.

B-815. You do not therefore advocate bringing in no-power concerns under the Act?—No. It will no doubt be an ideal state of affairs but it will be difficult to administer; I would not advocate it at this moment.

B-816. You say, Dr Rawley, in your memorandum: "It will be noticed that wages of ordinary skilled labourers rose gradually between the quinquenniums ending 1917 and 1922 as compared with the quinquennium ending 1912 but a fall was registered at the wages census for the quinquennium ending 1927." You then go on to say: "The fall in the wages of other industrial labourers is undoubtedly due to the fall in the cost of living since the last wages census." I think you refer to the census of 1927?—(Dr. Rawley) Yes, that is true.

B-817. I cannot reconcile this statement of yours that there has been a fall in the cost of living with the statement made by the Punjab Government in

their memorandum that the prices of foodstuffs have gone up since the last wages census. You also give us the percentage of increase or decrease in the wages of certain classes of labourers in Lahore, Amritsar and Multan in 1927 as compared with 1922. Let us take cotton weavers. Are they handloom weavers or do they use power?—Most of them are handloom weavers. There is not much power loom industry.

B-818. Are all those brass, copper and metal workers, and so on, working in their homes and not in factories?—Yes.

B-819. Am I right in drawing the conclusion that the wages of workers in factories have been rising whereas the wages of those who are not working in factories have remained stationary, and have, if anything, gone down?—The figures given in my memorandum are taken from the Director of Land Records.

B-820. In your memorandum you say that the efficiency of the Indian worker has increased very steadily during recent years. Do you apply that to all over India, skilled as well as unskilled labour?—I am mainly talking of the efficiency of skilled factory labour.

B-821. In your memorandum you say that “it is almost impossible in the absence of any recorded observations to give an estimate of the comparative efficiency of Indian and foreign workers”. Surely, the question of efficiency is a quantitative one, and the other points you raise are merely reasons why the efficiency in one country might not be up to that of another?—Strictly speaking it is not merely quantitative, but it is also qualitative. When you are talking of the efficiency of two individuals, you have to take the circumstances and conditions under which they both work. For instance, take the power loom weaving industry. You can say that the efficiency of the Indian worker as compared with that of a Lancashire worker is not so very low as compared with other industries.

B-822. You probably refer to 2½ Indian weavers being equal to one Lancashire weaver, against 4 to 1 in other trades?—It all depends on the machinery too.

B-823. I am taking the same machinery. Dealing with working hours and its relation to output, and taking the case of the spinning industry, do you consider that a reduction in the number of hours will affect the output?—That is what I maintain, that during the last two hours of the day the weaver cannot attend to the breakages to the same extent as he can in the earlier hours.

B-824. Have you any evidence, or is that your opinion?—I have evidence.

B-825. Have you figures to show the output for a nine hour day and the output for a ten hour day?—In an 11 hour day the output per spindle per day on 20's counts was six ounces. For a ten hour day the output was exactly the same.

B-826. May that not be due to the inefficiency of the worker in the first case?—The men with whom I tried this experiment had been trained for the last thirty years.

B-827. To-day in Bombay we are getting over six ounces of 20's per spindle per day, working two sides with one man?—That is due to the fact that during the last four years you have bought better machinery.

B-828. No, we have not. It is chiefly due to careful mixings. But let us assume better machinery. Supposing I stop one hour, do you say I am going to get the same production?—In weaving you will.

B-829. You say in your memorandum that it is necessary that statistical data should be collected regarding the various matters affecting labour. What would be the approximate cost of an organization for that purpose?—So far as the Punjab is concerned, it would cost anything between Rs. 1,500 and 2,000 a month extra.

B-830. *Mr. Clow*: Do the cotton ginning factories enjoy any exemption in respect of hours?—(Mr. Abel) Not at present. Exemptions have been granted

during abnormally good seasons. The last exemption was given about two years ago. Last year no exemption was given.

B-831. Will you explain a little fuller the working of the pooling system in these factories?—The cotton crop of the Punjab during the last three or four years has been very much below the normal. A factory situated in an area like Lyallpur, where there are 14 or 15 factories crowded together, has not sufficient work to keep it running for six days a week at full pace. As a result, the owners of all the factories meet together and decide that they will run only such a number of factories as they can keep going throughout the week, and close the rest. The profits or losses of the various factories working are pooled and distributed amongst the factory owners of the whole area.

B-832. What are the average hours of work in these factories in actual practice?—Seventy per week possibly. That does not refer to all of them. Cotton ginning factories are notorious offenders against the rule of hours of work. 60 is the limit; but I should think that one might put the average for all ginning factories somewhere between 66 and 70 hours.

B-833. Does not this pooling system lead to the closing of some factories and throwing their workers out of employment, and sweating the remaining workers who work in the factories which are kept open?—That is true.

B-834. In your memorandum dealing with the wages of skilled and unskilled workers in the cotton ginning factories for the past ten years, you say that the wages have steadily risen during this period. That seems to be true in the case of skilled workers, but in the case of unskilled workers in factories there is no perceptible rise. Their wages, if anything, have remained stationary or have fallen?—Yes.

B-835. What is that due to?—It is due to the fact that the cotton crop in the Punjab has been below normal since 1922 or 1923; as a result there are more workers to undertake the work.

B-836. The owners in this industry are in a very much stronger position than the workers?—Yes, very much.

B-837. Were you able to pay any surprise visits to these factories?—Yes. It means visiting them very early in the morning and late in the evening, or adopting some method by which you can arrive at the factory without the owners knowing of your arrival.

B-838. Are your movements well heralded?—No. As far as I know, no one knows where I am going.

B-839. Are the visits of the *ex-officio* inspectors, the district administrative officers, effective?—No.

B-840. Would it not be better for them to pay surprise inspections?—I do not think so. The average district official would be very unlikely to undertake a surprise inspection at 5 or 6 o'clock, the same as a full-time inspector does.

B-841. Has not the district official on the spot an advantage in this matter over the factory inspector who is far away?—Experience has shown that district officials either do not take interest in inspections, or are never able to bring home to the factory owners the necessity for a due observance of the rules. For instance, I have never had a prosecution which has been successfully launched by a district official. Another thing is that it is necessary for an inspector to have some experience in inspecting, and know what to look for and when to look for it.

B-842. As regards prosecution, what is the normal procedure? Your sanction is required for a prosecution, I take it?—Yes.

B-843. Is there any other officer's sanction required, or can you launch a prosecution yourself?—I can launch it myself.

B-844. Without reference to any other authority?—Yes.

B-845. You have referred to competition with Indian States in the Punjab, and to the fact that in some cases factories remove across the border in order to avoid regulation in British India?—Yes.

B-846. What are the regulations which they so strongly desire to evade?—Hours of work and child labour.

B-847. Not the Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories Act?—I do not think that would worry them very much, although I do not administer that Act.

B-848. Is there any regulation in any of the Indian States with regard to hours of work or child labour?—I believe in one or two of the States they have a Factory Act.—I should think, from the fact that factory owners in British India always complain that the competition they get from factories in Indian States is so very great, that the regulations are not enforced at all.

B-849. *The Chairman*: What is the extent of the movement out of British India, to which you have referred?—I only know of two factories that have deliberately moved into British India, but there are many cases where factories which might have been built in British India have not been built here.

B-850. *Mr. Clow*: Dr. Rawley, you were Chairman of the Committee which met to consider the question of sickness insurance?—Yes.

B-851. Your Committee came to the very definite conclusion that for any scheme of sickness insurance to be a success there should be central legislation. Can you give us the reasons that led the Committee to that conclusion?—(Dr. Rawley) We were of the opinion that one Province should not be at a disadvantage as compared with other Provinces from the financial point of view.

B-852. Do you regard sickness insurance necessarily as a disadvantage?—Not exactly. If the cost of administration is very high, one Province has to pay out much more money than another Province.

B-853. As far as industrialists are concerned, surely it would bring benefits in its train?—I agree.

B-854. And would it not be more likely to be successful if one started experimentally in a limited area?—We, as a Committee, came to the conclusion that there should be central legislation, and that the scheme should be started at the same time all over India.

B-855. *The Chairman*: Centrally controlled but locally administered?—Yes.

B-856. *Mr. Clow*: Have you considered the question of the possibility of enforcing by legislation weekly payments in certain industries or branches of industry?—We have not yet considered the question of weekly payments at all.

B-857. Do you think weekly payments would be popular with the workers?—Yes, very popular.

B-858. Would they be beneficial?—I should imagine they would be. Under the present circumstances the worker has got to borrow money from the *bania*, and buy his food for the whole of the month on credit, and pay very high interest.

B-859. It has been suggested that the *bania* would merely charge interest weekly, and that the compound interest would accordingly be greater?—I think the rates would probably be lower. I am giving this view from my own experience of my servants and people I have engaged.

B-860. *Mr. Joshi*: Do the workers, who go back to their villages every year for some months, return to the same industry?—(Mr. Abel) They mostly do.

B-861. Therefore, as regards skill, there is not much loss caused by the workers going back to their villages?—No.

B-862. What is called the "migratory character" does not cause any loss to industry?—No.

B-863. Does it do any good to the health of the worker that he should go back to his village and return after some months?—I should think it does. The work of cotton ginning is very dusty, and I should imagine that the worker would gain by getting out on to the land for some months during the year.

B-864. You mention the strike in Dhariwal mills. Some time after the strike, were the conditions of the workers improved to some extent?—I did not notice that they were. The unrest at Dhariwal was nothing to do with factory regulations. Therefore I took no official interest in it.

B-865. You make some remarks about the relations between staff and rank and file, and you say "In bigger industrial establishments particularly those run by responsible companies the relations between the staff and the workers are quite satisfactory", and so on. What leads you to think that the relations are more favourable in India than they are in other countries. Is it the lack of strikes?—That has something to do with it. We have been very free from strikes in the Punjab.

B-866. Is that due to the fact that the workers are too poor to rebel?—The worker is mostly far too poor to engage counsel to settle his disputes, but from what I see in well-conducted factories the labourers are fairly well looked after, and they appear to be contented.

B-867. You generally agree that it is the highly paid man who goes on strike rather than the badly paid man?—The average paid worker—the artisan—is the man who goes on strike.

B-868. Do you insist upon the drinking water for operatives being cool in the hot weather?—Drinking water either comes from municipal taps, and it must be fairly cool since it comes from underground, or it is kept in *chattis* which keep the water cool.

B-869. I should like you to make an experiment to see whether it is cool or not?—I will. I have found nothing wrong with the water. I have taken samples of it and had it analysed.

B-870. Would there be any objection if a clause is inserted in the Factories Act making it obligatory upon factory owners to keep first-aid appliances?—There is such a rule in the Punjab.

B-871. When you give exemptions from mid-day rest, do you insist that some compensation should be given to the workers for the exemption?—It depends on the exemption that is given. We lay down conditions for exemption. Actually exemption is very seldom given now, and only where there is an exceptional press of work for a certain period, in which case overtime pay automatically comes in; compensatory rest periods are also put down as a condition.

B-872. Do you give any exemption from the weekly rest provision?—On occasions. I think the last one was to the railway printing works to enable them to print the memoranda for this Commission.

B-873. What conditions did you lay down?—That was done by the local Government without being referred to me at all.

B-874. And they gave no compensation to the workers for depriving them of the right given under the Act?—They pay them $1\frac{1}{2}$ full pay or more for all hours over 60.

B-875. But they did not give any holiday after the pressure was over?—No, as far as I know there was no compulsion in that way.

B-876. Do you think it is desirable that, when you give exemptions from rest time, some provision should be made for giving rest days when the pressure of work is over?—I do. Indeed, I think exemption should not be given. I mostly oppose it if I have an opportunity.

B-877. You state in your memorandum with regard to industrial efficiency that amongst the labouring classes no improvement has been noticed. You have also stated that when the hours of labour were reduced from 12 to 10 there was no decrease in production?—I said there was very little.

B-878. Then why do you say there has been no increase in efficiency?—By reducing hours from 11 to 10 the fatigue element would be eliminated which would to some extent make a difference. When the Act was amended in 1922 millowners and factory owners complained bitterly that they would lose an hour; but they gradually increased the efficiency of their staff and now they

very much; but that is not a very great improvement in
 the worker.

Mr. Murray: I understand you to say that whether the
 day in the day, the worker generally works 8½ hours?—
 that the worker works when he is made to work to a
 put him on to longer hours of work he does not work.

That is true. I therefore want to know whether his
 case if the hours are reduced, while if the hours are
 low efficiency?—That is true, but there is a limit.

provided in factories for women workers?—I should say
 workers are sitting the whole time, because they are
 in ginning factories. There are a few operations in
 an open stand and there are no seats provided; but those
 workers and I do not think you would find them over-
 when they want to.

rule in the Factories Act with regard to the weights.
 —No.

is it desirable?—I have never seen a woman having
 a factory. They are generally engaged on very light
 the gins with raw cotton.

ever machinery is used have you any regulations?—No.
 such work should be brought under regulations?—
 very useful.

Government has taken an adverse view with regard
 the Bill; in view of the fact that an Act has been
 you think there will be a change of view in your
 I cannot say; it all depends on the view taken by the

in favour of the compulsory insurance of workers against

expressed yourself as being in favour of increasing the

Have you considered whether the period for which
 provided in the Workmen's Compensation Act should be
 to 84 weeks?—Yes, I think so.

Registrar of Trade Unions?—Yes.

Government was being examined mention was made of some
 Government directing that the associations of Government
 registered under the Act; is that so?—That is true.

Registrar of Trade Unions an executive or a judicial officer?
 an officer.

Government issue orders to a judicial officer with
 the provision of the Act?—That is for the Government of India

Mr. Abel, in your memorandum you say that you
 think in 1928, and you say you cover 725 factories in
 the Government memorandum there is the statement
 to say that inspectors cannot turn up more than once
 as I enquire what system you have for allocating
 factories under your jurisdiction?—(Mr. Abel) I have
 inspectors distributed throughout the Province, each at a
 full time inspector in Lahore, taking the whole of
 programmes to each one of these men as to the factories
 visit throughout the month. When they visit the
 the factory and have any defects to report, they report to
 me that if I find it necessary. Apart from that, I myself
 never I can, that is, 15 to 20 days a month, making
 15, apart from seeing that some of the inspections

which have already been made by my men in the districts have been properly carried out.

B-894. Are the assistants you refer to inspecting on the technical side, or on the more general welfare side?—No, only on the general side. They are not technical men, and they are only occupied under certain Sections of the Act.

B-895. Does that mean that you are obliged to retrace their steps, as it were, to catch up on the technical side?—It does. This system disappears from the 1st April of next year, when Government have agreed to appoint another fully qualified inspector, and the powers of these men will be taken away.

B-896. It seems that the one assistant factory inspector is going to replace the six part-time men?—Yes.

B-897. You do not anticipate from that an increase in inspection, do you?—No, what I anticipate is more effective inspections. Inspections may possibly decrease; in fact, I think they must; but I think they will be much more effective.

B-898. How many inspectors, in your opinion, are necessary to make effective inspection of the places that you have now got under the Act?—To inspect them effectively we might need anything up to six or seven inspectors. The factory inspection is such that you can make an enormous amount of it if you like. For instance, with regard to welfare work, we have very little time indeed to look to it although it is really one of the duties of a Factory Inspector that he should attend to it.

B-899. When you said that if the Factories Act were extended to include some of the unregulated places there might be an increase of about 30 per cent. in the cost, were you basing your figure on the present measure of inspection?—Yes.

B-900. In view of the large number of women employees in ginning factories do you think there would be any improvement in the inspection if women factory inspectors were employed?—It is very difficult to tell. Certainly a lady inspector would be useful, but, as far as women workers are concerned, our inspections really apply to their hours of work to a very great extent; their conditions of living do not seriously concern the inspector at the moment because they live in districts outside the factory area over which we have no control.

B-901. You do not suggest that regulating the hours of work is the only concern of the inspector?—I do not at all; in fact we do other things. We have tried to prohibit small children being brought in, and to make the conditions of women workers very much better.

B-902. Do you see any reason why your experience here in India as to the uses to which women factory inspectors can be put should differ from that of Europe?—It would be rather difficult, to my mind, for a lady inspector to tour the country and go into factory areas, as a man does.

B-903. I was not thinking so much of the difficulties of the woman inspector, which I think could be got over. I was thinking of the administration of the Act in the interests of the women and children?—I think it would be very useful indeed, but the point is whether the number of women workers would warrant the expenditure.

B-904. Do you get complaints from women factory workers?—Very seldom.

B-905. Does that imply anything to you?—First of all the woman worker is very shy.

B-906. Shy of a man?—Yes. The chief things we are concerned with as to women workers are hours and conditions of work. They have no heavy weights to lift; they have very little manual or heavy work at all to do. They sit the whole day in ginning factories merely putting cotton through gins.

B-907. Do you think a man factory inspector is very likely to get a complaint from a woman factory worker as to, for instance, the sanitary

arrangements supplied for women workers?—No, I do not think so; but the factory inspector does look to this too; he sees that proper sanitary arrangements are made for women workers.

B-908. But still there may be many abuses of which you do not know, just as there were in England?—Yes, it is possible.

B-909. You say that about one-third of the children employed are in the ginning factories. Do your Certifying Surgeons get round to see those children in time to prevent illegal employment?—They should do. The method is that the Certifying Surgeon can delegate his powers as a Certifying Surgeon to an Assistant Surgeon, which he generally does. The Assistant Surgeon will then issue certificates to children as they come to him. The Certifying Surgeon should go round the Province once every three months.

B-910. Does he in fact do so?—I doubt it; I think he probably goes round once a year.

B-911. The ginning factories are only seasonal; does he tour when they are kept open?—Yes.

B-912. The Director of Industries in his memorandum speaks of the long hours of work of the children in ginning factories. In practice, is there any distinction between the hours the women work and the hours the children work?—Yes, there is; if it is possible for the employer to do so, the scheme is to start the children working early in the morning; and if they are not detected by the factory inspector by mid-day they probably go on for the rest of the day.

B-913. Have you any reasons to think that there are children in ginning factories who work for 70 hours?—I am afraid I have.

B-914. On the question of the admission of underage children into the factories, you appear to have made some effort to solve the difficulty, but have had to abandon it?—Yes.

B-915. I take it that because the ginning factories are so small and scattered, no attempts have been made to start creches?—I have tried that in one or two areas, but they are not used to any great extent.

B-916. Have you any solution for this particular problem, because the atmosphere of the ginning factories is hardly conducive to the health of the children?—I have not found a solution. I have tried many ways. For instance, I have had dust-proof masks made for these people to wear, but they will not wear them. We thought of the possibility of having gins covered and an exhaust pipe to take out all the dust, but the scheme had to be abandoned as it would have been very expensive.

B-917. Have you considered the question of erecting a shade within the compound of the factory where women work?—I doubt whether they would make use of it. The woman works inside a big room in the ginning factory and my experience is that she will not leave her child anywhere; she will take the child with her.

B-918. Would it be an unfair assumption that in actual practice the system of factory inspection breaks down as regards seasonal factories?—It does not break down entirely. We try to do a lot of good but our work is seriously handicapped by the fact that if we file cases against an employer for overworking his workers it is difficult to get a conviction against him and even more difficult to secure any adequate fine or punishment.

B-919. If a child is turned down not for being underage but for reasons of health, is any attempt made to do any follow-up work and send the child to a health centre or hospital?—Not that I am aware of; not in my Department.

B-920. The child is simply told it is unfit for work?—Yes.

B-921. Do you think it would be a good thing to link up the work of the Certifying Surgeon with that of public health?—Yes, it would be a very good thing.

B-922. Is there anything to prevent a child who has been rejected because of age or for reasons of health, going forthwith to work in an unregulated factory?—Nothing whatever.

B-923. In fact that is what the child does?—Very probably; I cannot tell because I do not know what actually happens in unregulated factories. It would be quite possible for a child who was refused by the Certifying Surgeon to go and work anywhere else.

B-924. That seems to be an additional reason for bringing such factories under the Act. Since no effective check is put on the employment of such children, the issue of the certificates by the Certifying Surgeon amounts to a farce?—I am afraid it does.

B-925. On the question of double employment of children, you say in your memorandum that "many of them work at other occupations". By that do you mean that they work at home or in unregulated factory?—Either in the fields, or at home, or in any unregulated factory. I have no statistics to show that, but I am almost sure that children of between 12 and 15 years of age, who are only permitted in regulated factories to work for six hours, can if they choose or if their parents choose, go and work elsewhere.

B-926. Do you think that some of the children in the carpet factories or other unregulated places here in Lahore are partly employed in a regulated factory and partly in an unregulated factory?—To some extent I should think they are; as regards carpet factories I do not know.

B-927. Is there any co-ordination of the activities of Certifying Surgeons. For instance, when they are determining age, do they follow any medical schedule which enables them to maintain a uniform standard?—That I do not know; I merely get a certificate to show that the child is over a certain age and I must accept it.

B-928. Is there any control over the activities of the Certifying Surgeons by any one Department?—It comes under the Public Health Department, so far as I know.

B-929. So that the Director of Industries or the Factory Inspector has no control over their activities.—None whatever.

B-930. You simply have to accept the certificate of the Certifying Surgeon.—If I find that a child working in a factory is unfit, although he may have been certified, I send him back to the Certifying Surgeon to re-certify him; if he then appears again, having been re-certified, I must accept him as a healthy worker.

B-931. With regard to your remarks on "Acquaintance of workpeople with factory legislation", is there any arrangement made whereby they can understand the abstracts; is any lecture explaining it ever given to employees in the factories?—Not that I know of.

B-932. So that it means that only that small section that can read the particular vernacular language in which the notice may have been posted would be able to follow it?—I think that if one person in the factory can read that abstract the whole of the workers would know it very quickly.

B-933. Is the name of the factory inspector of the Province always put on the factory abstract?—No.

B-934. Do you not think that that should be done so that people should know to whom they should complain?—It would be helpful, but I do not think there is any difficulty in factory workers knowing where to complain.

B-935. Suppose they wanted to get a writer to send a written complaint to you, in these scattered ginning factories, are they likely to know where you are?—I do not think that is a difficulty. I think they know that they *only* have to address their complaints to "The Factory Inspector, Punjab". News travels very quickly in India, and if one person knows anything it would go round the whole village or town very quickly.

B-936. Are complaints from the workers as to evasion of the Factories Act on the increase?—No, I do not think they are.

B-937. Approximately how many a year do you think you receive?—There might be 50; not more than that.

B-938. Direct from the workers?—Yes; they are frequently anonymous and they are frequently written by some one in a competitive mill or factory and are not always genuine; it is very difficult to tell whether they are genuine.

B-939. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Have you ever met a worker who did not know what the legal working hours were and so on?—Many times; the average illiterate worker does not know; if you ask him at what time he goes to work he will say "Early in the morning"; if you ask him at what time he leaves the work he will say "When the engine stops". Many of them do not understand time at all. My remarks apply to the unskilled illiterate workers and not to the engineers and other staff.

B-940. *Miss Power*: The illiterate workers are the bulk of them, are they not?—Yes, in seasonal factories.

B-941. Dealing with "Rigour and efficiency of administration" you make some suggestions for increased penalties. In the memorandum submitted by the Punjab Government there is a reference made to the fact that there has been a tendency on the part of the magistracy, in the case of offences against women and children, not to fine but simply to warn?—That is so.

B-942. Do you think that if you had heavier penalties for repeated offences in respect of women and children, it would possibly have the effect of penalizing the work of women and children?—I think it would, if it were deliberately done for offences of over-working women and children. At the present moment, if a factory owner can employ a man at the same rate at which he can employ a woman, he prefers to employ the man because the regulations are slightly harder with regard to the employment of women workers than men; so that, if you are going to penalize the employer in respect of women and children very much more than you do men, you will find that the women worker will soon be very little sought.

B-943. You think there would be that danger?—Yes. I issued an order prohibiting children under the age of 6 going into cotton ginning factories. One of the results was that the women were not employed in the ginning factories. They then appealed to me that it was a hardship to them rather than an advantage. That was why I withdrew the order later on.

B-944. Have you visited the place where wool picking is carried on?—Yes, I know it quite well. There are three or four areas in Lahore, and in other parts of the Punjab there are many more.

B-945. Would it be within your province to consider whether or not all such work should be done over a grid under which there was an exhaust fan?—It is within the power of the local Government; it is not within the power of the factory inspector. If these factories are brought under the Factories Act we can then frame rules to cover such cases. But they not being under the Factories Act at present, we have no power whatever.

B-946. Supposing these factories were brought under the Factories Act, although there might be an attempt to divide them into groups, you could then provide that no such work as that involving such dust and risks should be done without it being done over grids with downward exhaust fans?—That would involve a certain amount of expenditure on the part of the employer, and I think, rather than incur the expenditure he would split up the factory into a number of small rooms, having one central press which would take the wool that had been cleaned in each one of these places. It would then be necessary to notify every such place as a factory regardless of the number of workers employed therein.

B-947. If they were all under one employer?—It is not impossible for one employer to have a dozen small factories.

B-948. Surely some legislation to regulate these factories could be devised to cover that point?—The Factories Act as it at present stands speaks of premises where so many persons are actually employed. I have known many

instances of printing presses and other factories where a partition wall is put down in the middle of a factory, with the result that each is split into two or more factories for evading the provisions of the Act in this respect. We have managed so far to get over such difficulties, but in the case of wool picking it is a very easy matter for the contractor or the owner to split his factory into small rooms.

B-949. Do you not think the cost of the exhaust fan system would be very small?—I do not know what power would be used for it. These factories have no power whatever at the moment. It is all hand work. The exhaust fans must have some power to drive them. That would necessitate a small power plant, either under every grid or a system of shunting or electric wiring to run the fans.

B-950. Is not this industry confined to towns? Most of it is done in Lahore; there is a certain amount of it in Amritsar. There is also one other place, Fazilka, where a lot of wool picking is carried on.

B-951. Is there no electric power available usually?—It is available in Lahore and Amritsar, but Fazilka is a rural area and it is not available there.

B-952. *The Chairman*: You told us of administrative difficulties in the way of extending the scope of the Act so as to cover small workshops, say, in the bazaar, employing 10 or 11 workers. But from the point of view of health do you not think it more important to bring within the Act those larger groups of men and women who are at present outside the Act because no motive power is used in the factories in which they are working?—It is very important. But as I have said, they would split their factories into small groups and evade the Act, unless legislation were so tightened as to prevent their doing so.

B-953. Do you really think it would be difficult to make legislation sufficiently tight?—I do not think it would be easy.

B-954. *Mrs. Wilson*: Are most of the women workers in cotton ginning factories got through women contractors?—No woman contractor has come to our notice. I should imagine they are all got through men contractors.

B-955. That is not what the women told us the other day?—I have no experience; I know it is got through contractors.

B-956. But we saw one of them during our visits?—She was very likely a sub-contractor. It is very likely that her husband was the contractor who settled the accounts and that she was in charge of the women workers.

B-957. From the health point of view is there any inspection of quarters occupied by the Railway employees?—I have been round them on one or two occasions and have thought they were not too bad and that no action on my part was necessary.

B-958. Have you made any attempts to get women health visitors appointed in connection with these industries?—No.

B-959. Have you put any such suggestion before the owners of factories?—No, I never have.

B-960. Have you suggested that the women Sub-Assistant Surgeons attached to the civil hospitals should be asked to attend the workers in these factories once a week?—No, I have not done anything like that.

B-961. Do you not think it would be a desirable thing to do?—I think it would be a very good thing; but these are matters which concern the general district health administration more than the factory inspector. Provided a person in a factory is healthy and appears to be fit, as a factory inspector I have nothing to say. Apart from that, I have very little time to undertake such duties.

B-962. In regard to ventilation, have you made attempts to improve the atmosphere in the cotton ginning factories?—Yes, as I say I had some masks made for the workers to wear. I also got draft sketches of exhaust fans which might be fitted over gins, but their cost was prohibitive.

B-963. Is there any objection to using some simple model of the kind used here in this hall? It could be done in Lyallpur where there is power?—I have tried it but it does not do much good. The dust comes from the gun itself, and it would merely drag it swiftly through the room, possibly into the lungs of the people working, rather than take it straight out. When you have dust emanating from 70 or 80 machines, all of them three or four yards apart on either side of the room and distributed throughout the room, my experience is that it is very difficult to get rid of the dust except through the workers themselves.

B-964. Regarding first aid, do you ever inspect whether the arrangements are properly made?—I always look at the first aid appliance, and frequently suggest that they should renew things which have become old.

B-965. Are women forced to work longer hours when the cotton picking season is at its height?—Yes, I do find women working longer hours in such seasons. Whenever possible I take action against employers. During the last few years I may have taken action against 30 or 40 employers who have over-worked women and children.

B-966. Would it be of any help to the women concerned if you assembled them by beat of tom-tom and told them the hours they are entitled to work as we do with regard to public health measures?—I do not think so. The point is that a woman has her living to earn and if she is not prepared to work in the way the employer wants her to do, she is not going to get employment.

B-967. Do you not think that pressure is put upon doctors who certify as to the ages of children employed in factories. Have you any suggestion to make in that respect?—I fear there is because the Certifying Surgeon or rather the doctor to whom these powers are delegated is frequently a man living within the local areas, and apart from being the Certifying Surgeon he is also the local practitioner and possibly receives a retaining fee from the employer himself. Therefore it is very difficult to get a really straight deal from him. I think there should be a Certifying Surgeon attached to the Department as a whole-time Government servant.

B-968. *Miss Power*: If you had a Certifying Surgeon attached to the Department, I take it he could not do more than supervise the work of the other surgeons; he could not cover the whole Province?—No, but he could act as an inspector and pay surprise visits to factories, and I think that would promptly stop any mal-practice in this respect.

B-969. Has any suggestion of that sort ever been put to the Punjab Government, or to your Department?—No. I think we have almost thought that there are not yet a sufficient number of child workers. In bigger provinces I believe they have Certifying Surgeons attached to the Factory Inspection Department.

B-970. *Mrs. Wilson*: In your opinion is it actually harmful to have assistants who are of such a grade of industrial surveyors that they have relatively small salaries, and might have the same pressure put on them as you mention that my medical colleagues have?—I think the powers that an inspector has are such that they make it necessary for Government to employ the best possible person they can get, and I think, as a whole, the industrial surveyor working as he does at the moment is underpaid in view of the powers he has and the work he is expected to do.

(The Commission adjourned till Monday, the 28th October, 1929.)

PUNJAB

SEVENTH MEETING

LAHORE

Monday, 28th October, 1929.

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

<p>The Rt. Hon. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P.C.</p> <p>Sir VICTOR SASSOON, BART.</p> <p>Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.</p> <p>Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.</p> <p>Mr. KARIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.</p>		<p>Mr. JOHN CLIFF.</p> <p>Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.</p> <p>DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.</p> <p>Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.</p> <p>Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. (<i>Medical Assessor</i>).</p>
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<p>Mr. HARKISHAN LAL, Bar.-at-Law.</p> <p>Mr. W. TAYLOR, Director, East India Carpet Co., Amritsar.</p> <p>Dr. K. C. HITESH.</p> <p>Mr. M. A. GHANI, Bar.-at-Law.</p> <p>Pt. RAM AUTAR, Vice-President, North Western Railway Union.</p> <p>Col. C. WALTON, D.S.O., Agent, North Western Railway.</p> <p>Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C.</p> <p>Miss SIRAJ-UD-DIN.</p> <p>Mrs. DAGMAR CURJEL WILSON.</p> <p>Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.</p> <p>Mr. A. DIBDIN.</p>	}	<p>(Assistant Commissioners.)</p>
<p>Miss SIRAJ-UD-DIN.</p> <p>Mrs. DAGMAR CURJEL WILSON.</p> <p>Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.</p> <p>Mr. A. DIBDIN.</p>	}	<p>(Lady Assessors.)</p>
<p>Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.</p> <p>Mr. A. DIBDIN.</p>	}	<p>(Joint Secretaries.)</p>

Mr. W. H. ABEL, Inspector of Factories, Punjab, and Dr. R. C. RAWLLEY, Director of Industries, Punjab (*continued*).

B-971. *Mr. Taylor:* Dr. Rawley, can you tell me whether there are any stipulated hours of work in the carpet weaving industry in Amritsar?—There are no stipulated hours of work as such, but, as I have mentioned in my memorandum, according to custom they work from sunrise to sun-set; if the sun rises at 6 in the morning and sets at about 5 or 6 in the evening, the hours of work may be 10 to 12.

B-972. There is no compulsion with regard to the hours of work that a weaver must work in a day?—No compulsion, as far as I know.

B-973. The weaver, I take it, can go into the factory when he wants to and leave it when he wants?—Yes, he can do that.

B-974. The carpet weaving industry is under the contract system?—Yes, the work is done on a contract basis.

B-975. It is quite possible then that a weaver does not work 10 hours a day in the winter?—Yes, that is possible. It all depends upon the amount of work. He might work 14 or 15 hours and it is also possible he might work 4 or 5 hours.

B-976. 14 or 15 hours is contrary to your own statement, because you say 10 hours?—That is in the winter.

B-977. Do you think that a weaver in the carpet weaving industry works longer hours than he would do in the cottage industry?—I am afraid it is difficult for me to say, because I have not watched their conditions all the time, but I should suggest that he works almost the same number of hours as he would work in his own home.

B-978. In your memorandum you say that "the rates of wages are still very low and the labourer gladly welcomes overtime work by which he can add to his meagre income". I take it you raised this question particularly with reference to the carpet weaving industry?—I think so far as the carpet weaving industry is concerned, the rates of wages as compared with the pre-war period are anything from 100 to 150 per cent. higher.

B-979. How does the weaver in the carpet weaving industry stand in regard to indebtedness?—In my opinion in the carpet weaving industry there is no indebtedness whatever, the reason being that the owners themselves advance money to the weavers and recover it from their wages. Therefore the weaver is not forced to borrow from the *bania*.

B-980. Is that advance given free of interest?—As far as I know it is given free of interest.

B-981. So that from the answers given am I right in coming to the conclusion that the weaver in the carpet weaving industry is fairly adequately paid, at any rate as compared with the ordinary textile weaving industry in this Province?—Yes, the carpet weaver is much better paid, it being a specialized trade.

B-982. In the Punjab Government memorandum it is stated that the children employed in the carpet weaving industry "continue their blind alley occupation". That means it is considered to be a blind alley occupation so far as children are concerned. Do you, as Director of Industries, subscribe to that view?—It is very difficult for me to say anything definite about it. One has to watch their future career and see if those employed at the ages of 6, 7 or 8, continue their occupation till the ages of 25 or 30. If it were so, it would not be a blind alley occupation. But if they left their occupation at the ages of 15 or 16, it would be a blind alley occupation. I think what the phrase "blind alley occupation" means is that there is too much employment of child labour in the carpet weaving industry; children under nine years form about 25 per cent. of the total labour force engaged in this industry.

B-983. That does not quite cover this statement. It is stated definitely that the carpet weaving industry is a blind alley occupation. Do you, as Director of Industries subscribe to that view?—No, I do not think that it is a blind alley occupation in that sense, because I have known of weavers who have continued their occupation till 30 or 40 or 50 years of age.

B-984. During your term of office, have you ever received any complaint from the carpet weavers themselves with regard to the hours of work or wages?—No, I have not, but the non-receipt of complaints is by no means an assurance that everything is all right in the carpet weaving industry.

B-985. But you have paid personal visits to Amritsar and I think you are personally acquainted with the carpet weaving. What is your personal opinion?—I gave my personal opinion at a meeting held by the Punjab Government, at which you were present. I think that children below the age of 9 should not be employed in the carpet weaving industry; children between 9 and 12 should work only for three or four hours in the morning; and children between 12 and 15 should not work for more than six hours a day.

B-986. Would you enforce that only with regard to children employed in the carpet weaving industry? Why should you not extend it to children employed in the general handloom weaving industry of the Province?—The general handloom industry is not concentrated in a parti-

cular place; it is scattered all over the Province; it is being carried on in the weavers' own homes in which not more than three or four people are engaged in it. On the other hand, the carpet industry is a centralized industry in which under one roof 200 people may be working.

B-987. In this Province?—Yes, so far.

B-988. Are you aware that in central and southern India the carpet weaving industry is carried on as a cottage industry in the same manner as the ordinary handloom weaving of the Province?—I do not know anything about central India; I know that the industry is localized in Ajmer and Agra.

B-989. In Persia also it is a cottage industry as in central and southern India. Supposing the hours of work in this industry were restricted, is it your opinion that the carpet weaving industry would continue as such in the factories, or do you think it would disperse, as was suggested by Mr. Abel, and the cottage carpet weaving industry would become prevalent in the Punjab?—It would in my opinion be very difficult to maintain anything like a good administration; that is to say, you would not be able to spread the right type of designs amongst the workers and watch the exact quality of their work, if the work were carried on in their cottages.

B-990. I believe last year you visited Poland, Greece and other countries and observed the conditions of the handloom carpet weaving industry in those countries. Can you tell us how the industry in India compares with the industry in those countries as regards the hours of work and wages?—In Poland the wages are very low indeed. I do not remember the exact figures. They are paid in Polish currency, Zlotis, but the wages work out in Indian currency at about Re. 1 to Rs. 1-6 a day. I also noticed a good number of small girls employed, who, the employer told me, were above 15; but as far as I could see, they were only 12, 13 or 14 years old. I was told that the weavers worked 10 hours a day and were paid for over-time after 8 hours. In Salonica and Athens also the conditions were not very much better than those in Amritsar.

B-991. Am I to take it that the wages paid in the carpet weaving industry overseas are less than those paid in Amritsar?—I think the Polish standard of wages is lower than that of Amritsar.

B-992. Can you give us the average monthly wages of an average weaver here?—It is Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 a month; of course there are experts with long experience who earn as much as Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 a month.

B-993. *Dr. Hiteshi*: Can you tell me *Dr. Rawley* why there are no trade unions of employers in the Punjab?—There are associations of employers.

B-994. Are there any registered associations of Employers under the Trade Union Act?—I think it is beneath their dignity to do that.

B-995. In your memorandum you stated that three trade unions, namely, the Textile Mill Workers' Union, the Electric Supply Company's Union, and the Punjab Mechanical Engineers' Union, have been dissolved. What was the reason?—They are defunct bodies. After taking the certificate they never complied with the law. They just automatically dissolved.

B-996. *Mr. Ghani*: You suggest that some wage-fixing machinery should be created in the Punjab. What method would you suggest to fix the minimum wages of labourers?—We have not gone into that question in detail. We have just given a suggestion that, taking into consideration the cost of living of the average industrial worker in the Punjab, some sort of machinery should be evolved whereby wages could be fixed, but as to what machinery will suit the Province itself we have not worked that out in detail.

B-997. In replying to *Mr. Taylor* you stated that the wages of carpet workers in Poland were less than they are in the Punjab. While you were touring in Poland, did you also enquire what was the cost of living in Poland?—Was it more or less than it is here?—The cost of living in Poland is also less, on account of the very low rate of exchange; when I was there last year the rate was about 800 to 900 zloties to the £1, so that obviously the

cost of living worked out in relation to exchange would be very low; but whether the actual cost of living in money and in kind is the same as in the Punjab or less or more, I cannot say.

B-998. *Mr. Gregory*: Does the Punjab Government employ contractors?—I am not aware of it. It may be that they do in the Irrigation Branch of the Public Works Department.

B-999. Are you aware of any measures or regulations issued by the Punjab Government to enforce the Washington and Geneva Conventions on contractors?—Not so far as my Department is concerned.

B-1000. Are there any measures in force in the Punjab to safeguard the labour employed under contractors?—No, I do not think so.

B-1001. After the initial registration have you laid down any method to be adopted for the purpose of keeping a strict watch on the management of a trade union?—Under the rules framed under the Trade Unions Act, the union have to submit to us certain statements. That is the only check that we keep.

B-1002. At the end of the first year and subsequently, if necessary, you get a statement of accounts?—That is right.

B-1003. Do you scrutinize the accounts?—Yes.

B-1004. Between the time you register a union and receive the balance sheet, do you keep a watch to see whether the funds of the union are being correctly expended?—I am afraid there is nothing in the Act which empowers me to check that.

B-1005. *Col. Russell*: Have you any suggestion to make as to the method by which you might obtain mortality statistics?—My suggestion would be that there should be a greater amount of co-operation between my Department and the Public Health Department, and that figures in so far as physique and fatigue and similar matters are concerned, should be collected by the Department of Public Health and passed on to us.

B-1006. Do you think the Public Health Department will be able to do that?—They have district health officers now-a-days in almost every place. I think the District Officer of Health will be in a position to collect all the material that is required.

B-1007. Would it not be better to have something like an Industrial Health Research Board to make investigations of that kind?—Of course, that would be the ideal, but I do not know whether funds will be found for that or not.

B-1008. You say "Little control is exercised at the present moment over the building of factories". How would you propose to remove this lack of control?—There have been suggestions that all the plans should be submitted to the Inspector of Factories and the Director of Public Health, who should then comment on the plans from the point of view of ventilation, spacing and sanitary arrangements.

B-1009. Do you think that would be an adequate control?—In the beginning it should be.

B-1010. Would it be an adequate control?—I am afraid not.

B-1011. How would you suggest that you should get adequate control?—I would suggest greater powers being given to the Factory Inspection Department.

B-1012. *The Chairman*: I presume that the plans for a new factory have to be submitted to some Department of the local authority?—No; that is only under one Act—the Cotton Ginning and Pressing Act.

B-1013. Not generally speaking?—No.

B-1014. *Col. Russell*: There is at present absolutely no control over the building of factories?—At present there is none.

B-1015. *The Chairman*: Except in the Municipalities?—Yes.

B-1016. If it is proposed to build a new factory in Lahore, to whom would the plans go?—If the factory is to be situated within the municipal area, they would be submitted to the Municipal Committee.

B-1017. But then it does not come to you or to the Public Health Department?—No.

B-1018. Outside the municipality a new factory can be proceeded with without the plans being submitted to any authority?—There is some provision so far as District Boards are concerned. There is no effective control of any kind.

B-1019. This is an important point, and it was raised by Mr. Abel. Would Mr. Abel tell us what his suggestion is?—(Mr. Abel) There should certainly be some direct control over the building and altering of factories; but it would not be very useful merely for the plans to be submitted either to the Public Health Department or Industries Department for passing and sanction. We want more control over the actual material used in the building and supervision, if we are going to have any real control. At the present time plans for the building of cotton ginning and pressing factories do come to the Agricultural Department and to the Department of Industries, and we examine those plans and pass them if they are satisfactory; but we have no control over the building or over the material that is used. We may pass a plan as regards area and sanitation, and yet the factory may be built entirely wrong and collapse very soon. We have no control over that at all.

B-1020. Have you ever put down in black and white what amendment you would wish?—Yes, I have. This question has been discussed for the last two years or more with the local Government, and also with other local Governments; and the local Government have asked us on one or two occasions to frame rules which would govern the building of these factories; but it is very difficult, because a factory built in a town would be entirely different from that in the rural district. Our reply has been that we cannot possibly frame any hard and fast rule, but we suggested that not only should plans come to us for scrutiny, but also that we should have some control over the material that is to be used in the building of particular factories. What will happen really if this is enforced is that it will merely turn the factory inspector into a consulting engineer, and nothing more will be done unless we have a Department which can actually work it and see that what we say is really carried out.

B-1021. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Are you prepared to take the responsibility of seeing that the proper mixtures are used in a building, thereby transferring the responsibility from the shoulders of the contractor and the factory owner, so that if anything collapses, the owner can turn round and say:

“Mr. Abel and his staff came and inspected it and he must accept responsibility”?—I should need an enormous staff to do it.

B-1022. It would be an impossibility, would it not?—I certainly could not take the responsibility myself.

B-1023. *Col Russell*: Are there any members of the Departments of Agriculture and Industries who now see these plans are capable of judging whether they are suitable or not?—Actually no civil engineer sees them; I think I am the only engineer and I am mechanical.

B-1024. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Dr. Rawlley, could you tell me why children are employed in preference to adults in these carpet factories in Amritsar?—The argument given to me is this, that they have got very delicate fingers and can handle the operations much better than grown up people can. The second point is that obviously the wages of these children employed in these factories are much lower than those of adults. The adult contractor has a number of boys working with him, probably 3 or 4 or 5. The contractor gets the wages in terms of so many annas for so many hundred stitches, and then it is open to him to distribute these wages amongst the boys. So it is very difficult for us to determine as to what wages a child actually earns there.

B-1025. Would you give me some statistics as to what a child, let us say of 10, would get per thousand stitches?—The usual rate in Amritsar is $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas for 1,100 stitches.

B-1026. Can you give me any figures regarding the profits made by the carpet industry in Amritsar?—Those figures are a mystery and a secret which nobody knows outside the carpet industry. It is impossible to find out; I have tried my level best to collect the statistics during the last few years, of the percentage of dividend paid or the actual money made, but I have not been able to secure the information at all.

B-1027. Are some of these joint stock companies?—Only the East India Company is a joint stock company.

B-1028. What has been the difficulty: the refusal on the part of the employers to let you have their balance sheets?—Yes; they do not want to let us know the cost of production.

B-1029. Is the carpet industry in Amritsar mostly owned by Indians, or is it owned by any outside firm?—There is one outside firm known as the Oriental Carpet Manufacturing Company, Limited.

B-1030. Is that the biggest firm in Amritsar?—Yes.

B-1031. Mr. Abel, in your memorandum you make a statement about unemployment and reference has been made to the Report of the Unemployment Enquiry Committee. Is it a fact that that Unemployment Enquiry Committee disposed of the question of unemployment among the illiterates in their Report?—(Mr. Abel) I have not seen this Report before, and I am afraid I do not know.

B-1032. Dr. Rawley, can you tell us anything about that?—(Dr. Rawley) Yes; I was a member of that Committee myself.

B-1033. Is it a fact that only 20 witnesses were examined by that Committee?—Yes, that is true.

B-1034. And generally they relied upon reports which they received from the District Officers?—That is true.

B-1035. So should I be correct in stating that that Committee did not really enquire properly or scientifically into the matter of unemployment in the Punjab?—You are right.

B-1036. It has been suggested to you by Sir Victor Sassoon that, the Punjab being an agricultural Province, the number of industrial workers is not very large. Should I be right in saying that according to the Census figures out of a population of 21,000,000 in the Punjab, there are at least 3,000,000 industrial workers and 3,000,000 persons dependent upon those industrial workers?—That is quite true.

B-1037. If we include the entire number of domestic servants and transport workers as industrial workers, it is practically half the population of the Province?—The majority of that number would refer to industrial works outside the scope of the Indian Factories Act. My memorandum refers only to workers within the purview of the Act. I have no experience of those outside the Act.

B-1038. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Do you accept the statement that half the population of the Punjab is employed outside agriculture?—(Mr. Abel) It may be so according to the Census; I have no knowledge of it. (Dr. Rawley): Only 14,800,000 persons are employed in agriculture; that is out of a total population of 25,000,000 including the Indian States; the actual population of the Punjab is 21,000,000.

B-1039. Does your 14,000,000 include dependents?—Yes.

B-1040. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Any question of unemployment, to be tackled properly, must necessarily include those people who are outside the scope of your Factories Act?—(Mr. Abel) That is true.

B-1041. Therefore, if it can be established that there is unemployment, you would not be averse to the setting up of unemployment bureaux in order to deal with that problem?—I do not see why they should not be set up.

B-1042. There is a constant tendency on the part of the agricultural workers in this Province to move out from the villages into the big towns?—There is a tendency; I would not say that it is very strong.

B-1043. But does it affect large numbers of the population, taking the Province as a whole?—That is impossible for me to say; I only know that a certain proportion of agricultural workers come into the factory, as in the case of Dhariwal last year; they will come into the factory, find they like that work better, probably earn bigger wages, and remain on. But I do not think it affects a very large proportion of agriculturists. Apart from that, the average Punjabi has some sort of interest in the land; either his family have some share in a small holding, or something of that sort. The land requires him during the time the harvest is being brought in. Whether he is or is not getting more pay in the factory, it is my experience that he does go back to his land when he is wanted.

B-1044. Even for those numbers that come in from the villages it would be necessary to have some sort of organization in order to help them to find employment?—I think it would be very useful.

B-1045. In your memorandum you speak of the collection of statistics; is there any regular method or system for the collection of statistics for your Department?—Yes; at the beginning of the working season of every seasonal factory I get a report on the number of workers that are or will be employed in that factory; that is the average number for the season. That enables me to determine the number of workers there are actually in factories. I also get returns at the end of the year as to the wages paid, and it is on that that I determine my statement showing the average wages of workers in factories.

B-1046. The figures that come in naturally come in from the employers?—Yes.

B-1047. In your memorandum you give us a chart as to wages and you say that the increase in wages is due to the increased cost of living?—That is my presumption; I do not collect statistics regarding food.

B-1048. Can you give me any idea as to the increase in real wages?—Wages have undoubtedly advanced slightly as far as skilled workers are concerned.

B-1049. But could we get any estimate of the increase in real wages?—I do not think you can get anything beyond this, unless you take it from the worker himself.

B-1050. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: But do you say that real wages have advanced slightly?—Yes, real wages have, in the case of skilled workers. It is more costly now to get a blacksmith or a carpenter. Possibly in the last 6 or 8 years there has been a 10 or 15 per cent. increase.

B-1051. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: How much absenteeism is due to illness?—I have no statistics.

B-1052. Has any serious attempt been made in the Punjab to investigate the question of the prevalence of industrial or occupational diseases?—Not more than our ordinary visits. I have had metal analysed in order to endeavour to discover what percentage of arsenic there is or if the fumes are injurious; and in printing presses where lead is smelted special stoves are provided with exhausts for taking away the fumes. Beyond that we have done nothing.

B-1053. We can take it that the welfare of the worker in the Punjab is nobody's concern?—Yes.

B-1054. Do not you think it is essential that the State should lend a helping hand in the matter?—It would be very useful but it would be very difficult, because the average worker in the Punjab does not stay at the factory sufficiently long for anyone to be useful to him.

B-1055. If a worker stays even two months, would you not make your machinery for welfare work available for him?—I would in the case of all factories which work throughout the year.

B-1056. You make the very serious statement that cheap labour is one of the causes of accidents. Would I be correct in suggesting that, as far as this Province is concerned, the workers in those factories are treated, as so much raw material and not as human beings?—Not entirely. In many factories they are.

B-1057. In regard to sickness insurance, you suggest that the employers in certain factories do engage doctors to look after the workers. There you have the rudiments of the panel system. Could that be usefully extended if the State came in?—Yes, I think it could.

B-1058. With regard to inspection, did you bring the facts about prosecutions referred to in your memorandum to the notice of the Government?—I did.

B-1059. What action did the Government take?—Almost every year I bring these matters to the notice of the local Government, and they have on two or three different occasions addressed the magistrates, pointing out the necessity of inflicting adequate punishment for such offences. In this particular case I asked the Deputy Commissioner, who is the authority, for a revision, pointing out to him the exact details. The reply to that was that he felt that the High Court would not be prepared to do anything, and therefore it was useless approaching it.

B-1060. How do you explain the fact that in the Punjab a man is sentenced to two years' imprisonment for an ordinary theft, and yet in regard to these serious matters only small fines of Rs. 45 are imposed. Why do not the magistrates take as serious a view of these matters as they do in the case of an ordinary theft?—I think it is because our system here is wrong. A case under the Factories Act goes to the local magistrate, and the factory owner of that particular district is probably the most influential person in that area. The Public Prosecutor is a part-time servant of Government. During the other part of his time he probably works for the factory owner. The local doctor who issues certificates regarding children is also a part-time practitioner, and is probably also employed chiefly by the factory owner. Our difficulty arises, therefore, in the factory owner more or less controlling that area. Neither the Public Prosecutor nor the magistrate really do their job.

B-1061. What do you suggest in regard to over-working in seasonal factories?—One or two adequate punishments, such as heavy fines or imprisonments would very quickly stop it.

B-1062. The difficulty is in getting convictions and proper punishments. What particular method of control would you suggest in those cases, in order to obviate the difficulty which presents itself?—I would suggest in the first place that the Department should have its own Public Prosecutor, and the Magistrate should assuredly be either the District Magistrate or the Deputy Commissioner.

B-1063. You mention that women take their children with them to work, and that when you passed an order stopping that they came and complained to you. Suppose a creche were instituted outside the factory: would the women be averse to leaving their children there?—They would. I have made arrangements in one or two places, but I have found the women do not like to leave their children.

B-1064. Suppose the creche were in the factory?—Then the dust would be bad for the children.

B-1065. At which places did you try this?—At Lyallpore and Ajmere, but they are not working satisfactorily?

B-1066. What is the arrangement in the creche?—A fairly healthy shed is put aside. There is water, a good floor, and a woman is told off to look after the children.

B-1067. Have you tried supplying free milk?—No.

B-1068. That might be an inducement?—It might be. We might get more children than actually belonged to the factory workers.

B-1069. I notice there is a good deal of indebtedness. Would I be correct in saying that the average worker in the Punjab is really living on next month's wages?—I should not like to say how far that is true. It works both ways. I know of instances where an employer has taken over a good *mistris* complete with his debts in order to get him.

B-1070. You make the statement that the figures of average wages are misleading. Will you explain that?—I get at the end of the year a statement from each factory showing the wages paid to the individual workers. Then I make an average of that for my Report. It is true that a blacksmith in Lahore City gets more pay than a blacksmith in the country. Again, a carpenter in a centre like Jhelum would earn very much more than he would do in the country. What I find is that a man may start as a blacksmith in a factory. He goes up possibly a rupee a month per year. He still calls himself a blacksmith. He is probably getting Rs. 75 or 100 per month. I find that on one statement. The next statement says a blacksmith is worth Rs. 25. Striking an average is not helpful.

B-1071. Would you consider that the wages of that particular type of worker are living wages?—As he lives at present, yes.

B-1072. As he lives at present it is not very good for him?—I think his conditions of living might be improved. He might improve them for himself very much.

B-1073. You talk about efficiency, and the foreign worker being more efficient. Are not the factors which govern efficiency, good housing, education, good food, and other amenities for a decent existence?—Yes.

B-1074. Would I be correct in saying that in the majority of cases these factors are lacking amongst the workers?—The housing is certainly not very good. I know nothing about their food, but I think the worker himself could help himself a good deal by becoming more skilled. I find very little ambition among the workers to get up into a better position.

B-1075. Are there any arrangements made for his training?—There are one or two industrial training centres. We have 23 industrial schools at present.

B-1076. What is the number of students who attend those classes?—(Dr. Rawley) We have at present on the rolls 4,000 students.

B-1077. Is the system of promotion based on efficiency, or is there no system of promotion? I am referring to a matter which probably is outside your competence, namely, the workshops at Lahore where up to a certain limit a man gets Rs 2-8-0 a day and thereafter even if he were to put in 20 years' service he does not get any promotion?—I do not think that is so; the man working for Rs. 2-8-0, and knowing that he is worth more, will not stick to his job for a long time.

B-1078. We know numerous cases of that kind where the limit is Rs. 2-8-0 and the man cannot get beyond that. Would it not improve his efficiency if a better system of promotion were instituted?—That I cannot say, as far as the railway workshops are concerned. In private-owned factories I find that a fitter, a mechanic or a carpenter, when he feels that he is really efficient in his job, leaves one factory and goes to another if he likes.

B-1079. In your memorandum you mention a case where a fine of Rs. 45 was inflicted on an employer for not guarding the main line shaft alley, which is a very serious matter as it may endanger life. Would I be correct, therefore, in saying that the average employer considers the Punjabi's life worth Rs. 45?—Some employers, I am afraid, do. Since the Workmen's Compensation Act came into force I have heard one or two employers who told me deliberately that they are not in favour of employing well-paid men because in case of accidents they would have to pay more as compensation.

B-1080. Would you recommend that every employee should be compulsorily insured by the employer?—Yes, I would.

B-1081. *Mr. Cliff*: In the flour mills I understand that there are two shifts and each worker gets rest for two hours during his period of 12 hours of

duty Have you any means of ensuring that that is strictly carried out?—At the beginning of each month a flour mill or an oil mill that works on this system sends on to me a copy of their proposed register for that month, showing the names of the persons who will work from a certain hour to a certain hour and will take rest from either 12 to 2 or from 2 to 4 as the case may be, when I go to inspect the mill I can take with me my copy of the register—a duplicate copy of which is also kept in the mill—and can go round and find out whether a man is actually on duty when he should be or should not be.

B-1082. Such registers are sent to you monthly?—Yes; but if there is a change after the register is sent on to me, I get a notice of the change, that such and such a man is ill or has changed his duty and will work at another period or from a certain date to a certain date; actually, I think that two hours rest is mostly given.

B-1083. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Can it be split up into two halves of an hour each?—It is not usually done.

B-1084 You have no objection if it is done?—No, provided not less than one hour is given at a time. When once a flour mill has started production it requires very few men to look after it; it could almost easily halve that staff.

B-1085. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Dealing with the question of offences under the Factories Act you recommend the appointment of a special Prosecutor. Is it because your present Prosecutor is not getting sufficient convictions that you make this recommendation?—The present Prosecutor has very little knowledge of the Factories Act inasmuch as he might only get one or two cases in a year; apart from that, the biggest trouble is that he is also a local barrister.

B-1086. From your annual report for the last year I find that out of a total of 130 cases instituted only in 8 cases were the accused acquitted. From this one can assume that your prosecuting officers have done their duty?—I would not say that; I never make a case against a factory unless I am almost perfectly sure of gaining a conviction.

B-1087. You have given us some very interesting facts regarding the prosecutions you instituted during recent years. Taking the first of the instances enumerated by you, I see that the employer was fined Rs. 45 for each of the two offences committed by him, that is to say, Rs. 90. He could have been fined at least Rs. 1,000 if the Magistrate cared?—Yes

B-1088. In one instance the employer was fined Rs. 1,250; he could have been fined Rs. 4,000 if the Magistrate cared?—That is so.

B-1089. So the responsibility of inflicting light fines rests on the Magistrate?—Not absolutely, because the Public Prosecutor is there to press his case if he feels so disposed to. In this particular case, I myself attended the court for three days and gave evidence as a result of which I gained a fine of Rs. 1,250. The case immediately went to the Sessions Judge who without hearing any of us reduced the fine to Rs. 400.

B-1090. *Mr. Sastri*: You did not attend the Sessions Court?—No.

B-1091. *Sir Alexander Murray*: For inflicting small fines it is the judicial side that has to be blamed?—Chiefly.

B-1092. You say in your memorandum “There is nothing in the Act, which provides for an enhanced sentence for the repetition of an offence: hence no mention of the offence having been committed before, is legally permissible in the complaint.” If I am a thief and you haul me up before a Magistrate you do not, till after I am found guilty, tell the Magistrate that I have been a thief a hundred times before and should get a heavier sentence?—That is true.

B-1903. What is the difference between an employer of labour and a thief if you are going to try a case on its merits; that is to say, surely you desire that cases where an employer is charged with an offence should be tried on their merits?—Exactly.

B-1094. Therefore the fact that previous convictions have not been mentioned in the complaint is no handicap in proving the case. After securing a conviction against an employer for his contravention of the Act is it the custom then to say "this employer last year or previous to that was fined and found guilty of the same offence; therefore I ask for a heavier punishment this time"—I do that when I am in the court myself.

B-1095. I think it is the duty of the Public Prosecutor to tell the Magistrate, after he has found the man guilty, about his previous convictions and to press for a heavy sentence. Do you do it?—I do it, but I have been informed by the Public Prosecutor that it is quite an illegal procedure.

B-1096. Is it or is it not legal?—I have to take the word of the Public Prosecutor who is the legal authority.

B-1097. And he says that you should put that into the complaint before the man is tried?—No; he says it will not do any good at all. Some cases have been turned down as a result of my putting it into the complaint.

B-1098. To get a proper opinion on this important point, did you bring it to the notice of the Government and the Legal Remembrancer?—Not that deliberate point, but I have sent the whole proceedings to the Government on more than one occasion; in fact, in every case in which I thought an inadequate fine had been awarded I have sent the entire case to the Government.

B-1099. If I were a Factory Inspector what I would have done would be to wait till the man was convicted and then tell the Magistrate that he was previously found guilty of the same offence, and press for the Magistrate not fining him Rs. 20 but Rs. 2,000?—That I do, but I do not get much change out of the Magistrate.

B-1100. Do you think it is a reasonable proposition that while the case is going on it should be put in the complaint that the man had committed the same offence before?—No; it does not sound reasonable.

B-1101. You said that in seasonal factories the workers really do not know what the working hours are. Does that also apply to the factories that start at a particular time and close at a particular time?—No.

B-1102. Is it your experience that notwithstanding their illiteracy, the workers, generally speaking, know when they should be at the factory?—In the bigger textile or perennial factories, the worker, to a very great extent, knows when he should come and when he should go.

B-1103. From the statement given by you, Dr. Rawley, in your memorandum with regard to the registration of trade unions, I find it mentioned in the case of the North-Western Railway Union that at the time of registration their membership was 5,000; on the 31st of March 1928 the number again stood at 5,000 and the same was the case on the 31st of March 1929. To me it is an extraordinary coincidence to say the least of it. When you got those returns did it not occur to you that it was an extraordinary coincidence?—Yes, it did.

B-1104. Did you not feel justified in asking for an explanation?—We have to accept their statement.

B-1105. At the time of registration they might put their number at 5,000; on the 31st March following they might put it at 15,000 and 150,000 on the 31st March succeeding. So far as you are concerned you merely accept the figures?—That is so.

B-1106. *The Chairman*: Do you not check the numbers with the audit returns?—We do; but the statement as presented to our office we have to accept unless there is some doubt or we get a complaint.

B-1107. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: What do you do when there is a difference between the number furnished by the union and the audit statement?—We write to the President or to any of the office bearers to explain the discrepancy.

B-1108. Therefore you do not necessarily accept the figure furnished by the union?—We have to check the number on the rolls with the statement given to us by the auditor.

B-1109. *The Chairman*: Is there any penalty inflicted on the Secretary of the Trade Union who sends to you a wrong return?—I think there is.

B-1110. *Sir Alexander Murray*: How do you know whether he has or has not sent you a wrong return until you check it?—As a rule one has to accept it unless there is something substantially wrong with the union or we hear any complaints about it.

B-1111. There is no reason why the local Government should not appoint local Magistrates, Medical Officers of Health, Directors of Industry or anybody else who is directly or indirectly interested in factory administration?—They have done to a very great extent. All District Magistrates are inspectors under the Act. Certain revenue assistants, Extra Assistant Commissioners, and three assistants of the Public Health Department and certain Sub-divisional Officers have already been notified for certain sections; that is regarding health and sanitation.

B-1112. Do they send returns to you with regard to factory inspection?—Yes. The number of inspections made by *ex-officio* officers during last year was forty.

B-1113. Do you bring them out in your factory inspector's report?—Yes; and Government last year commented on the fact. They said that they were pleased to note that *ex-officio* inspectors were taking a slightly more interest in inspections.

B-1114. So that, if the Government choose to put more pressure on *ex-officio* inspectors, you could get much more efficient factory inspection in the Punjab?—I am not prepared to say that the inspection would be more efficient; in fact I think it would not.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

PUNJAB
EIGHTH MEETING
AMRITSAR
Tuesday, 29th October, 1929.

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

The Rt. Hon. V.S. SRINIVASA
 SASTRI, P.C.
 SIR VICTOR SASSOON, BART.
 SIR ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt,
 C.B.E.
 MR. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.
 MR. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

MR. JOHN CLIFF.
 MR. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.
 DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.
 MISS B. M. LE POER POWER.
 Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,
 I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Lala HARKISHAN LAL, Bar.-at-Law.	}	(<i>Assistant Commissioners.</i>)
Mr. W. R. TAYLOR, Director, East India Carpet Company, Amritsar.		
Mr. M. A. GHANI, Bar.-at-Law.		
Dr. KARAM CHAND HITESHI.		
Mrs. DAGMAR CURJEL WILSON.	}	(<i>Lady Assessors.</i>)
MISS SIRAJ-UD-DIN.		
Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.	}	(<i>Joint Secretaries.</i>)
MR. A. DIBDIN.		

**Mr. GEORGE STEVENS and Mr. GERALD ALFRED DAVIES, of
 the East India Carpet Company, Limited, Amritsar.**

B-1115. *The Chairman:* Mr. Stevens, I understand you are the Managing Director of the East India Carpet Company, Limited, Amritsar?—Yes, I am.

B-1116. And that your company has four factories in Amritsar with a total of 267 looms out of which 93 are working?—That is right.

B-1117. You told us that the labour is paid on a piece-work basis, that the master weaver earns wages which vary from Rs. 30 to Rs. 50 per mensem?—That is correct.

B-1118. Is that apart from the payment of the boys or does the payment of the wages include the payment of the boys?—It does not include the payment of the boys; that is the minimum amount of money which remains with the master weaver.

B-1119. But the master weaver pays the boys?—Yes, and the master weaver will earn more than that during the month.

B-1120. Out of which he pays the boys?—Yes.

B-1121. Does he pay the boys at his own sweet will or is there an agreed rate?—I think there is more or less an arranged tariff. It is not really a tariff, but it is arranged by the master weaver when he engages the boys.

B-1122. Do you find that in your four factories the payments to the boys are uniform or do they vary?—They are about uniform. The boys go on getting more as they are put in more efficient work.

B-1123. You told us that your factories are open really from day-light to dusk?—Yes.

B-1124. And that the people can work all that time if they please?—Yes, if they wish to; they are at liberty to work all that time.

B-1125 I take it that when they once begin on a carpet they work pretty steadily to get that carpet completed?—Not always; some of them do; some of them are slack and do not work so fast. They close for every holiday, both Hindu and Muhammadan, although they are Muhammadans; they are always ready to take advantage of a holiday.

B-1126. But the actual payment until the carpet is finished presumably is made by measurement?—Yes, it is made by measurement and then there will be a reckoning up when the carpet is completed.

B-1127. Therefore those who are anxious to get more money will put in more work?—Yes.

B-1128. But it may happen that after one carpet is completed on a loom there will be a considerable gap before another carpet is set up?—As a rule when business is good, there is not much of a gap. There is a gap of possibly three or four days. A certain amount of time is then occupied in preparing the warps for the new carpet.

B-1129. By the same men?—Yes; there is always a loss of two or three days' time.

B-1130 Then the master weavers do prepare their own warps?—Yes.

B-1131 Are the boys engaged then?—Yes, the boys are engaged too, but that is very easy work.

B-1132 As you know, there have been questions from time to time about bringing these carpet factories under the Factories Act?—Yes.

B-1133 I understand that the employers are afraid of a step of that kind?—I do not think "afraid" is the right word.

B-1134. What would you say?—We are not afraid of coming under the Factories Act, but it would certainly change the industry; there is every probability that if the carpet factories come under the Factories Act, the industry will become a cottage industry as it is in other places in India. For instance, in Mirzapur district it is all a cottage industry. There would then be absolutely no control of child labour.

B-1135 I take it what really has happened is that you have brought what was once a cottage industry into the organization of these factories?—That I could not say, because the idea of a carpet factory was already existing when I came to India. I have only been in India since the beginning of 1923. At that time the industry in the Punjab was already in the shape of carpet factories. I think it has been brought into carpet factories because the weavers were not sufficiently reliable to be trusted to weave in their own houses; and apart from that they have got no capital.

B-1136. Is there not another advantage in concentration; control of designs?—It would mean greater difficulty in controlling the looms, but nevertheless that is the way we do it in Persia.

B-1137 I understand that before you came to India you were in Persia?—I was in Persia for 21 years.

B-1138. For this same company?—No, for a different company, but I have been there lately for the same company for five months; I have just come back from Kerman.

B-1139. This East India Carpet Company has allied businesses in Persia, Greece and Turkey?—Yes.

B-1140. In each of those countries are different kinds of carpets produced?—We try and keep them as different as possible so as not to have the different companies competing with one another. Persian carpets are entirely different, but I am not prepared to say as much about Greek and Indian carpets.

B-1141. That is to say, that if the conditions were made difficult in one country you fear that it might result in carpets being made, say, in Greece instead of in this country?—Certainly it would. As a matter of fact that is what has happened with Greece and Turkey. Greece is just about to beat

Turkey because the Greek Government is helping as much as possible the carpet industry. We have been lately requested by the Italian Government to start carpet factories on the same plan in the Dodacanese Islands which belong to Italy.

B-1142. You have told us that medical facilities are provided; "a doctor visits the factories each fortnight and certifies the age of any new apprentice; no boy under nine years of age is admitted to apprenticeship"?—Yes.

B-1143. Will you tell us exactly what that means?—No boy under nine years of age is allowed to enter the factory. They can come there and play about if they like if they come with their fathers; but they are not allowed to work and they do not work.

B-1144. But if you are under the Factories Act that age would be raised from 9 to 12?—Yes.

B-1145. Do you think that the difference between 9 and 12 would make an appreciable difference?—I think it would because a lot of the weavers employ their own sons. For instance, a man who had three sons would only have two working.

B-1146. You are no doubt aware that in England it was thought in a similar kind of operation that a child of 10 was quite necessary and that the industry would be ruined if they could not employ children under 10? But they have found that when it was raised to 12 and 13 the industry did not happen to be ruined?—Yes. But at the same time I do not think Great Britain was faced with the same competitions as we are.

B-1147. In your written statement you say that "one very unusual feature of this industry is the absence of indebtedness to money-lenders, as advances without interest are afforded by the company when necessary". Since when have you been able to carry out that reform?—When I first came here I refused to give advances. Other companies were giving advances but I wanted to work without advances. I found it difficult to do so and I think, it was in 1924 that I decided to allow advances.

B-1148. Are you quite sure that the result of your action is that none of your men are indebted?—I have never had any complaints about money-lenders. At our mills at Chheharta I have known of our men being in debt to money-lenders; there was one case which came into my hands and I had to settle the debt to get rid of the money-lender.

B-1149. I take it that this arrangement of yours only affects the master weavers?—Yes.

B-1150. It is not in any regular form a credit society?—No, it is not in any regular form; we only give advances of course when we know the master weaver is going to weave a carpet for us; then if he needs an advance the amount of the advance is discussed with him and paid over. It is repaid gradually from the wages of the man. Sometimes a balance is carried on from one carpet to another carpet, but there is nothing binding in it; it does not mean that the weaver is bound to take a new carpet from us. Provided he refunds us what he owes us he is at liberty to go and work with any one.

B-1151. That does not make quite sure that the man has no other debts to the *bania*?—If he has other debts we soon find it out because the weaver does not come to work if he is pressed for money. My sincere opinion is that there are no other debts.

B-1152. *Mr. Sastri*: Do you generally have these carpets made to order, or do you have them made on the chance of finding a market?—Up to about two years ago all our carpets were made to order; but during the last two years we have been working, as you say, on the chance of finding a market.

B-1153. You say a great many of your looms are idle?—We have got 93 looms working out of 267—that is because we have not found the market.

B-1154. We did not seem to see many looms idle; I suppose they are elsewhere?—We have two factories which are closed; one has two looms working, the other is entirely closed.

B-1155. You said that your men are comparatively speaking free from debt. You do not include the children in that category, do you?—No, I am talking about the master weavers.

B-1156. But you know nothing about the children?—I have got some idea that the children are indebted to the master weaver. The master weaver pays an advance to the parents to get the children when they are not, of course, his own relatives. If they are his own relatives there is no advance made, but in certain cases if the master weaver wants to have what they call *shagirds* he pays them something in advance. That is what happens everywhere, in Persia, Greece and Turkey.

B-1157. Whom does he pay it?—I suppose it is to the father of the child, but I am not certain.

B-1158. You have no knowledge?—I could not say that exactly.

B-1159. What is the number of children employed in these factories under you; do you know?—I am afraid I have not got the figures.

B-1160. Would it be something like 500?—No.

B-1161. Not so many?—On 93 looms I have not got 500 weavers all told. I may have on an average four men per loom.

B-1162. But every weaver has 3 or 4 children?—Yes, but of the four children two will be above 14.

B-1163. I suppose the children we saw to-day are the only children that come daily. Are there any children that we did not see?—Our factory has been shown to you as it is every day. No one has been sent away from the factory and no one has been introduced.

B-1164. How much would a master weaver lend to the parent to get the labour of the children; we are interested in the children and we should like to know how the children go into the factory and how they fare there?—I have my Indian assistant here who can give the information. (Indian Assistant) Sometimes they advance Rs. 100, sometimes Rs. 50 and sometimes Rs. 25.

B-1165. Is there any document that passes from the weaver to the parents?—Sometimes they take an agreement from their parents to work. The advance is not deducted continually but it is deducted by the instalment system

B-1166. It is of some interest to us to know the nature of this transaction?—Deductions are fixed according to a certain period. When the loan is entered into there are two ways in which the money can be taken back. One is that he has got to work right through his period; the other is that an advance is paid to him and according to the agreement one rupee or two rupees are deducted as the payments are made to the boy.

B-1167. Are these advances usually recovered in the shape of wages regularly, or has the master weaver sometimes to go to court to recover the money from the parent?—Very seldom.

B-1168. That is to say the children labour faithfully?—Yes, faithfully. The other system is that if the child leaves and goes to another employer the other employer will pay the debt.

B-1169. During the time that the child is under a master weaver who feeds the child?—His parents.

B-1170. So that the children go to the parents every day for their meals?—Yes.

B-1171. If the children are playful, and not quick in learning or do not diligently do their work, how does the weaver get work from them?—By punishing them.

B-1172. What sort of punishment?—A slight beating.

B-1173. Beating in what way; is it on the hand?—On the hand and sometimes with a stick

B-1174 *Mr. Ghaur*. And with shoes too?—(Mr. Stevens) Sometimes. I have never seen any sticks used in our factories, but I have seen weavers slapping the boys

B-1175 *Mr. Sastri*. To-day I have seen the very stick used. And a man of about 35 told me he had grown up with marks all over his body of the beatings that he had he did not complain; he said "it is the regular way" and he thought it was the proper thing—I suppose he was beaten by the stick 25 years ago, if he is 35 years of age now, but the use of the stick has certainly been abolished in our factories; I have never seen a stick there; but I have seen master weavers slapping the boys. I was slapped when I was a boy too.

B-1176 We have been told how the slapping is done and have seen also the instruments used to slap the boys. Have you seen any of these agreements?—(Indian Assistant) Yes, usually they are entered into a book.

B-1177. When such a document is filed in a court, does the court recognize it; I mean is it regarded as a valid and legal document?—The court has held them valid

B-1178. Do you know if the children's names are mentioned there?—I think so, the children's fathers' names are mentioned; it is said that the father has made his son work with such and such weaver.

B-1179 Are the wages mentioned?—Yes.

B-1180 Are the hours of labour mentioned?—No

B-1181. So this agreement which is the common basis of labour in these factories is a document purporting to proceed from a father to a weaver and pledging out a child's labour for so many months and so much a day. How much a day would it be?—It is according to the intelligence of the boy; some are paid 6 annas some Re 1 (Mr. Stevens) I should say an average of 8 annas to 10 annas a day

B-1182 Five annas is mentioned in this book?—I am talking about our factories

B-1183. As it is from your factory that I got this document so this is the way in which labour is engaged from day-to-day here; apart from the master weaver the bulk of the labour in these factories is that of children engaged on term similar to these?—(Indian Assistant) Yes.

B-1184. The children are therefore pledged to the weavers for a certain period?—Yes. (Mr. Stevens) I do not think it is correct to say the bulk of the weavers' children because a good part of these children are above 14 years.

B-1185. Above 14 years you would not call them children?—No.

B-1186. Will some one translate this document?

Diwan Chaman Lall: "I, Booter son of Chakli, Chowkidar of Amritsar, owe Rs. 57 odd, of which half is Rs. 28-8-0, which I have borrowed from Booty, weaver, in advance. I agree that my grandsons N and F, should be handed over for the purposes of carpet weaving. N is to get Rs. 9 per month and F is to get Rs. 7 per month. I will take the wages monthly. I will not break this agreement. If I break this agreement I will return all the money I have borrowed to the man who has lent it to me."

B-1187. *Mr. Sastri*: Nothing is said about the children's feeding or their play-time or their time for study?

Diwan Chaman Lall: Nothing.

B-1188. *Sir Alexander Murray*. What is the date of that document?

Diwan Chaman Lall: The date is 2nd October 1929.

B-1189. *The Chairman*: Has that document been held by the Courts to give a claim to the work of these children for an indefinite period?—(Indian Assistant) No decision has been taken in regard to the services of these children; the decision was in regard to the loan, that this is a valid loan. If he does not pay this money back it can be recovered by means of a decree.

B-1190. *Mr. Sastri*. When they speak of a certain amount a month, does that mean that the boys have to labour every day, or do they get some holidays?—They will get their wages for which they work, if they are absent they will not get wages for those days, but there are certain instances in which they fix the labour for the month. And if it is arranged that they should pay Rs. 9, they pay Rs. 9 a month even though the boys have been absent four or five days.

B-1191. Have you known of cases in which the children run away from the work to play or to loiter?—Yes.

B-1192. How are they brought back?—Sometimes their parents bring them; the master weavers do not look after them because they will not waste their time.

B-1193. *Mr. Stevens*, you are not aware of the nature of this agreement?—(*Mr. Stevens*) I have never seen it, I hear about it now for the first time.

B-1194. How long have you been here?—I have been in Amritsar six years.

B-1195. And during those six years you have had this labour in your factory and known nothing about the basis of it?—I have had nothing to do with the children. I have only to deal with the carpet weavers.

B-1196. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Have you had artificial light of any kind in the factories?—Sometimes we have had the electric light when it was a case of making special carpets; we have had two or three shifts of workmen and work at nights.

B-1197. When I went there I did not see any lights?—They might not be there because we do not keep them on looms when we are not working.

B-1198. If you are working at nights what power lights do you use?—We use 50 candle power electric lights. It has been the case when we have had to make carpets for Delhi for Viceregal Lodge and the carpets have to be made for very urgent delivery; we have employed three shifts, some of the men working at night. We instal electric light on that particular loom. As soon as the carpet is finished the electric light is taken off.

B-1199. We have been told that normally you work from day-light to dark. There is nothing to prevent any factory working 24 hours?—It is said that weavers will not work.

B-1200. Have they a Factories Act or any regulation in Persia?—The League of Nations have sent a sort of Commission to Persia. I have been away to Persia and have come back to Amritsar only 10 days ago. The League of Nations have complained very bitterly about the conditions in the factories in Persia; it must be admitted that the factories in Kerman where I have just been are much better than they used to be; they are better ventilated and cleaner; and the cases of deformed spines in the girls in Kerman are fewer than they were. I was talking to the C. M. S. Mission Doctors in Kerman, and I think they told me, though I am not certain of the figure, that the cases had gone down from 100 to 15. So far as working hours in Persia are concerned, a lot of promises were made but none were kept.

B-1201. Do they work from day-light to dark in Persia, or do they use light at night?—They do not work at night because kerosene is too expensive and the weaver cannot afford to have light on his looms.

B-1202. Therefore a girl or a boy working in Persia is limited to the hours from morn to night?—He is limited to the sun-light hours. In certain parts of Persia you have mild weather in winter which enables the people to weave the whole year round, but in the north of Persia the temperature goes down to as low as 25° fahrenheit below zero and the looms are practically closed for three months sometimes because the weavers cannot handle the yarns, their fingers become frozen.

B-1203. In Persia the conditions prevent the boys and girls working more than 8 hours?—In certain parts they can commence at 4 o'clock in the morning and finish late at night.

B-1204. All the year round?—Not all the year round. The days are shorter in winter, but you get longer days in Kerman.

B-1205. How short are days in winter?—In winter they can work 8 to 10 hours a day easily when the weather is very mild.

B-1206. And in Turkey?—I cannot tell you; I have never been in Turkey.

B-1207. And in Greece?—I could not tell you.

B-1208. *Mr. Ahmed*: Your contractor advances money in order to get a supply of labour without any trouble?—Yes.

B-1209. And he advances money in order that the labourer may not run away without doing work according to the terms of the contract?—I do not think that is the idea; I think he really advances money because the parent of the labourer needs money, or wishes to have money. I do not think it is to prevent the small workers from running away.

B-1210. Rs. 7 or Rs. 9 a month is a very low rate of wages considering as you say that you sometimes pay Re. 1 per day?—Some of them are paid Re. 1 per day. There are 25 working days in the month.

B-1211. You have said just now that the average is 10 annas per day?—I think so.

B-1212. It is not your concern whether the contractor pays them liberally?—That does not concern us; we only work with the contractors. I have been into the matter when the case with regard to placing carpet factories under the Factories Act came up and the wages which the boys were getting in our factories. From the information which I received I gathered that the wages came to 6 annas to Re. 1 a day. I therefore took 10 annas as an average. I may be mistaken.

B-1213. Probably you will agree with me that in view of these conditions being contained in the agreement which has just been translated, the people are afraid to go away without fulfilling the conditions and the terms of the contract?—Well, I suppose the man who made the contract feels it to be his duty to fulfil it.

B-1214. Is your firm an old firm?—I think our firm is the oldest carpet firm in the world. I am not speaking of the East India Carpet Company but our mother company.

B-1215. I suppose you have been making very good profits?—We have been making good profits for two years, but we have reduced our capital enormously the first year we were in India.

B-1216. Nine-tenths of your business consists in supplying America with carpets?—That was so up to two years ago; it has not been so for the last two years.

B-1217. Is that the reason why you do not pay higher rates to the contractors?—We have paid a higher wage than any company has paid, and the rates of the contractors have gone up threefold in the last 15 or 20 years. Rates have not gone up threefold in Persia, Turkey or Greece; Greece may now be on the same level as India. India is the place where the highest carpet weaving rates are paid, and the Punjab is the highest in India.

B-1218. And in spite of that you have started four factories here?—We have started four factories in the Punjab; we have had in the Punjab 263 looms, but we had, I think, 860 all over India which we have brought to a standstill. I am keeping the wages where they were before.

B-1219. What were the wages before; were they more than Rs. 7 or 9 per month?—I am talking about what I pay for weaving my carpets. Years ago the master weaver used to get half an anna for a thousand stitches. Now it has gone up to 1½ annas. Therefore I am justified in saying that the wages of the master weaver are three times what they were. I do not know what the master weaver does with his boys, but I take it for granted that the salaries of the boys have gone up.

B-1220. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Have you ever reduced the rates?—The rates were reduced once when there was a strike before our time. Our com-

pany has only been in existence since September 1922. The rates were once reduced by a company which was afterwards incorporated in our company. That was on account of the strike. Now the rates have been restored to what they were before.

B-1221. When did you restore the rates?—(Indian Assistant) They were paid 2 annas.

B-1222. When was that?—In 1917, when prices were very high.

B-1223. The rate was put up to 2 annas?—Yes.

B-1224. How long did it remain at 2 annas?—For 1½ years.

B-1225. When was it reduced?—In 1921. (Mr. Stevens) That was before my time. We came here in September 1922. When we came here the rate was 1 anna 3 pies; we put it up to 1½ annas which was the rate before the strike took place.

B-1226. *Mr. Ahmed*: I take it the master weaver pays at the lower rate and takes the higher rate?—I suppose he will take as much as he can for himself and give as little as he can to his labourers.

B-1227. If the wages were paid direct by your firm to the labourer he would get more money?—I do not know that would be so, because a trained man should be paid more than an untrained man.

B-1228. If payments were made directly by you to the labourer instead of to the master weaver, I suppose the labourer would be paid properly?—The labourer would have been paid properly but a skilled man will always get more than an unskilled man. There would have to be a schedule of rates.

B-1229. You have not got that sort of thing?—No.

B-1230. With regard to hours of work: we went to your factory and asked some of these boys how many hours they worked. Most of them told us that they worked from 6 o'clock in the morning till 7 o'clock in the evening?—(Mr. Davies) The factory opens at 6 o'clock in the morning. When a weaver comes along to start his work the door is open and he is admitted; that does not necessarily mean that he goes and sits at a loom straightaway and starts putting in stitches. Many of them have not bathing facilities in their own houses and they come to the factory where ample facilities are provided. There are two water taps there; they bathe and wash, and generally start work when there is sufficient light, which is about 7 o'clock on days like this.

B-1231. So that you have provided quarters for them with all the facilities?—Yes.

B-1232. I suppose they would prefer to stay in your factory rather than go home?—(Mr. Stevens) The children are happier in the rest time playing in the courtyard of our factory than in their homes.

B-1233. And you like that sort of thing?—To me it is indifferent whether they play in the courtyard or my factory or in the street or in the house. But I think they are much happier playing in the courtyard of the factory than in the street. Comparing it with the street I think the children can play better in the courtyard and there is no objection to it.

B-1234. There is no provision for a supply of drinking water?—There is; we have kept pumping station water which we all drink in our houses without filtering it; I do not see how they can get better water.

B-1235. Would it not be better to have a system of working four hours in the morning and four in the afternoon?—It certainly would be more regular than the irregular hours which they keep now, which may be six hours one day, eight hours another day and nothing the day after.

B-1236. Would it be better to have fixed hours of work during the day, not in one stretch?—Regular hours of work would suit me much better. But I do not know that it would suit them.

B-1237. *Mr. Cliff*: In answer to a question put by the Chairman as to whether the Factories Act should be applied to carpet factories I understood you to say that the result would be that the carpet industry would become a

cottage industry?—Probably it would, though one never knows what will take place. You may restrict us to eight or ten hours and enforce the Factories Act; it is impossible to say at this stage what will happen. It may become a cottage industry. In my opinion the probabilities are that that would be the result or the industry may cease to exist. It may either kill the industry or transform it into a cottage industry. In any event it will not remain as it is.

B-1238. Do you mean that there is a possibility of the East India Company going out of business?—It may be so; it all depends on foreign competition. Persia is producing carpets considerably cheaper than we can produce here.

B-1239. Can you tell me the approximate number of boys who will be employed on these 93 looms?—I could not tell you; I should say that on the 93 looms we must have about 350 people working and there may be 100 boys. I am giving you figures at random. I can get you accurate figures if you like by getting statistics made in the factory.

The Chairman: I think our observation was that roughly speaking there were one boy and two older youths on the average per loom.

B-1240. *Mr. Cliff*: On previous visits that have been made there is a statement that one may take it that usually four to eight boys are employed on a loom. I want to know whether that would represent the position in your factory?—We have had visits from the Factory Inspectors and two years ago sometime in the summer I took the Deputy Commissioner round at about 7 o'clock in the morning without giving warning to anybody; we went there on the sly to see the number of boys there. We did not see more than about one boy in three.

B-1241. The note we have says that the wages earned by a master weaver vary from Rs. 30 to Rs. 50 per mensem.—A loom produces about 12 yards a month on which the wages paid are about Rs. 7 per yard; so that the wages earned on a loom will come to about Rs. 84 a month for three to four people weaving. Sometimes they weave much more, but if the master weaver gets Rs. 30, the other Rs. 54 is divided between two or three boys. The master weaver may make Rs. 40 and the boys Rs. 44; but our average weaving in Amritsar is 12 square yards of our standard cloth per month per loom of four men for which we pay Rs. 7 per standard yard.

B-1242. *The Chairman*: I believe it is customary to speak of them all as boys if they are not master-weavers?—Yes, they are all called *chokras* here, weaving boys. The master weaver will be paid an average of Rs. 84 a month; that is for him and three other weavers. We have woven much faster than that, but on an average we calculate one 9 ft. by 12 ft. carpet per month per loom.

B-1243. *Mr. Cliff*: Would you say that the average earning is Rs. 84 per month for a master weaver?—Between Rs. 80 and Rs. 84. That was so up to last year in the Punjab; they may now be weaving slower or faster.

B-1244. You say there is an unusual feature of this industry and that is the absence of indebtedness. At the same time you say there is much under-employment.—I am talking about them when they are in employment, but of course when they leave our factories and are unemployed, the probability is that they will go and borrow money. We have had exceedingly few cases of weavers leaving us; as a matter of fact we have had practically no cases of weavers leaving us except to go and work in another carpet factory.

B-1245. You say you have 267 looms?—Yes.

B-1246. Can you tell me when the majority of these looms were being worked?—They were in full work up to about 18 months to two years ago.

B-1247. You have closed two factories. Are those men likely to be engaged by other carpet factories in Amritsar?—Some of them have, but not many. I have had no time to see what the other carpet factories are doing, but from the letters I have from everywhere I think there is a general crisis

which has affected India much more than other countries and I do not think many of the weavers we have lost have found work in other factories.

B-1248. Have you made advances to the weavers who are unemployed?—No, we have not. If we did the probabilities are that we should never get the money back. (Mr. Davies) We have made advances to some of them.

B-1249. *Mr. Ghani*: Have you got the money back?—No, we have not. We are willing to provide them with work until they have worked off the advances, but they do not want to come back. Most of these men are working in other factories. (Mr. Stevens) They will come back to us, I think, when they have finished their work in the other factories, to redeem the advances.

B-1250. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you any security for the advances?—(Mr. Davies) None at all.

B-1251. Is there a definite break in the factory for meals?—Yes, from 12 to 1.

B-1252. Do you turn them from their looms?—No, we do not turn them out; some go home and some have their midday meal on the loom.

B-1253. So that it may be that some of the boys are in the factory the whole of the day?—That is quite possible, but they are not there under compulsion; they can go home if they like. (Mr. Stevens) They leave the factory for many other reasons than getting their meals.

B-1254. You say they are not under compulsion. It does appear from the answers given that they are not under direction.—They are not under compulsion from us. I was speaking of the master weavers. Sometimes they do not come and the loom will be closed. When we ask the reason we are told that there has been a wedding; the whole loom goes to the wedding and you do not see them for a week. They go and come whenever they like; there is no compulsion.

B-1255. There is no compulsion and there is no regulation?—No; the factory is open to them, that is all.

B-1256. *Colonel Russell*: The position that these boys adopt when working at the loom is the normal squatting position; is it not?—Yes.

B-1257. So that there is nothing abnormal in the position they take up at the loom?—I do not think there is anything abnormal, but in Persia it has been found to be abnormal with very small girls. Little girls in Persia were put on the looms when they were two years old. We have made it a point that we are not going to have a single girl in the carpet factories. I mean that in the cottage industry we do not allow girls to be employed. The result of putting little girls of two years of age on the looms was that the hip bone never developed and that led to great trouble later on. I think I am right in saying that that has been stopped in Persia.

B-1258. You have never seen any such thing in India?—Never.

B-1259. Do you come across any cases of deformity of the spine among these boys?—In India, never; I have not seen any cases.

B-1260. Are there any other deformities?—I do not remember having seen any; I have seen it in Persia.

B-1261. What about flat foot?—I have never known such a thing.

B-1262. Your medical officer has never reported the appearance of any deformities among the boys in the factory?—I find they look just the same as other Indian boys who do not work in the factories

B-1263. Has your medical officer ever reported to you any case of deformity?—No.

B-1264. What sanitary arrangements are provided in your factory?—Just the ordinary arrangements which they have in other factories under the Factories Act, I suppose.

B-1265. For instance how many latrine seats do you provide for those you employ?—(Mr. Davies) We have two latrines, ten seats.

B-1266. Do you employ women and girls?—(Mr. Stevens) Sometimes we nave women for opening out yarns; they are in a separate compound.

B-1267. Then they will have separate sanitary conveniences?—Yes.

B-1268. I suppose in the hot weather these weaving sheds become very stuffy?—I do not think they become stuffier than other places in the town; they are well ventilated.

B-1269. How do you manage to ventilate them?—It is just the normal ventilation. There is always wind here. We do it by heightening the roof; but as a matter of fact in the hot weather they cover up the outside with curtains. They water the curtains. But the men do it themselves.

B-1270. It is your opinion that the ventilation of these sheds is satisfactory?—I consider it is.

B-1271. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Whenever a master weaver requires an advance it is you who give it to him?—We give it to him, yes. The factory advances a certain amount after discussion and after we have asked him how he is going to refund it; we come to some agreement.

B-1272. For instance, you want labour; you call in a master weaver and ask him to go and engage workers?—I do not ask him to engage workers; I tell him I have such and such a carpet and will he weave it for me.

B-1273. Suppose he then asks you for an advance for that purpose, you give it to him?—He does not ask me for an advance to get boys; he asks me for an advance, but he does not mention why he wants an advance. As a rule he has got boys because every master weaver carries his boys along with him. If he is a new weaver who has no boys he may ask for an advance in order to get boys.

B-1274. Mr. Sastri put a document to you. In that case I take it the advance did not come out of the pocket of the master weaver?—I do not know if that book comes from one of our factories or not, but if it does I have not seen the book; I do not know of the existence of the book. It is a weaver who has done the transaction; it has nothing to do with us.

B-1275. Suppose you have given the advance to a new master weaver who wants to get new boys: suppose he gets the advance from you and utilizes it for the purpose of getting these boys; in that case would you consider the master weaver to be your agent?—No, I know nothing about it; I do not see why the master weaver should become my agent.

B-1276. He is your agent in this sense that in order to get labour for you, you have advanced money and he again has advanced that from the money which you have advanced him.—I have not advanced him the money on the understanding that he is to get labour; I have advanced him money to weave a carpet for me. The two points are entirely different.

B-1277. A little while ago you told me that in the case of a new master weaver if he wants to get boys you do advance him money?—I do not say that in case he wants boys I do advance money. I do advance him money and he may use the money to get boys. It is not at all the same thing.

B-1278. You say there is no compulsion under which they are made to remain on in the factory?—I have not said there is no compulsion on the boys; I have said that I put no compulsion on any of the weavers. As far as I am concerned there is no compulsion whatever originating from me or my company. I do not know whether the weavers thrash their boys or not; they do not do it in my factory. If a weaver were caught thrashing a boy he would be turned out; but when it is a question of slapping a child's face, as I have said, I have been slapped many times and I expect I am much the better for it.

B-1279. You have not answered my question. It is your manager who made a statement that the boys are at liberty to come and go at any time they choose.—If my manager made that statement, I am afraid he has misworded his statement. The master weavers and the boys are at liberty to go as far as we are concerned; they can do what they like; but I cannot

guarantee that the master weaver will not tell a boy " Before going you have got to weave so many more stitches ".

B-1280. I may take it that what you say is this, that your statement does not apply to the actual workers; it only applies to the master weavers.—No, my statement applies to the labourers as well. It does not apply to the *chowkidars* who are paid monthly by me and have to stop there. My statement applies to the master weavers and the boys on the looms; they are free to go as far as I am concerned.

B-1281. But the boys may not depend entirely on themselves; they may depend on the weaver who gives instructions to the boys?—As far as we are concerned they are free; I have nothing to do with them.

B-1282. I am not attempting to foist the responsibility upon you; I am merely desirous of getting the facts. You mentioned that your *chowkidar* is employed by you on a monthly wage and has to remain in the factory?—Yes.

B-1283. Do you realize that these boys also are being employed on a monthly wage?—Not by me

B-1284. Are they or are they not being employed on a monthly wage?—I am not satisfied that that contract which has been shown here is the one that prevails everywhere. That contract speaks of a monthly wage of Rs. 9; but I have an idea that some of the boys are paid according to the work they do and not a monthly wage

B-1285. You have stated that if the Factories Act were applied it would possibly lead to the dispersal of this industry and would turn it into a cottage industry?—It might.

B-1286. Why do you say that?—My reasons are that the weavers may no longer be satisfied with the conditions prevailing and may start weaving in their own homes where they will not be under the Factories Act.

B-1287. Supposing a weaver who makes according to you Rs. 30 a month and works ten to twelve hours a day, is made to work nine hours a day and yet makes the same amount of money, what do you say?—The question would then remain to see whether the Indian business would be able to face the competition of Turkey.

B-1288. Now you are coming to the second point, but you agree with the first point that if the Factories Act were applied to these factories it would improve the conditions of work?—No It would improve the welfare of the boys to a certain extent.

B-1289. That is sufficient for my purpose. Is your company a limited liability company and registered in India?—Yes.

B-1290. Can you present the Commission with your balance sheets for the last few years that you have been in operation in India?—Our company is a private company; it is not a public company.

B-1291. Would you be averse to telling us roughly what profits you have made since you started operations in Amritsar?—The profits we have made have not paid for the losses we have made. I do not think the application of the Factories Act would improve the factories. We have had two prosperous years, we have had one year without dividend and we have had another year with a reduction of capital. That is about as much as I am willing to state.

B-1292. With regard to holidays, do these people get Sunday off?—The factories are closed on Friday.

B-1293. For half a day or the whole day?—For the whole day. Sometimes a weaver will come in on Friday and go round. But 99 per cent. of the looms are idle the whole of Friday. Whenever there is a Hindu holiday all the Muhammadans are only too pleased to partake in it and whenever there is a Muhammadan holiday they close the factory as well. They are all Muhammadans with the exception of one loom which is worked by Hindus.

B-1294. *Mr. Ghani*: In your factory the looms are worked in places with walls on three sides and open on one side?—Yes.

B-1295. Do you provide any fans?—No.

B-1296. Do you provide any heating arrangement in the places where they work?—No.

B-1297. Have you kept any schools specially for these children?—I was the first to suggest having a school in our factory. It was about four years ago that I suggested that to the Director of Industries. It was decided that the Municipality should give us a teacher, but the Municipality never gave us a teacher, we are still waiting for the teacher the Municipality is to give us.

B-1298. Did you suggest to the Municipality the opening of the school?—I suggested it to Dr. Rawley.

B-1299. Did you suggest it to the Municipality?—I suggested having a school at the factory you visited this morning and Dr. Rawley told us that certainly the Municipality would give us a teacher. The Municipality has not given us a teacher. I say quite frankly that I never expected much from the Municipality. We have got our mills which are under the Factories Act and we have a teacher there. They have a sort of canopy in the fields where the children are taught.

B-1300. Did you write and remind the Director of Industries of the promise to provide a school?—No, I have not written.

B-1301. I suppose there is no labour organization, no trade union of the master weavers or boys in your factory?—I do not think there is; I do not know. I have never had any bother with trade unions and labour unions and I know nothing about them.

B-1302. If one labour organization is formed, would you be averse to it?—I am afraid I do not like labour organizations.

B-1303. You have told us that there are two water taps in the factory. If your factory is in full swing how many people are employed?—Possibly 300 people. It would be very easy to put up ten more taps and I am quite willing to do so if necessary. But I think there are more than two. (Mr. Davies) That is only in one factory.

B-1304. Have you ever noticed that the boys get cuts on their hands from the knives they used?—(Mr. Stevens) The knife is so blunt that I do not think they could cut their fingers with it.

B-1305. I saw a boy this morning who had a number of cuts on his hand?—My son bought a pen-knife and cut himself with it seven times on the first day.

B-1305. *Mrs. Wilson*: You said that boys under nine years of age are not allowed in the factory. As a medical woman I am interested to learn how you know when they are nine?—The doctor comes and certifies their age.

B-1306. Who is the doctor employed by you?—Dr. Ram Rakamal, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon.

B-1307. He certifies that they are nine. Is there any other form of medical inspection of the children?—He goes there once a fortnight and sees everybody there.

B-1308. I myself work in a hospital in this town at times. I have been interested to see the deterioration of physique in your children as compared with the children who form hospital classes. You yourself said that you have never noticed anything about their legs?—I have never noticed that they were different from other children whom I have seen in other works or in the streets playing about.

B-1309. Do you mean in any other carpet works?—No, in any other works.

B-1310. I am accustomed to seeing the ordinary population that go to the hospital and they do not normally have these curves?—Possibly, but I am no doctor and I am afraid I have never noticed it.

B-1311. Have you any idea as to whether there is any eye strain among the children? My experience of Amritsar is that in the winter mornings it is distinctly dark up to about 10 o'clock.—When it is dark they do not come in; they do not start weaving until it is full light.

B-1312. As far as you know is there any evidence of any eye strain among the children?—Sometimes they get a little conjunctivitis and we treat them ourselves; we always have zinc solution, but I do not think there is any more conjunctivitis in our factories than anywhere else in Amritsar. As a matter of fact I am very friendly with the lady doctors of the hospital and they have never pointed out to me anything on the subject.

B-1313. Your factories here are situated within the municipal limits?—Yes.

B-1314. Have you had any assistance from the Medical Officer of Health in regard to the sanitary conditions in your factories?—I do not think we have. We have never asked for assistance; we prefer to be independent.

B-1315. Have you anybody with public health qualifications visiting your factories to help you in carrying out sanitation? The Sub-Assistant Surgeon has no public health qualification. Is there anyone who comes in?—I do not think anybody comes in.

B-1316. *Miss Power*: You were giving us some information in respect of your Persian experience. Is carpet weaving in Persia done in factories or entirely in cottages or in both?—It is called a cottage industry, but it is really done in large centres and large villages in the houses of the Persians.

B-1317. Regulations were passed some time ago as a result of agitation; did that in any way break up those units and make them smaller units than they were before?—No, but they were already very small units. The largest factory I have seen in Kerman, this time that I visited it, is a factory containing eight looms.

B-1318. How many workers?—There may be four or five people on each loom.

B-1319. So that 40 people was the largest you saw?—Yes, and that is an exception. As a rule there were two looms in all houses which belonged to the owner of the house who was himself a weaver and employed labour where he could get it. If his sons and daughters or his wife can weave they will weave when they are not in the fields gathering crops.

B-1320. You gave us some statistics implying that the regulations had been to a certain extent effective?—The regulations have been effective inasmuch as the carpet factories seem to me to be better ventilated now than they were. I do not guarantee the accuracy of my figures.

B-1321. Who has enforced that improvement?—The Persian Government.

B-1322. Can you tell me by what means?—I was not there, but they sent a commission there.

B-1323. You do not know whether they have a regular system of inspection?—I have visited all the more important looms in Kerman; I have visited about 800 looms. I do not find that the conditions in the villages are better, but the doctors of the C. M. S. hospital have told me that they consider that the actual condition of the health of the little weavers is much better than it used to be, and they attribute it to the better ventilation of the factories.

B-1324. You do not yourself hold the opinion that it is impossible to regulate an industry which is carried on in small units?—It is absolutely impossible to regulate an industry which is carried on in cottages. We have an affiliated company in Mirzapur where it is carried on by cottage industry and you cannot regulate it. It is impossible to enforce any satisfactory regulations in a cottage.

B-1325. Have the altered conditions in the Persian factories affected their competitive powers at all? Has it in any way increased the cost of production?—No. They white-wash their walls and paint the windows; that is all they have done.

B-1326. They have put older children on the work, have they not? I understood you to say that the girls of two years of age are no longer employed?—Little girls never weave. They used to sit there from the age of

two years but they never wove until they were five or six. It is the sitting position that impairs the development of their bones. Now you do not see them on the looms any more, they do not put children on the looms so young.

B-1327 *Mr Clow* Are carpets made in cottages in Amritsar district at all?—I do not think so, I do not think there is any carpet cottage industry in Amritsar district.

B-1328 Is there any cottage or factory industry of this sort in the Indian States in the Punjab?—I could not tell you, I do not know of any.

B-1329 *Mr Taylor* In view of your experience in Persia can you tell us how the general conditions as to carpet weaving compare in Persia and India?—I think in India the factories are much better organized and the conditions of hygiene in the factories are far superior in India than in Persia.

B-1330 Can you tell us how the wages compare with the cost of living?—I do not know what the wages are now in the north of Persia, but in the south of Persia in Kerman where I have been, the wages are lower than they are here, I should say they are 20 per cent lower.

B-1331 How does the cost of living compare?—The cost of living is approximately same.

B-1332 So that wages in Persia are relatively lower than in India?—They are certainly lower and the cost of living is about the same.

B-1333 *Sir Victor Sassoon* Have you ever been asked to make advances for marriages among your workers?—I think we have.

B-1334 Have you any idea of the sort of amounts that they have borrowed from you?—They may come to very high figures.

B-1335 Can they borrow as much as a thousand or two thousand rupees if they wanted?—No, I do not think they go up to that.

B-1336 I was trying to find out the amount they might spend on a marriage?—It all depends on the class of men. One of our mechanics in the mills we have at Chheharta was married. His first marriage cost him Rs 500 and his second marriage Rs 1,200.

B-1337 Did he borrow all that?—I found out later that he borrowed all that money.

B-1338 From the firm?—No, the firm lent him Rs 200, but that is not the carpet firm, I do not think we have ever advanced money for marriages (Mr Davies) No, not specially for marriages.

B-1339 So that they may be owing money outside for marriage or something of that sort if you do not advance them enough?—(Mr Stevens) They have never asked us for advances for marriages, though possibly they have paid such expenses out of the advances they got from us. (Mr Davies) The majority of the weavers here do not get married until they are in a financial position to do so.

B-1340 How many workers are there on each loom?—(Mr Stevens) It depends on the width of the loom, I should say on a nine foot loom there are about four workers.

B-1341 And how many would there be on the largest looms?—Our largest loom is 45 feet, the number of workers would be in proportion, it is about one worker for 2½ ft.

B-1342 You say that you have 267 looms, you cannot really say how many people would be working on these looms because it depends on the width of the looms?—You can take a loom to be on an average 11 or 12 ft. The majority of the looms are 9 feet long, but we have looms up to 45 feet.

B-1343 So that there may be 8 or 10 people on a carpet, it depends on the width?—There may be. About two years ago when we were working to our full power I reckoned that we had about 5,000 people weaving carpets for us in India on a total of 860 looms.

B-1344 When there are four workers on a loom one would be a master weaver?—Yes.

B 1345 Would two of the boys be older boys?—I should say two would be young, if it is possible to say so $1\frac{1}{2}$ of the boys would be older boys, out of six, two would be junior workers

B-1346 Would one master weaver control more than one loom?—Sometimes two

B-1347 Does he arrange it so that generally he has a team of eight people working two small looms?—Some of them have a team of more than eight people, some of them even have four or five looms, but they have an understudy in charge of each loom to dictate the designs

B-1348 An assistant master weaver?—Yes, all the looms may belong to the same master weaver and they may all be in partnership on terms which they have arranged among themselves

(The witnesses withdrew)

**MUHAMMAD RAMZAN and RAJBAL, two master weavers
examined (Diwan Chaman Lall' interpreting).**

The Chairman: I asked that one of the master weavers should attend in case we required to question him and I asked the Secretaries to take one quite by chance so that there should be no possibility of selection in the matter. With a view to saving time I would suggest to my colleagues that we should ask Mr. Sastri to conduct the examination; I think we should all be satisfied to leave it in his hands.

B-1349. *Mr. Sastri:* Are you master weavers?—One of us a master weaver and the other is an assistant.

B-1350. How long have you done this work?—27 years.

B-1351. Do you work at one loom or have you more than one loom?—Two.

B-1352. Do you do piece-work or do you get so much per carpet from the proprietor?—Piece-work.

B-1353. How much are you paid for your piece-work?—One anna six pies for 1,100 stitches.

B-1354. How much would you get per day at that rate?—A strong healthy man would get 14 or 15 annas.

B-1355. *Mr. Chow:* Is that your remuneration for the day or the total amount given to you out of which you have to pay the boys?—My remuneration would be 14 or 15 annas and the boys would get 9 annas each.

B-1356. How many have you working under you?—I have 20 or 21 boys working under me.

B-1357. *Mr. Sastri:* After paying them you have 14 annas for yourself per day?—After paying out to these 21 boys at the end of the month I myself save Rs. 45 to Rs. 50.

B-1358. How often do you pay the boys; do you pay them every day or once a week?—Every fifteen days.

B-1359. *The Chairman:* Are the parents of the boys paid in advance?—We pay the parents of the boys.

B-1360. *Mr. Sastri:* Do you pay them in advance or subsequently?—We pay them in advance.

B-1361. Taking them on an average how much do you pay a parent?—Some boys get 8 annas a day some 6 annas, some 14 annas and some 15 annas.

B-1362. But how much do you give to a parent in advance in order to get the work of his son regularly?—During the first two or three months the boy is learning his work; nothing is paid to the parent or to the child for the first two or three months. It all depends on what amount of money the parent needs. In some cases the advance is Rs. 50 and in other cases Rs. 80.

B-1363. Would that amount be for two boys or for one boy?—We have given as much as Rs. 100 for one boy.

B-1364. Then would an agreement be written out? Yes, agreements are written out.

B-1365. Is the name of the boy mentioned in the agreement?—Yes.

B-1366. Do you usually specify the period during which the boy shall work out the advance?—No period is mentioned, but it is mentioned that this money is to be paid back in so many instalments. When the money is paid back the boy is released.

B-1367. Otherwise the boy must work for years?—That is right. Until the money is paid back the boy has to work for me.

B-1368. How is the calculation made of the amount that the boy has earned every day?—Every day we make a calculation of the amount of work done.

B-1369. Supposing I am a boy engaged by you, is it I or you or the two together or the parent in addition who determine how much I have done during the day?—We pay them by the month and we make the arrangement with the parent.

B-1370. If you pay them by the month, is it so much whatever the amount of work turned out by the boy?—We see to it that the boy is made to work a little more than he ought to work; if it is one rupee's amount of work we see that we get 17 annas out of the boy.

B-1371. You know how to get 17 annas work out of the boy?—Yes, a little more.

B-1372. Do you get work from the boys on all the days in the month or do you give them specified holidays, Sundays or Fridays?—On Fridays there are holidays. Also if he is ill he does not turn up.

B-1373. In settling the account with the parent do you take interest into account or do you only take account of the money you have advanced?—No interest is charged.

B-1374. If a boy does not turn out efficient work how do you get him to do it?—Beat him, hit him on the face, hit him with the fist and whatever we have handy at the time such as a stick.

B-1375. Does the boy sometimes run away?—Yes.

B-1376. When he runs away how is he brought back to work?—Very few run away; when they do run away we go after them or send the parents after them.

B-1377. Supposing a boy does not like to work under a particular master weaver, has he any chance of getting a transfer?—Provided he pays back the money we have advanced.

B-1378. Do the boys, so far as your observation goes, usually improve from week to week or from month to month?—As they go along I notice some improvement.

B-1379. If a boy during the first month turns out Rs. 7 worth of work and then owing to the improvement caused by practice he turns out Rs. 9 worth of work next month does he get the Rs. 9, or does the parent get credit only for the Rs. 7 stipulated?—We stick to our agreement.

B-1380. Whatever the efficiency of the boy?—Yes, within the time limit. The only limit is when they pay back the money.

B-1381. Do you occasionally have to go to Court in respect of the carrying out of the agreement?—Sometimes we get hold of such a boy and such parents and we have to go to Court to recover the amount.

B-1382. When you go to Court do you put this agreement in as evidence of the contract?—Yes, we present this agreement.

B-1383. And the Court accepts it as valid?—The Court accepts it as valid.

B-1384. *The Chairman*: During the period does the boy or do the parents get cash or are the parents credited with the accrued monthly amount; that is to say, is the money deducted from the loan or is it paid in cash?—We pay in cash to the boy's parents; if he is not a minor we pay him.

B-1385. Is the loan repaid by regular instalments or is it allowed to drag on?—If a boy has done Rs. 10 worth of work we will give him Rs. 8 and keep Rs. 2; that is how bit by bit we get the loan back.

B-1386. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Supposing the advance is Rs. 84; does the boy work for 12 months at Rs. 7 a month which makes Rs. 84 and does that wipe out the debt or what happens?—If he can afford it we take the whole Rs. 7 in payment of the loan, but if he cannot afford it then it may be that out of the Rs. 7, he will take Rs. 6 and we keep Re. 1.

B-1387. I suppose you would prefer to take only Re 1 because in that event it would be six years before the loans will have been repaid.—No, we prefer to get back cash, because sometimes we also have to borrow the money.

B-1388. *The Chairman* : What proportion of these boys go on to become master weavers?—There are some who become master weavers after ten years; there are those who have been working for twenty years and more and are still only assistant master weavers.

B-1389. *Sir Alexander Murray* : When you started did you start against an allowance?—No, I did not.

B-1390. What pay did you get?—Two rupees a month when I started work.

B-1391. What was your age?—About nine or ten years when I started.

B-1392. *Mr. Sastri* : When a boy is careless and does not turn out the expected work, besides punishing him is there a system of fining him?—We ourselves do not fine the boys.

B-1393. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is the age of the youngest boy you have working in your looms?—10 or 11. I do not think I have any boy under 10 working with me.

B-1394. *Mr. Cliff* : What is the lowest grade of wages that you pay for a boy of 10, if there is no advance?—My boys are all on advances.

B-1395. What is the lowest wage?—It comes on an average to 6 annas a day though it is paid on a monthly basis. If there are four or five days in which the boy is absent and those are cut out, the average will come to 6 annas a day for a month of 30 days.

(The witnesses withdrew. The Commission adjourned to Delhi.)

DELHI

NINTH MEETING

Saturday, 2nd November, 1929.

PRESENT.

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*)

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart. Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S. Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.	}	Mr. JOHN CLIFF. DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A. Miss B. M. LE POER POWER. Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. (<i>Medical Assessor</i>).
Mrs. J. C. CHATTERJEE (<i>Lady Assessor</i>)		
Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S. Mr. A. DIBDIN.	}	(<i>Joint Secretaries</i> .)

Mr. W. H. ABEL, Inspector of Factories, and Mr. MEHTAB SINGH Industrial Surveyor, Delhi.

B-1396. *The Chairman*: Would you, although it may involve a little repetition, tell us the organization of your Department with regard to the Delhi Province?—(Mr. Abel): I am the Inspector of Factories for the Punjab and for Delhi, having full powers to apply the Act. I have in Delhi one Industrial Surveyor who is a part-time Inspector under my control, and also notified for several sections under the Act, that is, for sanitation, hours of work and all the things which have nothing to do with engineering. He is resident here in Delhi, and I visit Delhi once or twice a month as I think necessary.

B-1397. I note in the memorandum you have submitted to us you tell us of a change which is going to take place next year?—The change is in the Punjab at the moment. Ordinarily speaking, any change in administration is first of all adopted by the Punjab and then it is for the consideration of any other Government, Delhi and the other two Administrations, the North-West Frontier and Ajmer-Merwara in which I have jurisdiction, to consider whether they would also like to adopt the same measure as the Punjab but it is for each local Government to consider for themselves whether they really want it or not.

B-1398. You say in your memorandum that in the case of the Punjab the Government "have decided to appoint one full-time Inspector with effect from April 1st, 1930, in the place of the five Industrial Surveyors of the Punjab under certain sections of the Indian Factories Act. Thus from April next there will be one Chief Inspector and one Inspector in the Punjab."—Will both of them be full-time officers?—Yes.

B-1399. You told us, I think, at Lahore that you thought that would contribute to the efficiency of your Department and enable more effective inspection to be carried out?—That is true. At the present moment, as I have full powers—and I am the only Inspector with full powers under the Act—it is necessary still for me to go to factories although they may have been inspected by Industrial Surveyors previously.

B-1400. Do you feel that your staff is adequate for the large area that you have to cover?—No, not by any means.

B-1401. You feel, as your colleagues in other countries do, I imagine, that greater staff could be usefully employed?—It would be extremely useful; the more staff we have the more work we can do. At the moment there is very

much work in factory inspection which is left undone that could be done if we had a larger and better staff.

B-1402. I take it from what you have already told us that it is so recently that the Factories Act came into operation that you have a great deal of difficulty with certain employers in getting them readily and willingly to observe the Act?—That is so. The Factories Act actually in India is yet a young Act, and it was drastically amended in 1922. Even now we are not actually up-to-date and we have not been able to get employers really to realize that the enforcements which are now law should be carried out.

B-1403. You have not yet arrived at a stage when employers think it bad form to be evading the Act?—We have not arrived at that stage yet.

B-1404. *Mr. Bala*. Discussing the question of efficiency you mention that, from what you have seen, the efficiency of the Indian worker is lower as compared with the foreign worker, and then you say that unless the labouring classes are well paid by increasing their wages it is not possible to increase their efficiency. Now, apart from the question of increasing the wages, could you suggest some other remedies for increasing the efficiency; for instance, the abolition of the drink evil, solving the housing problem and such other things?—Yes, to improve those conditions would naturally increase the efficiency of the worker, but I think there are two points which would help the worker to become more effective, such as standardizing his work or endeavouring to create a standard to which the worker would work up. For instance, trade unions could help, I think, in this direction so as to make a mechanic fit to be a mechanic when he has learnt his trade after apprenticeship.

B-1405. You know the trade unions at present are in an infant stage, and I should like to know how far the Government or the employer could be helpful in increasing the efficiency of the worker?—The employer could do very much. Certainly if better houses were provided for a worker and more interest taken in him, he would become more efficient and be more useful to his employer.

B-1406. I think I am inclined to agree with you that if every worker were provided with good accommodation the efficiency would increase, but the difficulty of the employer is that he cannot always get suitable land. Do you think it should be the duty of Government to acquire land at a reasonable cost for the employer if he wants to build houses for his workers?—It is very difficult to say; I am afraid I cannot give a reply to that question.

B-1407. It has been suggested in certain quarters that it might be possible for Government to grant loans, say, to the extent of 50 per cent. of the cost of quarters to be built for the working classes. Do you think it would be a desirable scheme?—I think any sound scheme whereby better houses could be produced and good housing facilities could be made for the worker would be a very useful thing.

B-1408. You know some of the factories here are working on a double shift, day and night?—Yes.

B-1409. How do you think night work affects the health of the workers as compared with day work although the night workers may get the same amount of sleep?—I am sure it is not as good for them.

B-1410. May I take it that you suggest shorter working hours for night workers?—No, I do not know that I should say that. I certainly think that a day worker is at a greater advantage than a night worker, but from the night workers that I have seen coming off duty I would not say that they are utterly fatigued or worn out. I do not suggest a reduction in working hours for the night worker.

B-1411. So far as the question of fatigue and health is concerned you think there is not much difference if the worker works for 10 hours either during the day or during the night?—There is not a great deal of difference. Certainly a worker would prefer to work by day if he had the choice.

B-1412. That is not necessarily so. In fact, I have come across cases in the hot season when workers prefer to work during the night?—That is possibly so in the hot season.

have not mentioned any views on the question of sickness insurance to you any suggestions to make on that point?—Sickness insurance is very useful. It is a matter for the employer. I think if it were made it would be profitable and useful to him. I am sure the Government will come to it.

Do you think the worker would be prepared to contribute to a sickness insurance fund?—That I am not prepared to say. In Lahore we have to consider whether sickness insurance should be brought in. We have found there that the workers consulted were rather reluctant to give up a part of their wages. The sum that they could afford to contribute is small that it would be hardly useful. On the other hand, the workers are not very interested in paying anything towards insurance. The only suggestion that we could get was that Government should take the matter up.

Power: Mr. Abel, you were giving evidence just now about the inadequacy of the inspection staff. I take it that your memorandum that "the staff is adequate" is a misprint; your meaning is that it is inadequate?—Yes. I am sorry about that. It is a misprint.

Chairman: That, of course, refers to the Province of Delhi and Punjab?—Yes.

Power: You also refer to the fact that the people who were brought from Rajputana and Central India have now very largely settled in Delhi. Do you say that there has been unemployment owing to the cessation of activities in the Public Works Department Workshops. Is it true that large numbers of workers are imported for a special job, and then sent back to their place of origin when that work is finished?—I have never heard of any scheme whereby arrangements were made to send them back, but in the case of importing these workers they were imported 10 or 12 or possibly 15 years ago for the Public Works Department, and they have more or less settled and made Delhi their home.

Is the construction industry in Delhi growing sufficiently quickly to absorb the unemployed in the construction work is over?—I do not think it is.

What does that mean that there is likely to be a permanent unemployment?—It will gradually decrease, but the decrease in the number of workers employed in the buildings having been finished is much greater than the increase in industry to absorb that amount of unemployment. There is a good deal of unemployment amongst unskilled workers in Delhi.

Do you say "no occupational disease has been reported or has come out in the evidence given by the Government Press they refer to cases of lead poisoning which they say came to their notice as a result of the buildings having been finished is much greater than the increase in industry to absorb that amount of unemployment. There is a good deal of unemployment amongst unskilled workers in Delhi."—Yes, under the Factories Act that cases of that kind in industrial establishments should be notified to the Factory Inspector?—There is no obligation on the Inspector to enquire, I have taken up his question rather carefully, but I have not heard of any occupational disease, particularly with reference to lead poisoning.

Do you think there should be an obligation on the employer to provide medical facilities?—I think it would be helpful; but no case has ever come up, and it is one of those things we take an interest in; I think that there was no such case.

Do you think that the "Industrial Efficiency" of workers in your memorandum is one of the chief factors governing the efficiency of the workers and unless the labouring classes are well fed by an increase in wages, it is not possible to effect any improvement in this respect?—You made any investigation in the course of your work as to the standard of living for an industrial labourer in your area?—No, I

B-1423. Have you any experience upon which to calculate whether the wage paid to the unskilled worker in this district will cover the cost of a family?—I think I have if I had time to go into it, but one would need to take the average over a number of months before you could really get anything material.

B-1424. Even if you have not investigated it scientifically, what is your conclusion: Is it that the average wage of the ordinary labourer will cover the family requirements like food, housing, clothes, etc.—It is only just enough; it does not leave anything for him to spare, or very little, and as a result my experience is that he does not eat as much as would be good for him in the ordinary way, and then on such a day as this, the *Dwali* day, he probably spends the whole of what he has saved which should have been spent on good food.

B-1425. You mean to suggest that if he has anything to spare, instead of spending all of it on living he spends some on the smaller luxuries and as a result goes without necessities?—That is what happens.

B-1426. That is what the rest of us would probably do?—Yes.

B-1427. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: Is it not a fact that the rents of working class quarters in Delhi have vastly increased?—That I am fairly sure about. I have no statistics about it, but house rents in Delhi have increased enormously within the last five or six years.

B-1428. Do employers of small factories give any allowance for house rent?—I have never heard of such a case.

B-1429. Dealing with the extent to which medical facilities are utilized by women you say "Women do not always make use of the medical facilities on account of their traditional *parda* system." Is it not a fact that women working in industries do not observe *parda*?—They observe no *parda* when they are actually inside the buildings, but I find that women are reluctant to go to the mill doctor for advice.

B-1430. Do you not think it is because women doctors are not provided for them? Naturally they might be shy of going to a man doctor?—If women doctors were provided, they would make more use of them than they do of the men doctors.

B-1431. Do you think if factories or groups of factories provided medical facilities with women doctors they would be better utilized?—I think that if there was a lady doctor either within the mill area or in the mill itself, the women workers would take advantage of her presence.

B-1432. So it is not absolutely that *parda* stands in the way?—Not absolutely *parda*, but it is the fact that they have been accustomed to *parda*.

B-1433. In your memorandum you talk of recreation grounds provided by employers. Could you tell me where these recreation grounds are?—The Birla Spinning Mills have provided very good facilities in this respect.

B-1434. How far are they made use of?—The workers do make use of them to a very great extent.

B-1435. Do women make any use of them?—I do not think I have ever seen women workers making use of them.

B-1436. You say that some workers are low paid. Are there not particular industries in which they are low paid?—There is no special industry in which they are lower paid than in others; but the average wage of the unskilled worker is low—about 10 as. a day.

B-1437. Is that for both men and women?—No, the woman gets slightly less, a woman worker probably gets 7 as. and a man worker 10 as.

B-1438. Does it mean that she does less work?—No; she usually does a much lighter work.

B-1439. *Colonel Russell*: In relation to fatigue you say "The break after putting in 6 hours work is very useful and does go a long way in preventing undue fatigue." Have you made any personal observations with regard to that matter?—I have frequently been in factories just before the rest interval,

it, by the look of many of the workers, that it was time
 .
 ere any statistics?—I have never taken any statistics in

Thaman Lall: Can you tell me something about exemptions from the Factories Act by the employers and by Government were asked for fairly frequently after the Act was amended. We gradually worked factories up to a state when it required so frequently. It was customary to give exemption owned printing press here nearly every year to enable it ush of work, and apart from that Government factories ntly for, and obtained, exemptions even up to this

ke it that the Government of this Province has been the fa. as exemptions are concerned?—They have had more rivately owned factories.

. take any action against the stone factory here for work- on they should have done?—Yes, I have done so recently, s ago. After having written to them several times regard- und rather a bad case of overwork and I lodged four or them for overworking their employees.

also owned by the Government?—It is a Government fac- e extent to the contractors. The work produced there is h? produce is Government, the machinery and buildings property, and it is controlled, I am told, to a very great ic Works Department.

fact that after you launched this prosecution, the Deputy sh, gave an order withdrawing the prosecution?—I lodged ourt, and I appeared when the case was first opened. The . that day as it could not be finished I think it was two in a newspaper that it was strongly rumoured that the er was withdrawing the cases. I wrote to the Deputy s if that was a fact, and the reply I received was that there nstances under which it would be preferable not to pro- use. I have not entirely agreed with the Government's t. The cases are still pending. No decision has yet been her they shall be withdrawn or proceeded with.

as the date of the institution of these cases, could you dea?—Three cases were made on the 16th February and ater on on April 25th, 1929.

irman: And still undecided?—Yes, they have not advanc-

Thaman Lall: One case was nine months ago and another nd they are still pending?—That is so.

e the other functions of the Industrial Surveyor here?—I describe them himself, but he is the officer in charge of er the Department of Industries, Punjab. Part of his ade prices to look into any problem regarding industries hat he has a laboratory here as a science man for making ipality, for the Health Department, Chambers of Com- rs and anyone who cares to bring anything for analysis.

he is a sort of Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, Che- . Collector of Statistics, apart from the other duties that your Department?—That is so.

inspite of the fact that you have got a very able Indus- he is not in a position to cope with all the work?—It lt for him. Sometimes it must also be very embarrassing bjects to deal with.

B-1452. A question was asked by Mr. Birla about the efficiency of the workers and their drinking habits. Have you any statistics in regard to their drinking habits or the alleged drinking habits of the working classes here?—No, I do not keep such statistics.

B-1453. *Mr. Clow*: Is drink a serious evil?—I do not think it is really a serious evil. It is noticeable once or twice a year.

B-1454. *Mr. Cliff*: Is that the Scotch New Year's Day?—No.

B-1455. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: In his memorandum the Industrial Surveyor mentions the fact that the average wage of the unskilled worker was about 10 as.?—Yes.

B-1456. In their memorandum the Punjab Chamber of Commerce have mentioned that the question of efficiency is not really governed by housing conditions, better conditions of living and so on. You do not subscribe to that view?—No, I do not. I think that the more you look after the worker the more efficient he would become, the elements being good housing, good food, education, recreation and welfare work.

B-1457. You have mentioned in your memorandum that there has been a reduction of hours without any reduction of pay and that the workers welcomed it?—Yes.

B-1458. If the working day were reduced to an 8 hour day, do you think that the workers would welcome that?—I think the workers would naturally welcome that, if they get exactly the same pay for an 8 hour day, as they get for a 9 or 10 hour day.

B-1459. The Washington Convention gave an exemption as far as India was concerned and fixed the limit at 60 hours the explanation given being that the conditions were different in India. Do you find that the conditions are different in any way which would justify Government in keeping to 60 hours instead of 48?—I find that the worker here in India is very much slower getting on his job than in Europe; as a result a good lot of time is wasted in starting and stopping. He is ready, to get on to his job and then wait for half an hour before he really starts. He is also very ready at the end of his six hours or even before that to prepare for closing down. So that if the hours were reduced very much more, a considerable proportion of his day or the same proportion would, I think, still be spent in starting and stopping and production would suffer very heavily.

B-1460. Do you mean to say that the average worker does not get there before the usual time for opening the factory?—He does get there before time. But he is, very slow. I find that the worker will get on his job a quarter hour, half an hour, possibly longer than that, before the time he should be there. Nevertheless he is even longer than that in starting on his job.

B-1461. If he is slow at work that is also a matter of efficiency?—Exactly.

B-1462. If you improve the efficiency you will improve the method of work too?—If you could improve the efficiency then you would improve the output.

B-1463. Is not that a vicious circle? Can you not improve the efficiency of the worker by reducing the hours of work and increasing his pay?—I think that a moderate line will have to be taken. The average factory worker now does not put in a 10 hour day.

B-1464. Do you seriously mean that the worker who does put in a 10 hour day now-a-days has any leisure left for recuperation of any sort?—I quite agree that he has very little. But if he is persuaded to put in a full 9 hour day and actually work those 9 hours, both the employer and himself would gain very considerably.

B-1465. Is there any arrangement here whereby either the technical worker or the unskilled worker is being trained in order to increase his efficiency?—Not that I am aware of.

B-1466. A question was put to you about land for housing the workers. Would it not be better if either the State or the Municipality undertook the

task of providing houses for the working classes?—I should think it would. I believe that has been tried in Bombay and has not been successful.

B-1467. There are other reasons why it has not been successful. The reasons were that the workers were not consulted on the type of houses that were built. They were too hot in summer and too cold in winter. It was not a case of the workers not wanting better facilities for housing?—I certainly think whoever put up good quarters and made houses for workers would reap the benefit of them in the efficiency of the worker.

B-1468. *Mr. Cliff*: The memorandum of the Industrial Surveyor records that there are 60,000 industrial workers in Delhi, whereas you record 10,443?—Yes.

B-1469. You also say that these workers, are employed in 61 factories?—That is so.

B-1470. Can you tell me whether there has ever been a census of the factories in Delhi other than that 61?—Not that I am aware of.

B-1471. Would the factories and workshops in Delhi be recorded in the census in 1921? Would they take a census of the factories there, or is that a census of population?—I think it was only a census of population.

Mr. Clow: There were industrial figures in that census, I think, of establishments employing ten or more.

B-1472. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you an approximate idea of the number of unregulated factories? Have you had any experience?—Only from observation. The number of unregulated factories employing ten persons or more in Delhi must be twice or three times as many as those that are under the Factories Act at the present moment.

B-1473. Have you visited any of these factories?—Yes, many of them.

B-1474. Can you tell the Commission what kind of conditions you saw in those unregulated factories?—The conditions are not too good; small children are employed; the workshops themselves are very crowded, very small and very dirty. They leave very much to be desired.

B-1475. Do they work long hours?—Yes, they do.

B-1476. Longer than under the Factories Act?—Very much longer.

B-1477. Have you any idea about the prevailing rates of wages?—No.

B-1478. With regard to the difficulty of obtaining what in your judgment is a satisfactory penalty for contravention of the Factories Act now, is there any means of forming public opinion which has been adopted by your Department other than prosecutions in courts?—I do not know of any.

B-1479. The Chairman suggested by question that you had not reached a stage where it was regarded as being bad form to contravene the Act. I was wondering whether your Department ever did any propaganda work with regard to the observance of the law?—We never have undertaken any propaganda in that respect, I do not think the ordinary person would be sufficiently interested.

B-1480. As far as I know from your report given to us at Lahore, you have not sufficiently interested the magistrates even?—Yes, that is so.

B-1481. I wonder whether with this experience of having had the administration of this law, you have reached any conclusion as to whether by circular letter or by articles in periodicals or the Press, you could create a stronger and more virile public opinion?—I think it would be very difficult. Often cases are reported in the press. Also there have been some writings in the press particularly from the other Provinces regarding small fines. I do not think that will help very much.

B-1482. Has this ever been the subject of a resolution or discussion in the Legislative Assembly?—No. I think the only discussion that has taken place will be my annual reports and my letters to the Government authorities concerned.

Mr. Clow: The Assembly in 1929 did agree to a substantial enhancement of the maximum penalty for contravention of the Act.

B-1483. *Mr. Cliff*: Since that date, with regard to the enforcement of the law in very serious cases to which Mr. Abel called our attention the other day, has there been any action taken by the responsible Ministers with a view of creating public opinion even in the Assembly?—No. With regard to what was happening in Delhi, when I reported to the Deputy Commissioner that the fines were not sufficient, he replied that he had instructed his magistrates to pay more attention to these matters and that fines should be heavier. That has had a slight effect.

B-1484. That is as far as it has gone up to the present?—Yes.

B-1485. You make a reference in your memorandum that unskilled labour has not made any progress or has not made progress during the last few years? Has there been any real attempt to train unskilled labour?—As far as I know, none.

B-1486. Having in mind the illiteracy and the helplessness of this population, is it to be expected that there will be an improvement unless they are aided and trained?—Certainly not.

B-1487. You said that sickness insurance would be useful. May I ask you whether you mean by being useful it would be helpful?—It would be helpful to the worker.

B-1488. Would it be helpful to the industry as well as to the worker?—Yes, I should think it would be.

B-1489. With regard to contributions, I take it that you accept the canon that no one should be called upon to pay except in so far as he is able to pay?—Unless you fix some definite rate such as a percentage of pay or something of that sort, you would have most people saying that they were not able to pay.

B-1490. You cannot put upon the poorest people of the land a burden heavier than their capacity to pay?—That is so.

B-1491. *Mr. Ahmed*: You remember when we visited the Government Press this morning we saw many workers there who were not very healthy. Is that due to overwork under the piece-work system or to insanitary conditions of their dwelling?—I think it is more a case of the type of person that is recruited. The conditions in that Press are good; lighting and ventilation are good; hours of work are not excessive; the rates of pay are good; the quarters they live in compare favourably with others. I think it is more a point of the type of person that is recruited for the work. There is one other thing that may be the cause of the workers there not appearing to be physically fit, and that is the press is comparatively new and the workers there might have been imported from other Provinces where the physique is not quite so good as it is here. I cannot think of any other reason. The work that they do is not unhealthy.

B-1492. Increased wages, good housing, facilities for education and recreation, supply of pure drinking water and such measures will increase the efficiency of the workers?—Yes, that is so.

B-1493. Will that not be a great help to the employer as well?—It would; because it would enable the worker not only to get more pay, but to earn more.

B-1494. They would be able to discharge their duties more satisfactorily?—Yes, that surely would happen.

B-1495. Do you think that it would be a good thing if Government granted loans to the employers for the purpose of acquiring land for housing workers?—I imagine it would help the employers to put up quarters for their workers.

B-1496. Does not working in the night cause a lot of accidents owing to the peculiar nature of the work and various other difficulties?—I do not know that accidents are more frequent during night than during day.

B-1497. Are they not more likely to occur?—Yes, they are more likely to occur, because the worker is less likely to be alert.

B-1498. It would be better for the worker to work at day than at night?—Undoubtedly better.

B-1499. Is it not difficult for him to work at night for eight to ten hours at a stretch?—He gets the rest interval in the night exactly the same way he does in the day.

B-1500. But he has to pass sleepless night?—Exactly.

B-1501. With regard to the sickness insurance scheme as to which Mr. Birla asked whether the workers would be willing to contribute, do you think it reasonable and feasible to ask the workers to contribute towards any such scheme?—If you do not get something from the workers you will be putting a tax on the industry. If the worker is going to be benefited from the insurance I think it is reasonable that he should be expected to contribute something towards it, however small.

B-1502. *Sir Alexander Murray*: In his memorandum, the Industrial Surveyor says that "the industrial employer is given facilities for the grant of Government land on favourable terms for purposes of building workers' houses." Can you tell us something about it? (Mr. Singh) I am afraid I do not know anything about it, except that one of the cotton ginning factories applied to Government for the grant of Government land at reasonable prices for the construction of coolie quarters and Government complied with their request.

B-1503. In how many cases did Government extend similar help?—I know of two cases.

B-1504. If any other employer in Delhi comes to Government with a similar request is he likely to receive the same consideration?—I think so, if the land belongs to Government.

B-1505. Do you know whether there is anything corresponding to that in the Punjab or in any other Province?—I know only so far as Delhi is concerned; I do not know of any other Province.

B-1506. Do you consider that the statistics of the cost of living compiled by the Industrial Surveyor are fairly accurate?—So far as the prices of commodities are concerned, they were taken from Government publications. But so far as house rent, social functions and cotton piece goods are concerned, we had to cover fresh ground and we have done that to the best of the resources at our disposal.

B-1507. As regards the variation in the cost of living. You give eleven different items, add up their prices, divide the total by 11 and call that the average cost of living for the period?—Yes.

B-1508. Now take sugar. In 1924, the price was 92 and in 1925 you say that the price rose to 349. By taking the actual figures 92 and 349 without weighing them properly you make your calculations faulty. Supposing, a man eats one maund of wheat in a week he may eat only one pound of sugar in a month. According to your calculation you have given the same weight to wheat as you have given to sugar. Have you any idea how much sugar a man will consume in the time that he takes to consume one maund of wheat or *bajra* or *jowar*. Will it be one pound?—I have no idea; I cannot say.

The Chairman: I think it is like reckoning the cost of the meal on the cost of the mustard.

B-1509. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Mr. Abel, dealing with the question of unemployment I think you said that that was due to the stoppage of building operations in Delhi?—(Mr. Abel) Yes.

B-1510. There must have been many thousands of workers engaged in building operations in Delhi?—There must have been probably 20,000 or more.

B-1511. What has happened to them?—They gradually disappeared. Many of them doubtless have gone back to their homes. Some of them have found employment here in Delhi.

B-1512. And many of them must be out of employment at the present moment?—Exactly.

B-1513. Do you know anything about the working of the double shift system in connection with the building operations in Delhi?—They did that when the Public Works Department had a great deal of work to do. But it was chiefly unskilled work. The difficulty arose that it was not possible to get skilled workers in order to put on an extra shift. When the application came in for exemption for these works, knowing that unemployment was prevailing in this Province, I suggested that an extra shift of workers should be put on. The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department said that it was not possible owing to the fact that there were not enough skilled workers. He said that it could not be done.

B-1514. Many of the workers employed in the building operations in Delhi must have been skilled workers. Is it the case that they have found employment elsewhere?—I do not know where the skilled workers could have dispersed. The work of stone masons is a specialized work.

B-1515. In connection with printing presses you said that probably these workers were recruited from other places. You went through the Government Press to-day and you are in the habit of going through presses periodically, I take it?—Yes.

B-1516. What have you to say of the physique generally of the workers in the press as compared with the workers you see in other industrial undertakings to which you go?—I think the standard of physique in the press we saw to-day was lower than that in the iron foundry or even in textile mills.

B-1517. Why should that be so?—I think it is a matter of recruitment. I know of no other reasons.

B-1518. *Mr. Clow*: You do not think it is because they are overworked?—No, the hours of work in the Government Press are 48 hours a week, normally; occasionally they go to 52 hours; and on very rare occasions, once in year, they apply for exemption to work 60 hours. I do not think it is a case of overwork.

B-1519. *Sir Alexander Murray*: You have stated in your memorandum that the average worker instead of working 10 hours a day is not more than 8½ hours on his job. Supposing you reduce the 10 hour day to an 8 hour day or 9 hour day, how long do you think the average worker will be on the job? Do you mean to say that there is a possibility of the time spent on the job also being correspondingly reduced?—I think he would still spend some time not on his job. In an 9 hour day he will be on his job for 8 or 8½ hours. It is the habit of the worker to take rest between 8 and 9 in the morning for a quarter of an hour.

B-1520. The Certifying Surgeon suggests the possibility of children between the ages of 12 and 15 years being periodically examined in order to see whether their health is maintained. He further suggests that that should be continued up to the age of 20, and that, if necessary, medical officers should be appointed by Government, their pay being charged to the mill owners. Would that be a reasonable proposition—that the mill owners should pay for Certifying Surgeons?—I do not think so.

B-1521. He gives, as his reason, that it would be necessary to see how the health of the children continued from year to year. On the other hand, he gives statistics which show that during 1928 he examined 1056 children, and only 10 of these were declared unfit on account of disease. That is less than 1 per cent. Do you think that would justify the appointment of a medical man to check the health of the children from year to year?—I hardly think it would.

B-1522. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: In the report of the Industrial Surveyor it is stated that an unskilled worker expects his wife and children to work whereas a skilled worker does not; so that in working out the family budget of an unskilled worker you would have to take into account the wages earned by his wife, and in the case of a skilled worker you would only have to take into account the man's own wages. Do you agree with that statement?—I should think that the families of men workers earning up to Rs. 150 a month would do something towards contributing to the upkeep of the house.

B-1523. Whether they are skilled or unskilled?—I should have thought so. I have not very great experience.

B-1524. From what you have noticed would you say that it was not only so in the case of the unskilled worker but in the case of the lower paid skilled worker too?—I think it is so in the case of the lower paid skilled worker too.

B-1525. If night schools were started for the benefit of skilled and unskilled workers, do you think they would take advantage of them—if there were no fees or very small fees?—Skilled workers would take advantage of them to some extent, but I do not think that unskilled workers would.

B-1526. Even if there was a small fee charged?—Not very many. There would be a certain proportion of the skilled workers who would take advantage of free schools; but I do not think that either the skilled or unskilled worker is sufficiently ambitious to pay anything in order to learn at a night school.

B-1527. Am I right in thinking that your view is that if there was no fee you might fill a school, whereas if there was a fee you would not expect to fill the school?—That is so.

B-1528. On this question of the efficiency of the workmen, I take it that, compared with Europe, we have to take his efficiency when he is working all out, and we have to allow for his habit of being a slow beginner and leaving his work more quickly. There are two sides?—Yes.

B-1529. When he is working all out would you say that his efficiency compared very badly with the European worker?—I am of opinion that he compares unfavourably.

B-1530. And on the top of that you have this habit of his of delaying beginning?—Yes.

B-1531. So it is a question of his always being slow in getting on to his work—quite apart from how much work he is capable of doing?—That is so.

B-1532. Supposing better housing were provided for workers but that they had to pay a little more rent for it, do you consider they would take advantage of it, or do you think they would still prefer to live where they are because it is cheaper?—Judging by the fact that even when they have good quarters provided for them they are very keen to sub-let, it would seem that if bigger houses were provided for them at a bigger price, they would not take very much advantage of them. It is a matter of education—training the man up to appreciate something more.

B-1533. Am I right in thinking that the worker would only take a better house if he felt he could make more out of it by sub-letting and that he would not take it if he were not allowed to sub-let?—If the cost was heavier I doubt if he really would take it.

B-1534. *Miss Power*: Sir Alexander Murray put the question that there was a very small percentage of children whose physique was poor, and that this possibly showed that there was no necessity for the appointment of full-time medical officers. Do you not think the figures possibly reflect rather the inadequacy of the type of medical inspection made by the Certifying Surgeon than the actual state of health of the children?—The Certifying Surgeon does his work well but there is probably quite a lot in what you say—that all Certifying Surgeons should be conscientious men.

B-1535. You do not accept these figures as being typical of the standard of health of the average child who applies to get into factory labour?—Not absolutely, but it is very seldom that I find a child in a factory who is physically unfit, and whom I have to send back to the Certifying Surgeon to be re-examined.

B-1536. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: You make the statement that “there has been retrenchment in some industries owing to several causes. In order to minimize the cost of production, there is a general tendency for the introduction of labour-saving appliances and high speed machinery in the industrial undertakings generally”. And you go on a little later to support that statement by saying that “the iron foundry

industry is in a depressed condition owing mainly to the reported poverty of the yield of sugarcane crop in the surrounding districts coupled with increased external competition in recent years." Then the whole problem that we are asked to investigate depends upon the economic production of factories?—(Mr. Singh) These are the causes which have led to the surplus of labour in Delhi.

B-1537. You say labour saving and high speed machinery has to be brought in in order to meet external competition, and as a result unemployment increases?—Surely.

B-1538. The capacity of the employer to employ the number of hands usefully depends upon his ability to produce on a basis by which he can compete successfully with foreign imports?—Quite so.

B-1539. And therefore any proposals to increase the cost of production would probably have the effect of increasing unemployment, because if the factory is unable to produce on an economic basis, and to successfully compete, in the open market it would have to shut down?—Quite so.

B-1540. Therefore the problem has to be examined from the point of view of successful competition?—To some extent.

B-1541. And in order to get that successful competition labour must be efficient and the management must be efficient?—Quite so.

B-1542. Now if management and labour are both efficient, if the machinery employed is up-to-date, then there is a fair chance of that industry prospering and being a source of larger employment?—Yes.

B-1543. Anything that militates against successful enterprise would adversely affect all the industries concerned?—Surely.

B-1544. Then you say "The development of home industries is known to play an important role in the national welfare of a country." And again "The solution of the problem of economic salvation of the masses fundamentally lies in the organization and development of home industries." Dealing with the question of labour and its well being, would you advocate a solution on the lines you have indicated, namely, an increased number of successful enterprises in industrial development with both management, and labour freely efficient?—Yes.

B-1545. And the cost of production should not be such as would allow successful competition. These factors have to be borne in mind in coming to a decision on these problems?—Yes.

B-1546. *Mr. Clow*: Is primary education compulsory in this province?—In certain municipal wards.

B-1547. It is not general?—No.

B-1548. Are these wards in which primary education is compulsory wards in which industrial workers live?—No.

B-1549. You mention that there is undue competition with Indian States. To what States are you referring and to what industries?—Sarawar, Kishan-garh and Vijyanagar.

B-1550. This does not refer to Delhi?—No.

B-1551. Have you any responsibility for the enforcement of the Boilers Act?—No.

B-1552. Is your work carried on entirely with Government funds or do you receive contributions from employers?—The Industrial laboratory was established from funds contributed partly by industrialists, but now it is being maintained by Government.

B-1553. Employers are no longer contributing to it?—No.

B-1554. Could you give us a specific instance of any particular industry which is competing with the industries of British India?—Cotton ginning and pressing.

B-1555. How many ginning factories are there in the surrounding Indian States?—I know of seven.

3. *Miss Power*: You state that a large number of woman and children indiscriminately employed. Do you know whether there are more children employed in the unregulated workshops than there are in the regulated workshops?—In the thread-ball factories, of which there are about 18 in Delhi, from 40 to 200 women are employed making thread. What hours do they work?—Ten, eleven and twelve hours a day.

4. Can you answer my first question—whether there are more women and children employed in the unregulated workshops than there are in the regulated workshops?—We have no statistics.

5. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: You state that a maternity home has recently been started at the mills. Have any women been appointed in connection with it?—A woman has been appointed as midwife.

6. Is she a midwife or a nurse?—A midwife and a nurse.

7. Has she had any special training?—She is a trained midwife.

8. You mention the question of unsatisfactory sanitary arrangements in certain places. Has the matter been brought to the attention of the District Officer?—I have brought it to the notice of the Inspector of Factories under whom I act.

9. Has the Inspector been able to do anything?—Not to my knowledge.

10. You refer to welfare work. Do you think the proprietors of the mills are doing anything for the workers in this direction?—Libraries are provided for literate people and the illiterate take part in games.

11. Is there any particular organization existing which looks after the interests of the workers and which induces the people to avail themselves of these facilities?—There is a labour secretary, who entertains them.

12. Do you not think some outside agency would be able to do it better?—It would be very helpful.

13. *Colonel Russell*: You say in your memorandum: "The coolies engaged in the industrial operatives employed in the building trades in Delhi present not a pleasant spectacle, and suffer by comparison". By comparison with what?—Similar accommodation provided by the mills.

14. You are not comparing it with houses in Delhi?—No. I am comparing it with the houses provided by the employers.

15. You say "The food of the average worker is poor, and consists of inferior quality of flour, pulses, rice and ghee". Is it a fact that the workers are only supplied with inferior qualities of these things?—They are forced to purchase good qualities of food.

16. Do you know anything about vegetable ghee?—Yes. It is a commodity taken advantage of by the poorer classes.

17. Would you have any objection to it being prohibited, or do you think it is a valuable foodstuff in itself?—It is a commodity which is consumed by the poorer classes, but it is devoid of food value.

18. You refer to the question of medical facilities, and you say that they are not availed of owing to the fear of the worker of a loss of a day's wages. Is it a common experience that the men do not avail of medical facilities because of the fear of the loss of their day's wages?—They do not go if it means a long journey, because they would lose their day's wages.

19. What happens if a man is very sick?—Then he is attended by the doctor, or he is taken to the nearest medical man.

20. But they do make use of the medical facilities available?—Yes.

21. You refer in your memorandum to the general absence of statistics. Do you have a statistician?—Recently I have had an assistant appointed.

22. What is his training?—He is being trained now. His actual training will commence from the 1st January 1930.

B-1576. Who is training him?—He is getting training here, locally, in the Municipal Committee under me, and I propose to send him outside too.

B-1577. So that you anticipate that from the 1st January your statistics will be of greater value?—Yes.

B-1578. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: You state that the average wage of an unskilled worker is 10 annas a day. Would I be correct in saying that the average unskilled worker living on that wage is living on a starvation wage?—That is the minimum living wage for that class of worker.

B-1579. Is it or is it not a fact that a minimum wage of 10 annas a day for an unskilled worker is a starvation wage?—He can accommodate himself. He is accustomed to accommodate himself within that limit.

B-1580. You have given us in your memorandum a family budget for the unskilled worker. You say that this budget is for a family of five. You put down food at Rs. 17 a month. Does that work out to about 1½ annas a day per head?—Yes.

B-1581. Would you not agree with me that, taking into account that on food they are spending 1½ annas a day per head, that is a starvation wage?—It is an inferior quality of stuff which the man purchases. He takes sufficient food to fill his belly.

B-1582. Would it be correct to say that, because they spend only 1½ annas a day, many of the workers go without the usual two meals a day?—I have no experience.

B-1583. On what basis did you estimate the Rs. 17?—Flour.

B-1584. How much flour would you require for a family of five?—Five *chapatis* for the man, and five for the woman and 1½ for each of the three children.

B-1585. And what else?—And *dal*.

B-1586. That is all?—*Dal*, oil, common salt, pepper and turmeric.

B-1587. Supposing this is the diet that is given—one seer of *atta*, a little *dal* I presume, oil, salt and pepper for a family of five. No milk, no vegetable?—Nothing of that sort. Only on ceremonial occasions they take extras.

B-1588. Do I take it then that the average unskilled worker is living on this diet?—Yes.

B-1589. In the skilled worker's budget you have given in your memorandum, you provide Rs. 18 for food for a family of five. Do I take it that the average skilled worker's family is also living practically on this diet, at only a difference of one rupee a month?—Yes.

B-1590. It is not a healthy diet. Nor a nourishing diet?—No.

B-1591. A question was asked a little while ago as to whether these workers would be ready to pay a little more rent in order to go into a better class of houses. Is it because the margin of their wages is so small that they cannot afford to pay a single anna even towards extra rent?—In my opinion, they cannot afford to pay.

B-1592. In your memorandum you mention that the permanent workers in Delhi are 60 per cent., while (Mr. Abel) in his memorandum says they are 80 per cent?—That may be in regard to factory labour.

B-1593. There are two figures given, one is 60 per cent. and the other is 80 per cent.; which is the correct figure?—I have taken industrial labour as a whole, including the factory labour. I have calculated 60 per cent. as the total labour force which is permanent in Delhi.

B-1594. There are no proper methods of calculation?—Only from personal inquiries I have come to this conclusion.

B-1595. You say that you are "not aware of any appreciable degree of dismissals nor of any voluntary retirements." Is it correct that the average agreement that a man enters into when he seeks work in a factory is purely a verbal agreement?—Yes.

B-1596. So that at any time he can be discharged or dismissed?—Mostly that is the case.

B-1597. There is no security of tenure at all?—No, in most cases.

B-1598. You say “there is no marked distress noticeable amongst the industrial population in this province” and yet you say that many of the industries are passing through a period of depression. That would entail unemployment, I take it?—It will throw out of work a certain number of persons.

B-1599. You do not mean to imply that there would be no distress amongst those who have been thrown out of employment?—At present there is no marked distress amongst the industrial population.

B-1600. What do you mean by “no marked distress”?—They are not going without food or clothes.

B-1601. You mean even those who are unemployed and have no means of earning their livelihood?—They are earning enough for their maintenance.

B-1602. Would you agree with me that there would be distress if a man were thrown out of his job?—He will get some other job to earn his maintenance.

B-1603. Suppose he is not able to, considering that the industry is passing through a period of depression?—If he cannot earn anything, of course he will be in distress.

B-1604. Would you be in favour of a scheme for unemployment insurance in order to protect that particular class of worker?—I think the unemployment insurance, under existing conditions, might be productive of idleness. The thing is that industrial workmen are uneducated, they are illiterate, they do not realize their responsibilities at present; so it might encourage them to be idle.

B-1605. Have you any experience of the system of unemployment insurance in other countries?—No.

B-1606. What is your suggestion regarding training and promotion of workmen; have you any concrete suggestions?—The Government industrial schools can provide training for these people.

B-1607. You have got an industrial school here?—Yes.

B-1608. How many pupils have you got in that industrial school?—About 800.

B-1609. In your memorandum you say “The effects of contract work appear to be generally satisfactory to the parties concerned”. What do you exactly mean by that? Let me put it like this: Do you mean to imply that the average worker is willing to part with a portion of his earnings, which he has earned to a man who is a contractor who does no work himself and is pleased with the idea that he should part with a portion of his earnings to that particular contractor?—I mean the employer who gives a contract to the contractor. He gets an out-put from him, and the employee who works under the contractor gets his wages.

B-1610. Would you prefer such a system?—I wish to eliminate the middleman.

B-1611. Are you in favour of setting up unemployment exchanges?—Yes.

B-1612. You say “The cooly-camps housing the industrial operatives employed in the building trades in New Delhi present not a pleasant spectacle and suffer by comparison.” Would you be in favour of a comprehensive Housing Act which would undertake legislation in regard to housing?—I have no experience of it.

B-1613. What attempts have you made to find out whether the workers want better housing or not?—Have you any experience of that?—No.

B-1614. Have you made any attempts to investigate the prevalence of occupational diseases?—I have been enquiring every now and again during

the course of my duties, and I have never come across any case of occupational disease in Delhi.

B-1615. No special inquiry has been instituted?—No.

B-1616. Dealing with sickness insurance you quote the resolution of the Assembly that the Governor General should not ratify the Draft Conventions nor accept the Recommendations of the International Labour Conference. What is your personal view about this matter?—I am in favour of sickness insurance.

B-1617. In your memorandum you speak of amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act. You have made very helpful suggestions, if I may say so Mr. Mehtab Singh. Are they the result of your considered judgment and practical experience in this matter?—Yes.

B-1618. Dealing with the reduction of hours, you say: "There appears to be no possibility of reduction in maxima as was indicated in the recent speech delivered by the Employers' Delegate from this country at the last International Labour Conference." What do you mean by that? Do you mean that the employers are averse to it, or it would not be a desirable thing?—I mean that the existing imperfect development of industrial organization in India does not make room for reduction in the maximum number of hours.

B-1619. Do you mean to say that the employers are to blame for not organizing industry, or do you blame the workers?—The thing is that the Indian worker is less efficient as compared with the foreign worker.

B-1620. And therefore you want longer hours of work?—I do not want to adversely affect industry and, at the same time, the worker, because he is mostly employed on piece-work system at present, will not be able to earn what he is earning now if the hours of working are reduced.

B-1621. Dealing with Trade Combinations you say that the *Mazdur Sabha* met with no success. That was a local trade union that was formed, I believe, last year when the Assembly was in session?—Yes.

B-1622. Is it a fact that the employers generally refused to recognize the leaders of the *Mazdur Sabha*?—I cannot say.

B-1623. Knowing what you do, can you tell me whether the increase in the cost of living in Delhi has been greater than the increase in the wages of the workers in the periods that you mention in your memorandum?—I have given there the variations in the wages also.

B-1624. But what is your opinion?—That the wages have also fluctuated to some extent.

B-1625. In your opinion, have the wages kept pace with the cost of living in Delhi or not?—I cannot say.

B-1626. *The Chairman:* Mr. Mehtab Singh, how long you have held this present office?—Since 1924.

B-1627. And what is your previous experience of industry?—First of all for six years I was employed as a lecturer in science in the Gordon College at Rawalpindi, and for 5 or 6 years I was doing business in indigenous medicines, drugs, herbs and chemicals.

B-1628. You have given in your memorandum and in evidence some opinions about various schemes, for instance, unemployment exchanges, sickness insurance and also unemployment insurance. Have you made an estimate of the cost of those services?—No. I am asked by the Government to submit my opinions to them on these Bills and I make a personal study of the existing conditions and submit my views to the Government.

B-1629. But you did not carry out an investigation into the cost?—No.

B-1630. Do you know if any investigation has ever been carried out in India as to the cost from an actuarial point of view?—Not to my knowledge

(The witnesses withdrew.)

MUKERJEE, Mr. W. R. TAYLOR and Mr. SHRI RAM,
Representatives of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce.

The Chairman: Will you tell me about the organization of your Chamber of Commerce?—(Mr. Mukerjee) The organization of the Chamber was started in 1905. We have at present about 72 members including Europeans and Indians. We represent all interests, banking, mercantile, railway, etc., covering an area of the provinces of Punjab and Delhi and certain parts of Ajmer-Merwara and Rajputana.

Do you consider your membership fairly representative?—I think there are very few firms of importance in these provinces which are not members of the Chamber.

Are there any sub-divisions of your Chamber of Commerce in which members in specific industries meet together?—They are not exactly sub-divisions of the Chamber of Commerce, but there is an association here in Punjab called the Millowners' Federation of which my friend and colleague Mr. Ram is the President.

Does your Chamber as such deal not specifically with employers' questions but with general questions of trade and commerce?—We have various Standing Sub-Committees in which we take up different matters. For example, if there is any question relating to Industrial matters it will be dealt with by the Sub-Committee appointed for the purpose and if there is a question on banking, it will go to the Banking Sub-Committee and so on.

I notice that you express sympathy with the proposal for sick pay on a restricted scale. You say that the cost of the scheme should be borne equally in the proportion of one-third on the worker, one-third on the employer and one-third on the State. Do I take it that the members within your association are agreeable to bear their one-third?—I have referred this matter to all the employers and this is their consent.

You also agree to bear one-third in your second capacity as tax-payers on your income?—Yes.

Have you any evidence if the worker is willing to contribute his share?—No.

Has your association formed any estimate of the cost of a scheme of this kind?—No, we have not. We considered it as a general proposition; we have not gone into the details and we have not even considered about the practical difficulties in carrying out the proposal. There are practical difficulties in carrying out the proposal.

It is a kind of expression of good-will?—I think it can be put in that way.

Referring to the question of the method of payment of wages in the case of undertakings in the provinces of the Punjab and Delhi. Some of them pay wages fortnightly?—Yes. For instance, Mr. Taylor's case pays his labour fortnightly.

What kind of factory is this?—Carpet factory.

Are wages paid fortnightly in more than one carpet factory?—Yes. In the carpet industry we pay fortnightly.

You do not find the men objecting to that because we have had cases in some quarters that they would hate to be deprived of the monthly payment?—We have not found it so, because we have always paid them monthly.

Probably if we were to pay them on a monthly basis they would object strongly, having got so accustomed to the fortnightly payment.

Your experience is that it has not done them any harm to be paid fortnightly?—No.

B-1645. In your memorandum you make an interesting reference to prohibition. You say "As regards alcohol and drugs, absolute prohibition will not only raise the moral standard of the worker but will also increase his efficiency".—(Mr. Mukerjee) I think that necessarily follows.

B-1646. Do I take it that the members of your Chamber of Commerce are ready for that proposal applying not only to the workers but to everybody?—On that I have some doubts.

B-1647. *Mr. Chow:* As regards the payment of wages in the carpet factories, is that a payment to the contractors or to the workmen?—(Mr. Taylor) Payment to both; we pay to the contractors who in turn pay to the workmen; it is a general distribution.

B-1648. They do pay them actually fortnightly?—Yes.

B-1649. Is there much delay in the payment of wages in this province?—(Mr. Mukerjee) They are paid monthly. If they are paid, say, on the 15th of this month, they will be paid exactly on the 15th of next month.

B-1650. What is the usual period lapsing between the end of the month and the payment?—About 15 days.

B-1651. Would you find it very inconvenient if you were compelled to pay, say, within 2 or 3 days?—It is almost impracticable, as it would be impracticable to make up the pay-sheet even.

B-1652. You could not do it?—I think big industries cannot do it.

B-1653. It is done in other countries?—I think in other countries they pay weekly.

B-1654. Surely that is more difficult because more accounting has to be done?—I do not think so.

B-1655. If a weekly system were adopted, would there be the same difficulty?—I think the difficulty would be greater for the change from the system which obtains at present would not be liked by the workers.

B-1656. But what is the difficulty in calculating the wages due in two days? Is it lack of staff?—It may be due to lack of staff, but in case the suggested change of payment is enforced, *i.e.*, within the first week of the succeeding month it would lead to unnecessary increase in the staff who may not have enough work for the whole month.

B-1657. Take a factory employing 1,000 persons. Suppose Government compels you to pay wages in three days how much extra staff would you require?—(Mr. Shri Ram) The position here is quite different from the position in the west. Here we have not only to calculate the monthly wages due to the man, but we have also to calculate the wages due to him under the piece work system. We have to make deductions for rent, bad work, advances paid, provident fund and so many other things. We have to make all these calculations through human agency, unlike in the west where they employ machines even for ordinary calculations. Moreover from time immemorial the workers here including the clerks have been accustomed to receiving their wages once a month. Of course those employed on inferior jobs such as road-making and building receive their wages weekly or fortnightly. The rest would not like to receive their wages weekly or fortnightly.

B-1658. Because they would feel that their status has been reduced?—Exactly.

B-1659. The average man's wage does not vary from month to month?—It varies on account of various causes such as his absence from work, the advances he has received, and deductions for bad work. The regularity of attendance here is nothing like the regularity of attendance in the west. That is why the calculations take a long time to finish.

B-1660. Are advances generally given to the great majority of the workers?—So far as my mill is concerned we give two sorts of advances, provident fund advances and pay advances. Provident fund advances are

expenses such as marriage and pay advances are given every 15 days for small expenses before they get their pay.

Generally what proportion of the pay is given to them as in the case of the monthly wage workers we give anything from 30 per cent. and sometimes even 75 per cent. of the pay for the old hands we give up to 50 per cent.

Do you charge interest on these advances?—We do not charge interest against pay; but on advances from the provident fund for buying land, for marriages and so on we charge 7½ per cent.

Do other employers charge any interest on advances against pay?—I do not think anybody charges interest on such advances. The small charge on provident fund advances is intended just to keep them from being used for other much advances.

Birla: It has been suggested that the employers in Delhi in favour of sickness insurance being introduced and that they should contribute their own quota to the sickness insurance fund. In a specific case of your own mills do you think that you would contribute towards such a fund?—We have all of us sym- sickness insurance fund. So far as my mills are concerned, in the case of sickness insurance I do not think any of our workers would contribute towards such a fund. He is helped when he is sick in some form or other. He is helped when he is absent from attendance is concerned, which he gets free. Even when he is given some form of help. But if it came to a question of contribution it would all depend on the conditions then existing in the industry.

Do you think you may be doing many things voluntarily, but if you are compelled to contribute to the sickness insurance fund would you do it?—I do not know what that amount of contribution will be. If it were too large certainly we would fall out of the scheme.

Do you think it is fair to say that the expression of sympathy expressed in this memorandum is a sort of lip sympathy?—It is exactly that, but as the Chairman put it, just an expression of sympathy.

Do you think that your workers will be prepared to contribute to a sickness insurance fund?—Certainly not. It was years before we could make a system compulsory; it had been optional all the time.

When did you start this provident fund?—About 12 or 14 years ago.

What percentage do you contribute?—Jobbers, mistries and clerks contribute 1/12 of their pay and we contribute an equal amount. It is the same scale for the lower staff. People getting Rs. 10 and below contribute 8 as. to 12 as. a month.

Do you think your worker does generally if he is ill?—Does he take advantage of the medical facilities provided by you, or does he prefer to go to his own village?—If he has ordinary illness, certainly he takes advantage of the medical facilities which I fortunately have in abundance. He is surrounded on all sides with medical institutions like the Tibbia Hospital, the Willingdon Medical School, and the Municipal dispensary which we contribute a good deal. Those who have been ill and those who have not become permanent residents of the village go away to their villages.

Do you think if a man is seriously ill and wants to go to his village and get the benefit due to him, would you be averse to pay him the cost of any unknown doctor; or how would you manage it?—It is not easy to get doctors in our remote villages.—We are aware of this. We pointed them out when the question came before the Government referred to them in their letter to us.

B-1672. In your opinion apart from the difficulty of contributions, which as you say is a small thing the employers might agree to, there are other difficulties, viz., about administration. Therefore you think that at present it does not seem to be a practical proposition?—Yes, I think, so.

B-1673. All the same you are in sympathy with the object in view and you would desire that some sort of scheme should be promulgated?—Yes.

B-1674. In your memorandum you say: "As far back as 1920 a suggestion was made by Government as to the desirability of interesting Local Governments in the matter of housing which this Chamber fully endorsed and it is understood that Government always assist by leasing out its land for industrial concerns on favourable terms". Is that your own experience too?—My experience is just the reverse of it. I do actually want to build houses for my workers. But it is simply impossible to get any sort of help from Government. So far as the Local Government is concerned they are quite willing to help. In one case they recommended to the Imperial Government that a plot of land might be sold to me at Rs. 4 per square yard. The Imperial Government turned down that proposal and I had to pay Rs. 9 a square yard for that land.

B-1675. What is the sort of help you want from Government?—We must get land somewhere near the factories. Then we should get advances of money on favourable terms. In their circular letter No. 628, dated 12th August, 1920, the Government of India clearly stated that the Local Governments and Municipalities would help us financially in building houses for the workers; but in practice it is impossible to get anything out of them.

B-1676. You suggest that Government should not only give you lands at reasonable prices, but that they should also grant you loans if necessary.—Yes.

B-1677. It has been suggested in certain quarters that if the working hours were reduced the efficiency of the worker would be increased. Can you throw any light on that point?—I doubt if we could get any more output in proportion if we cut it to 8 hours. At present for a 10-hour day we are getting 8½ hours work.

B-1678. What is your spinning efficiency?—I could not tell you since I have been out of touch for the last six or seven months. I think it might be about 90 per cent.

B-1679. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: How many ounces do you get per spindle on 20's?—With warp spindles we get 6½ to 6¾ ounces.

B-1680. *Mr. Billa*: I think it would be more appropriate if I put the question as to what efficiency you get. Because so far as the number of ounces are concerned, it all depends on the speed of the machine and the quality of cotton. With cotton of bad quality the speed would have to be reduced and consequently the output of thread in ounces will be diminished. I want to know what efficiency you get.

Sir Victor Sassoon: How is he going to work that out?

B-1681. *Mr. Billa*: Ounces are not essential from my point of view. You think it is 90 per cent.—I think so, but I am not quite sure.

B-1682. This 10 per cent. goes towards doffing, breakages and contraction and all that sort of thing?—Yes.

B-1683. If we reduce the working hours from 10 to 8 what do you think will be the efficiency of the worker converted into 10 hours production? In the ordinary course there must be a 20 per cent. reduction.—Efficiency does not vary with the number of hours.

B-1684. What will be the percentage of efficiency converted into 10 hours production?—There might be 1 or 2 per cent. better efficiency. I do not think there is room for much. When we were having a 16-hour day, the efficiency was the same as when we had a 12 or 13-hour day. Now, I think it is all different and there is not much room for efficiency.

B-1685. Could you furnish the Commission with a statement showing what would be the increase in the cost of production if the working hours were reduced from 10 to 9 or from 10 to 8?—If the working hours are reduced from 10 to 8 per day, it will mean an increase of 16 and 13 per cent. in the cost of yarn and cloth, respectively.

B-1686. Because I think that would be very helpful in finding out what the increase in the cost of production would be in a cotton mill, if any question of the reduction in hours were considered.—I will work that out.

B-1687. You have experience of the double shift system?—Yes.

B-1688. I understand that your mills also work 10 hours during the day and 8 hours during the night?—Yes.

B-1689. What is your experience about night work? Do workers prefer to work at night or during the day?—Certainly during the day. For 8 hours in the night I have to pay the same wages as for 10 hours in the day.

B-1690. Have you got cooling arrangements?—Yes.

B-1691. Does that keep the temperature down during the warm season lower than it is outside?—Except in the rainy weather, it is comfortable.

B-1692. Have you any experience of trade unions in Delhi?—There is no such thing as a trade union.

B-1693. There is no organized trade unions?—Organized or disorganized, there is no such thing.

B-1694. Did you ever refuse to recognize any? I understand there was one union some time back?—A few people at one time collected together and called themselves a *Mazdur Sabha*. (Mr. Mukerjee) What Mr. Shri Ram says is that there was no registered trade union. (Mr. Shri Ram) Registered or unregistered it does not matter. There were certain mushroom trade unions which lasted for not more than a month or 15 days. I do not think they lasted for more.

B-1695. *Diman Chaman Lall*: Why did they not last longer?—There must have been some inherent defect in them.

B-1696. *Mr. Birla*: Did you refuse to recognize any trade union?—If there had been any trade union I would have recognized them. There did not exist any proper trade union.

B-1697. Are you doing welfare work?—Yes.

B-1698. What is the welfare work you are doing?—We give them every week some soap and water to wash themselves with. Then we hold the workers' fair every year in which we give for each man half-anna tickets worth one rupee with which to buy sweets and things of that sort, so that there might not be any hoarding of money. We arrange joy rides, magic lanterns, a laughing gallery and so on. They enjoy them immensely.

B-1699. Do you provide any sort of daily recreation?—Since I came back I started loud speakers and playing gramophones half an hour before the mill starts, twice a day. We have some other small things in our own way. We give them cinema shows.

B-1700. Does any outside agency ever afford any help to you in the matter of your welfare work?—When this so-called *Mazdur Sabha* was started some well-intentioned people volunteered to work among my staff; but I did not require their services, because I think I am in a better position to serve my staff than those coming from outside who really do not know the labour problems.

B-1701. Are there any social workers in Delhi who are working among the working classes?—Very few, I might say, one or two only.

B-1702. What is your view about this drink problem? Do you think that total prohibition of drink among the working classes would help to improve their efficiency?—It is much less as it is, than it was ten years ago. If compulsion were introduced I do not think anybody would object except very few old sinners.

B-1703. Would it increase the efficiency of the workers?—Certainly. The advantage will be not in efficiency, but in better attendance.

The Chairman : You do not suggest Mr. Birla,^a that it should be applied to one section of the people only?

B-1704. *Mr. Birla* : Is it not a fact that so far as Indians are concerned they look upon drink as a sort of evil and generally they do not drink, at any rate publicly?—(Mr. Mukerjee) I think there are many of those who drink and do so publicly.

B-1705. You think that Indian public opinion would strongly support a proposal for total prohibition?—(Mr. Mukerjee) I think so. (Mr. Shri Ram) I do not know about the country, but the Delhi Municipality of which I am the Vice-President has already proposed to increase the duty on liquor from nothing to Rs. 5 per maund during the last four or five months.

B-1706. *Mr. Cliff* : What is the Delhi surtax?—Up to about a few weeks ago there was none. I understand that they have imposed a tax of Rs. 5 a maund.

B-1707. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : On country liquor or imported liquor?—Less on country liquor and more on imported liquor. I was away and I do not know definitely how much it is.

B-1708. *Mr. Birla* : May I take it from you that so far as Indian public opinion is concerned they will support such a proposal?—Yes, there will be a preponderating majority in favour of a proposal for total prohibition.

B-1709. *Miss Power* : In dealing with staff organization you say that "owing to lack of education it is not easy to train labourers for promotion to the superior staff and there are, therefore, not many facilities to train them". Do you know of any experiment being conducted by the members of your Chamber to give any educational facilities of that kind to the lower grade workers?—We are doing our very best to induce these people to attend night schools and improve themselves and make themselves fit for higher posts. As it is they cannot rise above the post of jobbers.

B-1710. Is there anything else for them except night classes?—Nothing else except the night classes. Even the night classes they would not take advantage of.

B-1711. Do you not think that possibly long hours of work has something to do with that? People working 10 to 12 hours a day may not be inclined to go to night classes after that.—I do not think that stands in their way. That is mere change of work.

B-1712. Our experience in the West has been that working long hours stood very much in the way of attendance at night classes.—I do not think that stands in their way here.

B-1713. *Mr. Cliff* : Why do you not think that it stands in the way?—That is my view. I have been with them for 25 years now and I know they are averse to any sort of education. All that is now slowly changing and they want to learn something. But still they are far behind.

B-1714. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Children below the age of 12 years are not employed; they could go to school if they wanted to?—Yes.

B-1715. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you provide a school for the workers in your mill?—We provide the building and the Municipality provides the staff.

B-1716. *Miss Power* : In your memorandum you have stated that "in a very restricted scale maternity benefits are available. An allowance of three months' wages is in certain cases given to women labourers, that is, two months before and one month after confinement". Can you tell me how many firms are involved in a scheme of that kind?—I think only one.

B-1717. How many women are covered by that?—I cannot tell you about this particular firm, but we have not 1 per cent. of female labour in our mills.

B-1718. So that it is less than 1 per cent.?—Mr. Birla has introduced this maternity benefit scheme in his mills. I do not think they have many women there.

B-1719. Would your Chamber be in favour of a Bill of the nature referred to in your memorandum covering the whole of the Punjab and Delhi?—(Mr. Mukerjee) We have said that we have full sympathy with Mr. Joshi's Bill about maternity benefits which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly before 1925. If the scales of benefit are placed before the Chamber, we shall examine them and we shall be able to give a considered opinion on the Bill itself. As it is I understand that employers in general throughout the country have some sort of maternity benefit scheme.

B-1720. You say: "Stringency of inspection and enforcement of regulations are generally at times more than necessary both in seasonal and permanent factories". Would you explain what you mean. Do you mean that there is not an excessive amount of industrial inspection?—I mean that there is too much industrial inspection. If any mill applied to Government for exemption to work over-time within limited periods, although it is provided for by the Act, such exemption is not usually granted, or if it is granted it is done so too late. The mill authorities do not even get a reply from Government in less than a month. Our practical experience is this. This is one form of stringency. Again they do not allow any laxity on the part of employers and the inspecting authorities are only too ready to pounce upon them even for small lapses.

B-1721. Do they not give you a warning first?—They give a warning, but they are also very prone to instituting prosecutions even for small lapses.

B-1722. Are you referring only to cotton ginning factories?—I am referring to cotton ginning factories, mills and everything coming under the Indian Factories Act.

B-1723. Do you imply that the cotton ginning factories never work above the regulated hours?—No, they do not. They cannot, according to the Act.

B-1724. Your evidence, you probably know, is contrary to that of the Factory Inspector who stated that there is a great deal of over-time work in the cotton ginning mills in the Punjab?—That has not been my experience.

B-1725. How are you in a position to say that? Have you any means of collecting information as to the actual number of hours they work every day?—We have not found that necessary.

B-1726. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: With regard to welfare work you said that you give them soap and water to wash themselves with once a week and you conduct some fair when you give Re. 1 to buy sweets. Do you think that is sufficient welfare work?—That is a matter of opinion. We think we do more than what most of the factories do not only in India but also in the West.

B-1727. What is your definition of welfare work?—That is again a difficult question to answer.

B-1728. Had you any definite scheme after you returned from Europe regarding the welfare work?—Problems of India are quite different from the problems of the West. What is necessary in the West is entirely unnecessary here.

B-1729. I could grant that it is so. But have you not to stretch your imagination and try to suit those things?—I am thinking of them. We have just started, as I said, playing the gramophone and the loud speakers half an hour before the work starts, twice a day.

B-1730. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Mr. Mukerjee, you state in your memorandum that the indebtedness of the workers is almost general. Can you tell me what it is due to?—I am afraid I have to revise my opinion. On further enquiry I understand that that is not so general as it used to be ten years ago.

B-1731. If there is indebtedness, what is that due to?—I think the indebtedness of the labour population is due to the extreme poverty of the country.

B-1732. But you go on to say that raising the level of wages will not increase the efficiency of the labourer?—I personally think that the labour population does not understand the value of money. So long as they have got enough to eat, they will not go to work. That is my personal experience. Raising the wages will not necessarily increase the efficiency of the worker.

B-1733. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: Is not the inefficiency of the worker really due to lack of food? The physique of the people is generally going down. Have you not noticed that?—No, we do not say that; we say that lack of education is the main factor.

B-1734. You do not think that lack of food has got anything to do with it?—I think as long as a man is properly fed he is all right.

B-1735. But do you think the labourer is properly fed?—I think so; I think the labour population is well fed; I think it is the middle classes who are not well fed.

B-1736. *Col. Russell*: We have been told in other connections that malaria sometimes exists in the Punjab to such an extent that it may affect 80 per cent. of the working population for two or three months. The resulting cost of such an epidemic would be far higher than the 12½ lakhs you have quoted in your memorandum?—If that is actually the fact, yes.

B-1737. Therefore it becomes still more difficult for you to face the financial obligations involved in connection with an insurance scheme?—(Mr. Taylor) Yes.

B-1738. But in India you must not only consider normal malaria; you must also consider the question of these abnormal epidemics that occur?—(Mr. Mukerjee) The financial liability must be much more, but I do not agree with the suggestion that malaria accounts for 80 per cent. of the sickness of the whole working population.

B-1739. You say that the "accommodation provided by the employers is generally satisfactory and in most cases it is far better than the standard of houses in which the working population lives in its village home". Do you think that is a sufficient standard on which to base your estimate?—I think the housing conditions provided by industries generally are quite satisfactory.

B-1740. With regard to the industrial efficiency of the workers, you say, "It is admittedly a fact that in recent years the efficiency of workers has improved". Then you say that the health, physique and standards of living cannot be said to affect it to any appreciable degree. How do you reconcile those statements?—As I have said in answer to Mrs. Chatterjee's questions, it is not the health, the physique and the standard of living that account for the inefficiency of the working population; that inefficiency is mainly due to lack of education.

B-1741. *Dewan Chaman Lall*. Would you consider that a man and his family living on 1½ annas a day for food well-fed?—I do not think so.

B-1742. Is there unemployment and under-employment in Delhi?—There is no unemployment of the labouring classes.

B-1743. In your memorandum you say that there is no "acute" unemployment; I take that to mean that there is unemployment but that you do not consider it to be acute?—You must consider the answer in reference to the question in order to follow it.

B-1744. I am taking the words in your own memorandum: "Amongst the working classes there does not seem to be acute unemployment"?—I do not think there is any kind of unemployment.

B-1745. Have you any method of finding whether there is or is not?—No.

B-1746. Did you ever try to find out?—Yes. We have asked the Industrial Surveyor.

B-1747. You have not investigated the matter yourself; you have accepted the statement of the Industrial Surveyor?—We have investigated the matter practically in this way. We have to recruit labour and we find that labour does not come to us. That means there is no unemployment, because we find difficulty in recruiting labour.

B-1748. What class of labour?—unskilled labour?—We may not find much difficulty in getting unskilled labour, but there is difficulty in recruiting skilled labour.

B-1749. We have evidence to the effect that there is no difficulty in the recruitment of unskilled labour because there are many people available for that purpose, which proves that there are many people seeking one particular job. That leads to the further conclusion that there must be some kind of unemployment?—(Mr. Taylor) My experience is that the ordinary working class men do not as a rule remain for any length of time at their job; they are always leaving for some reason or other. It may be for no reason at all, or simply to get a change. There is a continual circle of people leaving employment and getting other jobs, one has a continuous flow of people going out and coming in.

B-1750. If that is so, would it not be better to have some arrangement to assist them in finding the jobs for which so many are looking?—(Mr. Mukerjee) There is no doubt about it. (Mr. Taylor) I personally do not think it would serve the purpose either for skilled or unskilled labour.

B-1751. You are contradicting one another?—(Mr. Mukerjee) We say there is no unemployment.

B-1752. Supposing people are continually leaving employment and seeking employment elsewhere, would you have any objection to a systematic arrangement being made by means of which the workers could place their demands before some organized body and asked that they should be placed in their particular jobs; what objection would you have to that?—(Mr. Taylor) No objection at all, except that there seems to be no necessity for it.

B-1753. *Dwarkan Chaman Lall*: In the opinion of your Chamber would it not be preferable to make the Municipalities or the State responsible for the housing of the working classes?—(Mr. Mukerjee) Yes, we would welcome it; in fact there was a Government proposal to that effect.

B-1754. In your memorandum you say that from the health point of view such accommodation is generally satisfactory.—We have been told that in some cases there is congestion in the living rooms, and a medical witness says that the number of deaths due to tuberculosis is 12·8 per cent. among the general population. There are no exact statistics with regard to the labourers. Obviously this is not a healthy state of affairs?—I think tuberculosis is more to be found in middle class families than among the workers.

B-1755. You say further that “the moral effect of industrial housing conditions on the worker has not been found detrimental, otherwise there would be many instances of disturbances in areas where houses for labourers are situated. Do you mean that you test the moral effect of housing by the existence or otherwise of disturbances?—I think it follows.

B-1756. Then you say that the wages of workmen are fixed more or less verbally. I take it that your Chamber would not be averse to a better system of entering into agreement between employers and employees?—It would not.

B-1757. I understand you to say that efficiency is not governed by the health, physique and standard of living of the workers. Surely a worker in good health with good physique and who lives better would be a more efficient worker?—That is in answer to some specific question; we say

that it is not so much governed by the health of the worker as the efficiency of the machinery.

B-1758. You speak of industries being in a depressed state. I take it that the cloth mills are not in a depressed state?—They are very much more so.

B-1759. You refer also to the Indian States. Have you any more information as to what the Government of India have done in regard to this matter?—Not since I returned from Geneva.

B-1760. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Do you consider that labour in Delhi is in a better or worse state than labour in the surrounding agricultural districts?—I think the industrial worker is generally better off than the agricultural worker.

B-1761. Do you consider he is better or worse off in Delhi than he would be in a large industrial centre?—I do not know.

B-1762. You have had had a temporary influx of workers due to the building of New Delhi?—Yes.

B-1763. When New Delhi is finished naturally a large number of these workmen will have to leave because there will not be employment in Delhi?—Yes.

B-1764. I take it that that is beyond question?—Yes.

B-1765. May that be the cause of temporary congestion of housing?—Yes.

B-1766. May it be that the reason why that congestion was not obviated was because it was known that the labour would be here temporarily?—Yes.

B-1767. So that the congestion that may have been existing during the last two or three years in Delhi will not continue?—No, it is not continuing. Had it been permanent labour the employers would have taken good care to provide good housing conditions.

B-1768. So that we need not expect that these unfortunate housing conditions will continue?—No.

B-1769. Is it not a fact that the grain merchant is in the habit of giving credit to work-people?—Yes.

B-1770. He gives a month's credit as a rule?—Yes.

B-1771. Whether the workmen were paid by his employers at once or at the end of the month the price charged by the grain merchant would probably be the same?—Yes.

B-1772. He would pay the ruling price whether he pays at once or in a month?—Yes.

B-1773. When a workman starts work, as you pay your work-people a fortnight after the end of the month, he would not be able to pay his grain merchant for six weeks?—Yes.

B-1774. Do you think that the grain merchant would insist on being paid or do you think that knowing that the workman was to be paid a fortnight later, he would give additional credit for that fortnight?—I think he would give him that latitude.

B-1775. So that the workman would not have to go to the money-lender in order to pay the grain merchant?—No.

B-1776. Afterwards the workman would only be a month in arrears?—Yes.

B-1777. And if he changed his employment, I take it it would still only be a month?—Yes.

B-1778. It is only the new worker who has that extra fortnight?—Yes.

B-1779. Even if he were paid with only one week delay it would only mean that he would have to take five weeks' credit instead of six weeks?—Yes.

B-1780. Probably the workman is no worse off by having a delay of a fortnight than if he were paid the day after because of the credit he gets from his supplier?—Yes.

B-1781. The workman would not have to go to the money-lender in order to pay the merchant who supplies his grain?—Yes, because he gets advances from the employer in the interim.

B-1782. What would these advances be for?—For his own daily food.

B-1783. Does he pay cash for his daily food?—Sometimes he get

B-1784. What does he do with the advances; would he use the in order to pay the grain merchant?—Sometimes.

B-1785. In Bombay the grain merchants always give credit. He would not have to pay rent in advance?—No.

B-1786. Would he have to pay cash for his food?—Sometimes he can get advances.

B-1787. Would he have to pay the grain merchant cash?—No. He would get credit with the grain merchant and he will make payment after he gets his pay.

B-1788. Therefore the advances would be used for extraordinary expenditure and would not be used to pay for his food or his rent?—No.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Rai Bahadur BAISAKHA SINGH, Contractor, New Delhi.

B-1789. *The Chairman:* How long have you been a contractor in New Delhi?—In New Delhi from 1912, but I have been a contractor since 1907.

B-1790. How many men do you employ as a maximum?—2,000 at a time.

B-1791. How many have you now?—Now at different places I still have about 2,000. They are at Multan, Lahore and here. I have got about 500 here now.

B-1792. The term "contractor" with reference to yourself includes more than merely collecting and supplying labour?—I recruit the labour myself and do the whole thing.

B-1793. That is to say, you contract for the doing of certain work?—Yes.

B-1794. What kind of work do you undertake with the labour that you bring?—Different sorts of work, with masons, carpenters, stone dressers and unskilled labour.

B-1795. That is, general building work?—Yes.

B-1796. Does it include actual erection of buildings?—The erection of buildings also.

B-1797. Is it under the supervision of the architect?—Yes, under the supervision of the Government architect and engineers.

B-1798. You take a contract to carry out the work?—Yes.

B-1799. Therefore you are what in England is called a 'building contractor'?—Yes, a building contractor.

B-1800. I understand there are other people in India called contractors who merely collect and supply labour and have no further responsibility?—There are some petty contractors, but I take up the work myself because I am an engineer. I did some service for the Government in the beginning, and I now take on work which I supervise.

B-1801. When Government enters into a contract with you for some large scheme of building, which I take it they do, does Government put in any conditions or directions to you with regard to your labour force, or is it left absolutely to you?—No, they do not make any condition as to labour; it is left to me. If the contractor does not pay, the labourers generally go to the officers; but that very seldom happens.

B-1802. No condition is laid down as to housing or medical facilities, or anything of that kind?—No.

B-1803. There is one matter in your memorandum which I do not understand. You say in one place "Improvements are possible if labour exchanges—that is, State Bureaux similar to those in Great Britain—are established, where unemployed can register their names and occupations, and to which the employer in need of labour may apply". In the next paragraph you appear to say something which is quite the opposite—"Public employment agencies should be discouraged, as these would be harmful considering the present labour conditions in India." What distinction do you make?—That should read "Private employment agencies should be discouraged."

B-1804. *Sir, Ibrahim Rahimtoola:* You say "Industrial workers are generally recruited from amongst the ranks of those uprooted from the soil, whose ancestral land has under the baneful influence of fragmentation dwindled to a point at which it will no longer support its owner and his family". That is to say in your view the labour which finds employment in industry is a surplus over what the land will stand. People who are unable to maintain themselves on the land are driven to industrial occupations?—

Yes. Those who cannot maintain themselves on the land have to seek labour outside.

B-1805. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: You say that the general health of the workers is not very good. How do you account for this?—In the first place they have not good houses, which affects their general health. The houses are overcrowded, being occupied by three, four or five families.

B-1806. Is that the only reason? Do not you think there is lack of food?—They eat very little.

B-1807. You say the birth rate is low and that infant mortality is high. What are the reasons for that?—The health is bad. They cannot keep their children in good houses, and therefore the infant mortality is high.

B-1808. You say that their physique is generally weak. What is the reason for that?—They have no facilities to improve it.

B-1809. You state that the provision of women doctors is very poor. Can you suggest any remedy for that?—The Government should put in every contract with its contractors a clause providing for medical attendance for the workers. At present there is no such clause in the contracts. Sometimes I employ doctors for the workmen, but it is in my private capacity. There should be something in the agreement to the effect that the contractors are responsible for the general health of their employees. Government provide one or two doctors, but the number is not sufficient.

B-1810. Medical aid is too expensive under the Western system of medicine. Has any effort been made to try the indigenous system?—The people were at one time prejudiced against the English medicines, but now that prejudice is breaking down.

B-1811. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Is it not a fact that with regard to Government contracts Government provide doctors, dispensaries and medicine?—Yes.

B-1812. Is that the reason why Government does not ask the contractor to provide such things—because Government itself provides them?—Yes.

B-1813. *Mr. Chow*: How do you get your labour? Suppose you want more labour to-morrow, what do you do?—We know that there are certain centres of available labour, and we have got mates, whom we send to the villages to recruit labour which we know is available there.

B-1814. Do the mates have to give advances?—Sometimes, yes—advances and railway fares.

B-1815. Not always?—Not always. Those who have faith in us will not ask for advances

(The witness withdrew.)

DELHI TENTH MEETING

Monday, 4th November, 1929.

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, BART.	Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A.
Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt., K.C.S.I., C.I.E.	Mr. JOHN CLIFF.
Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.	Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.
Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.	DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.
Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.	Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.
Mrs. J. C. CHATTERJEE (<i>Lady Assessor</i> .)	Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. (<i>Medical Assessor</i>).
Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.	} (<i>Joint Secretaries</i> .)
Mr. A. DIBDIN.	

Major J. R. D. WEBB, I.M.S., Health Officer, New Delhi.

B-1816. *The Chairman*: Major Webb, you are the Assistant Director of Public Health, Delhi Province?—Yes.

B-1817. How long have you held this office?—I have been here since March 1928.

B-1818. Your previous experience?—I was at Simla from July 1923 until the time of joining here, with a break of about four months, while I toured India in connection with the interchange of health officers of the League of Nations. Apart from that I was stationed in Bombay doing public health work there from 1917. I was on active service during the Great War. I have been serving in India since 1913.

B-1819. You have long experience of the Indian health conditions over a wide part of this country?—I believe I may say so.

B-1820. And you have specially devoted yourself to the study of malaria and its control?—I would not say entirely malaria, but field work in connection with the improvement of all classes of individuals living in India.

B-1821. And as a result of your experience you in your memorandum lay great stress on malaria as being the greatest ill to which the health of the Indian people is subject?—I do.

B-1822. You quote some figures where you say that well over a million deaths occur solely from malaria?—These figures are quoted from the Director of Malarial Survey in India. 1,130,000 deaths occur per annum from malaria alone.

B-1823. You suggest that the great number of deaths is only a fraction of the harm that is done to the national health by malaria?—That is so.

B-1824. You again tell us that there is a loss of over 300,000,000 working days per annum in India on the top of the death rate?—Yes, that is so. I took the figure from the Director of Malarial Survey of India.

B-1825. Has that loss of so many working days per annum ever been put into the form of a percentage of loss of national working efficiency?—No. It has been calculated in rupees, annas and pies; and we find that there is a potential loss to the country of about Rs. 1,50,00,00,000 or £100,000,000 sterling.

B-1826. Has that ever been put in the form of percentages; for instance, would you say that the loss of working efficiency amounts to 20 per cent. or 30 per cent.?—I would not be prepared to make that statement without reference to the Director of Malarial Survey. That question could better be answered by him. I have not worked that out.

B-1827. Could you obtain that from him?—I could do so.

B-1828. Because it would be most useful to us in our work if we could have a reliable estimate on which depends so many other things?—Exactly.

B-1829. Is it the case that this national weakening from malaria predisposes the population to other epidemics when they come along, for instance cholera, plague and hookworm?—That is so. Not only those diseases which you mention, but other diseases such as leprosy, pneumonia, influenza and weakening generally of the physical side of the people through re-attacks of malaria. That is not generally appreciated by the workers themselves and those controlling labour.

B-1830. I take it that it is your deliberate opinion that the control and practical elimination of malaria, or at any rate a reduction of malaria to a small item in the national health, would do more than any other one thing?—I do believe that. When one refers to the conditions in America and the Federated Malay States where work is being done, there would be no doubt felt in that respect.

B-1831. And I notice that you have pinned your opinion to a practical point in your memorandum where you say: "I do not believe that an insurance scheme against sickness could be successfully introduced at present. My reasons are as follows: Such insurance schemes cannot successfully operate until we have reduced the incidence of disease to a reasonable figure"?—I believe that is so. I understand from enquiries in Delhi that insurance companies of a very small nature have been started from time to time in connection with the insurance of labourers against death. These are small insurance companies with no capital behind them admittedly. They do not bear too close an inspection in respect of even insurance against death. It would be more difficult to insure against sickness in our present state.

B-1832. Therefore you consider that the control of malaria is a condition precedent to any practical scheme of sickness insurance?—I do. That is one thing. But other epidemics occur, such as cholera, plague, enteric fever which are not brought to the fore, and tuberculosis. All these revolve round the same subject.

B-1833. I understand you to say that once malaria was conquered the work of tackling other diseases would be simplified?—Yes.

B-1834. Your reason I take it is that as long as this terrible national weakening through malaria persists, the actuarial basis of any scheme would involve such heavy contributions from the worker, the employer and the State that it would not be a practical proposition?—That is exactly the point.

B-1835. *Col. Russell*: In your memorandum you say that "In the earlier days the labour was entirely controlled by the Public Works Department." Can you explain what that means?—That requires a qualification. The Public Works Department representing Government did not directly control labour in the sense of recruiting them and paying their wages directly. All they did was to build quarters for them, afford them medical facilities, supply them with good drinking water and arrange for the conservancy of their quarters.

B-1836. The Public Works Department lines were built by Government agency. Did the coolies pay any rent for them?—The coolies did not and do not pay any rent for the coolie lines, with the exception to my knowledge of one small coolie line in the notified area. I am excluding Delhi City for the present from my remarks and speaking of the Imperial Capital and the Notified Area. The Notified Area has a small remains of coolie lines which at one time was controlled by Government and

which the Commission saw yesterday. The coolies there pay on an average 12 annas per mensem to the contractor who at present owns these lines.

B-1837. In your memorandum you say that "Government maintained dispensaries and sub-assistant surgeons to attend to the minor ailments of labour... ..". How many dispensaries and how many sub-assistant surgeons were in use?—The history of that in the Imperial capital is interesting. At the beginning two sub-assistant surgeons, two compounders, a small staff of menials and one choukidar were maintained by Government in one area. One sub-assistant surgeon worked in the dispensary and the other moved into camps amongst labour carrying with him a certain number of medicines for treating the labourers. This formed the initial basis of development of what is known as the combined hospital at New Delhi. In addition to this, one sub-assistant surgeon and one compounder were kept in the southern area to look after the large mass of labour engaged in the manufacture of bricks. In addition to this a contractor paid for and started a dispensary with a compounder in charge near the Secretariat. Later on he moved that on to the stone-yard. The Municipality also employed a compounder and a woman worker who was not fully qualified to look after a small labour camp. That served very well for the transitional stage before the combined hospital was started. There was practically nothing else for the workers except a small crèche which was developed at that time, the welfare centre opened by the Baby Health Week organization and the lady compounder who lived apart near the clerks' quarters.

B-1838. Then I take it you think that these arrangements were not sufficient for 30,000 coolies?—I do not think so.

B-1839. Were there no first aid posts?—With the exception of what I have described there was no first aid post actually in the camps at a later date.

B-1840. I take it you approve of the foundation of first aid posts?—I do most decidedly.

B-1841. Did you ever ask for these?—I was not here at the time. Immediately I came to Delhi I did ask for them.

B-1842. You say in your memorandum that the crèche was not a success. Can you tell me why?—There are several reasons why it was not successful. One was that it was a new idea foreign to women labour. Secondly this crèche was left entirely in the hands of amateurs to operate. Thirdly, there was the difficulty of breast feeding of children. Indian women feed their children at the breast and there was the difficulty of the women returning to their children. Attempts were made to bring women into the crèche for that purpose. Fourthly, as the building progressed, the crèche had to be moved from one room to another. Lastly, this crèche was paid for by a contractor who withdrew his subscription and gave it to another charity, and the crèche closed down.

B-1843. Is it your personal opinion that these crèches will always be a failure?—I do not think so, if they are properly operated.

B-1844. Then I take it that you would be glad to help in the development of welfare work of that kind?—Yes.

B-1845. What have you done in this direction in Delhi?—When I first came to Delhi two ladies Miss Griffin and Miss Graham were carrying on welfare work here under the auspices of the Lady Chelmsford League of India, an organization for welfare work. Later on Her Excellency Lady Reading took a personal interest in the matter and started the Lady Reading Health School. We had then a small welfare centre staffed by a compounder and the lady worker to whom I just referred and who was chiefly working among the clerks and not among the coolies. We then learnt that this welfare centre was under the control of the Delhi Baby and Health Week Association, a most excellent institution whose aims and objects are to formulate and establish centres for welfare work in various part of India, and as they become established, to hand them over to the local governing bodies. We made a proposal to that association to take over the welfare centre

at New Delhi and asked the Municipality to increase the work. It took a considerable time and the matter was then settled in April 1928. Before September of the same year we established six welfare centres in the coolie camps in the various lines. I may state here that we did not officially wait for sanction as we knew that sanction was going to come. We forged ahead with what money was left in the balance of funds of the Baby Health Week Association and we personally established those centres in anticipation of sanction.

B-1846. Have the labour force welcomed this work?—Yes, they have done so. In this connection I would refer you to the pamphlet enclosed with my memorandum, describing maternity and child welfare work in Delhi, in three labour camps for the year 1928. The camps were opened in May; and before December of the same year, the clinic attendance at one of them was 3,130, at another, over a thousand, and at a third, nearly 4,000. On page 14 you will see that the house to house visits in these camps range round 4,000 for each camp. I may observe here that labour here is generally fatalistic in its outlook with regard to work of this sort and education is necessary to firmly establish good work amongst them.

B-1847. From your last remark I take it you consider that some advance in educational facilities would not only be appreciated, but would be made use of?—Educational facilities are absolutely necessary. We see them making some attempt. The coolies themselves in one particular camp have started a small educational institution. They contribute two rupees per child. In the Notified Area we have a night school for all adult coolies, which the Commission saw yesterday. They also saw the school mentioned above. A well-known lady of Delhi, whose name I do not mention here, has started an industrial school for workers in a highly populated village in the Notified Area. That will be extending the work for helping labour in industrial and minor education.

B-1848. I would call your attention to a statement made in the memorandum sent in to the Commission which runs as follows: "The causes of the troubles among Indian labour are"—I will not read item No. (1)—"the growing feeling of unrest among Indian labour and the limited scope of welfare activities". Have you any experience either to support or refute such a statement?—In New Delhi and the Notified Area there is no unrest amongst the coolies. They are disciplined. In this connection I would mention that about two or three years ago the headquarters of the Communist Party in connection with labour was actually stationed in Delhi. I am told,—I was not here at that time—that there was some unrest at that time. But very shortly afterwards, in about six months the headquarters was transferred to Bombay, because Delhi was not considered to be an industrial city.

B-1849. Another witness says that medical facilities are not properly used because of the fear of loss of a day's wages entailed in visits to hospitals and dispensaries. What is your personal experience?—That is absolutely correct. That was one of our reasons for establishing first aid posts in the labour camps in New Delhi.

B-1850. You think you would solve that difficulty by establishing first aid posts?—I do.

B-1851. Has the propaganda work carried out by your department been of any lasting good?—Would you like to extend the work?—Propaganda work is a subject of its own. It requires a special staff. In Delhi city, the Notified Area and the rural areas of Delhi my small public health staff has done considerable propaganda work apart from their other activities. Last year, they gave 83 cinema and lantern lectures with a counted attendance of 40,000 persons. Similar work is being carried on by various bodies like the Delhi Social Service union. Private individuals such as doctors and certain Medical Officers of Health are making efforts at doing propaganda work in the city.

B-1852. In her memorandum Dr. Scott, Secretary of the National Association for Supplying Medical Aid by Women to the Women of India, lays

stress upon the necessity of investigation into the causes of infantile mortality amongst industrial workers. At present no such investigation is made?—No. In this connection I would refer you to the memorandum of Dr. Sethna, the Health Officer of Delhi Municipality, who deals with this point. I regret to say that even my own figures in this connection are not absolutely fool-proof.

B-1853. Then she says, "Medical women in India have repeatedly pressed for an enquiry into the causes of infant mortality." Do you know why that enquiry has never been made?—I presume it is a question of money.

B-1854. Is there any source at present from which you can get any reliable statistics of the incidence of disease and low health of many of the workers?—Not that I know of. There is absolutely none.

B-1855. What suggestions would you make for the collection and investigation of such statistics?—I would suggest that essentially we require women workers amongst the people to obtain these statistics. At present these statistics are obtained through the agency of sweepers in various areas or through menial public health servants in Delhi city. Two sub-assistant surgeons are also employed by the Delhi Municipality to determine the birth rates and death rates, chiefly the latter. I am unable to give you any details in that respect.

B-1856. I take it you do not approve of the method of employing sweepers for collecting statistics?—I do not.

B-1857. Have you any practical suggestions as to how it can be carried out?—It can be carried out by women workers if they are properly trained and work under the Public Health Department.

B-1858. Then you would agree with Dr. Scott when she says it is a very important point that women medical officers and health visitors should be used in order first of all to gain the confidence of women and then to collect information?—Yes.

B-1859. Is there any difficulty in getting medical women, trained midwives and women to do welfare work?—There is the greatest difficulty. In New Delhi and the Notified Area I had sanction for two women. It took me six months to get one and nine months to get the other, because I was determined to get one who would understand what welfare work was. We tried women and we said good-bye to them; we tried others and said good-bye to them. Eventually we were successful in getting two good workers whom we have now.

B-1860. There is one other statement in Dr. Scott's memorandum which is of considerable importance. She says. "The provision of good medical and health facilities for women would prevent the exodus of women to villages for confinement and would tend to correct the disturbance of the sex ratio in the industrial areas. No one can doubt that both these factors would help to stabilise labour." Do you agree with that statement?—I consider that to be so; it is mixed up with the question of sex ratio and one has to consider other points in this connection; but, generally speaking, there is no question that welfare work would tend to stabilise labour, because, as we know, women will stabilise men so to speak.

B-1861. This kind of work would also add to the efficiency of the worker?—I think so, yes.

B-1862. In another memorandum submitted to us from Delhi it is stated that the results of general welfare work are not at all satisfactory. Do you agree with that?—Welfare work in Delhi is in its infancy; it has been started and an effort is being made; but it does not always get the support it might have, and I am sorry to have to admit that the general public do not know what welfare work is. I have personally communicated with many contractors here, and I have a letter from a contractor in reply to a personal letter of mine. That contractor is very kind and very helpful; but he finishes his letter by calling my welfare centre a dispensary. That indicates the mentality of these people; they do not really know what welfare work is, and not knowing I do not think they are in a position to criticise.

B-1863. Is it easy or is it difficult to get any Indian men and women to take up this work?—It is not easy. In Delhi I can count on the fingers of one hand the Indian ladies who have taken an active part in welfare work. We hope that as time goes on the number of these ladies will increase. But I must admit that it is not easy to get ladies to take an interest. Certainly it is not easy to get the right type of worker for taking up this work.

B-1864. The Inspector of Factories in his memorandum has stated that the health of workers is generally good. Do you agree with that statement?—I would say no; the health of the workers and the physical conditions of the worker in Delhi are generally poor. This may be due to many reasons: malaria which we have already discussed and similar diseases, domestic worries, large families, difficulty of housing, food, etc., etc.

B-1865. Is there any clause in the contractors' agreements in New Delhi compelling them to supply housing or do any other welfare work for the labour they employ?—There is no definite clause; I believe there is a vague statement to the effect that the contractor must attempt to help his labour.

B-1866. Do you think that clause should be made more specific?—I do.

B-1867. In what directions?—In connection with the actual buildings, the way in which they could supply facilities for scavenging and general sanitation. There is the necessity for improved conditions during epidemics. These are the chief headings.

B-1868. *The Chairman*: Have you ever attempted to draft a clause which you would like to see inserted in the contract?—I have not personally.

B-1869. Do you know of the clause which is inserted in England when any large public works are undertaken?—No, I have no acquaintance with it.

B-1870. You say a clause exists in the contract whereby contractors are held responsible for the proper housing of their labour?—I believe a clause exists; I was told that by the Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department at Delhi. The details could be obtained from him.

B-1871. But there is no clause comparable with the one which exists in similar cases in England whereby these matters are made subject to the approval of the Medical Officer of Health?—No. That leads me to explain that the whole of the Capital of New Delhi was built without any reference to the Medical Officer of Health, and without any reference subsequently, until I came here in 1928, since when references are made to the Medical Officer of Health.

B-1872. Would you be in favour of the insertion of a clause in all such contracts?—I would.

B-1873. To provide that where any considerable body of labour is being imported into the district, provision for housing and general sanitary arrangements should be made subject to the approval of the Medical Officer of Health?—Most certainly.

B-1874. Do you think that a general clause of that kind would add greatly to the efficiency of the labour?—I do. Without that clause may I explain what happens here. In one of our camps we have labour making bricks; in June of 1929 we had 35 cases of cholera; at first we could get little done to improve that camp; we really had to send our men. Then we got into touch with the Chief Engineer and we said "we must be helped". The Chief Engineer saw the contractors and we got that help.

B-1875. If a clause such as I have suggested were standardised and made applicable to such contracts all contracts would be on the same level?—Yes, and we should automatically get that help.

B-1876. The contractors would take into account these requirements in the making of their contracts?—Yes.

B-1877. Therefore they would not be hurt in any way?—No.

B-1878. And you would then have no such camp established without your approval of the conditions?—Exactly.

B-1879. *Col. Russell*: You have stated that the Public Works Department never consulted the Public Health Department in connection with the construction of these camps?—Unofficially, but not officially.

B-1880. You have also done public health work in other parts of India. Do the same conditions apply to those other parts?—No, the Public Health Department is always closely consulted.

B-1881. Have you got any type plans approved by the Sanitary Engineer and the Director of Public Health for the housing of workers on Government works?—I have not seen any type plans but I am told that type plans of a vague kind existed when the camps were originally established. I have not been able to see them and have not had time to make further detailed enquiries, but you may take it generally that at the present moment there is no type plan.

B-1882. And any plan which was prepared was prepared without any consultation whatever with the Public Health Officer?—As far as I know, yes.

B-1883. Do you see plans prepared by the Public Works Department for housing schemes, etc.?—I do now see them.

B-1884. Since when?—Since I came here.

That is because you have taken a personal interest in the matter?—Yes.

B-1885. But there is no Government regulation by which they have to be sent to the Public Health Department for approval?—I cannot say whether there is a Government regulation to that effect; it is always an automatic thing elsewhere wherever I have been.

B-1886. Do you consider that a room 8' x 10' is sufficient for a family of 4 or 5 living together?—Speaking generally, no.

B-1887. What minimum would you suggest?—It is difficult to lay down a definite size because the health of the people depends not only on the actual size of the room but on the ventilation, the air, moving currents of air coming in and out. One would have to take all these points into consideration in laying down any particular definite size, cubic space, and so on.

B-1888. You have no statistics to show whether the sickness rate or the death rate is higher among those living in one room houses than those living in two rooms?—I have no statistics to that effect.

B-1889. Are you satisfied with the type of the houses at present provided in the coolie camps which have been described by another witness as "not a pleasant spectacle"?—In reply to that question I would say it seems to be an exaggerated statement. Admittedly the mud huts of the coolies are not spacious and they are not luxurious as opposed to the better type of houses—the remains of Government houses, which are not at all bad. The Commission has seen them and one would not say that they are simply miserable human habitations.

B-1890. But another witness says definitely they are unfit for human habitation?—All I can say is that I have lived in places very similar for nearly three years during the war.

B-1891. Which would you consider more important—the actual floor space within a hut or the spacing of the huts in their lines?—The spacing of the huts in their line is a very important subject. With regard to the space between one series and another series, as you saw in the camps, we have spacing in between lines in three of our camps here and not spacing in houses except very occasionally.

B-1892. But I observed that in some cases the spacing had been done and laid out it was allowed to be filled up?—Yes, encroached on.

B-1893. You have no power at present to stop that?—We have not.

B-1894. *Col. Russell*: One of the memoranda that we have had put before us states that there is a general increase in mortality owing to the bad system of housing. Have you any statistics to support or review that statement?—The statement cannot be regarded as being an accurate statement because there are no statistics that I know of.

B-1895. You think this witness has no information which could confirm that remark of his?—I believe that to be so.

B-1896. There is another curious statement made by the same witness; he says that official supervision is lacking and boards of health are too few. Can you tell us exactly what he means by that?—I entirely refute the statement that official supervision is entirely lacking as far as New Delhi and the Notified Area is concerned. With regard to the city I would prefer not to express an opinion as I am not in medical control of Delhi city.

B-1897. Is there any maternity benefit in the Delhi province?—As far as I know there existed at one time an attempt in New Delhi towards maternity benefit; at the crèche labour workers made an effort to get a woman paid but not allowed to work; it was not very successful. I do not think more than two or three women actually benefited from this effort, though there may be a few more. Speaking generally, there is no maternity benefit.

B-1898. Are no allowances on leave given to women workers before and after confinement?—On enquiry I find an attempt has been made, on paper, to try and allow the women worker to work at lighter work during that period; but in actual practice it is impossible for a contractor to go round and see that every pregnant woman does light work and in actual practice it does not happen.

B-1899. What percentage of his earnings does the average labourer spend on food alone?—I should say 70 per cent. of his earnings are spent on food.

B-1900. Does that include food substances like sugar, ghee and milk?—It does not include milk because the labourer cannot afford to buy milk, and it does not include ghee because the labourer cannot afford to buy ghee. In place of ghee he buys oil. It includes a small quantity of sugar, namely, two ounces per meal at a cost of three pies. It is *gur*, which is not sugar in the sense of being purified Western sugar.

B-1901. Is the milk supply sufficient?—The milk supply is a big problem and it will take a long time to solve.

B-1902. I take it you agree that milk is an essential part of a vegetarian diet?—Yes, but the question is whether the labourer could ever afford to get it.

B-1903. *The Chairman*: You are no doubt aware that the same problem arises in the poorer parts of our cities in England?—I am quite aware of that; there is an absence of the vitamins A, B, C and D.

B-1904. I mean there is inability to purchase milk?—Yes, it is a question of supply and demand and costs; it involves a hundred and one things, such as the number of cattle and the grazing grounds.

B-1905. *Col. Russell*: Milk is highly expensive and grossly adulterated?—Yes. An effort has been made in Delhi to supply milk. The Municipality at one time started a small farm on the eastern side of the river; all the *ghoshis* or cattle dealers were sent out of the Delhi city over to the other side where there was built for them a more or less model village. At a later date this farm was taken over by Mr. Edward Keventer. The actual proposal or hope of establishing a cheap milk supply for Delhi city failed miserably. At the present moment the Delhi Health and Social Service Union have a proposal to start a similar undertaking. It means capital and it means very careful supervision; to my mind it is very doubtful whether such a thing can be established without most careful thought.

B-1906. What about the question of vegetable ghee, which is sold very largely in the bazaar? It has no nutritional value, as the chemists tell us, although it is a very useful fat for cooking. It is a very useful fat, is it not?—Yes. Chemists have made their tests on cats fed with vegetable ghee, as you know, as compared with ordinary ghee and the results are not very satisfactory.

B-1907. *The Chairman*: But is not that corrected a good deal by a partial fruit diet?—Yes.

B-1908 The working classes in England seldom see real butter, what we call margarine corresponds to your vegetable ghee?—Yes

B-1909 But here in India you have the advantage of a fruit diet?—Having bought his ghee at a certain price it is difficult for him to find money to buy fresh oranges or limes

B-1910 *Mr. Cliff* Am I to understand that the working man gets fruit or does not get fruit?—He does not

B-1911 *Col Russell* Have you a Food Adulteration Act in this province?—There is the Punjab Food Adulteration Act, which they are making an attempt to introduce into the Province of Delhi. It is only an attempt, there has been a lot of talk but nothing has been done

B-1912 It is practically a dead letter?—Yes

B-1913 One witness says that the food is poor and consists mostly of inferior flour, pulses, rice, oil or ghee. Is that your experience?—One cannot say that the food, wheat and pulses are of the highest standard by any means, for the lower classes you may say it is rather a low standard

B-1914 Are there any malnutritional conditions or diseases in your Province?—The subject of malnutritional diseases is one which requires investigation. The Commission have seen the state of the actual labour in the camps in Delhi, they have seen that the children are feeble. I would like to stress the particular point that the child at birth gains weight and is quite happy and healthy until it reaches the age of about 8 months, then it starts to lose weight very rapidly. That is accounted for by the fact that all children are breast fed until they are, roughly speaking, 8 months or a year old. As soon as they come off the breast they start to chew chapatis and other adult food straight away and they simply go down in health, and it is a question of the survival of the fittest

B-1915 That would be largely counteracted by improving the education of the women?—Yes. I may say that what I have mentioned does not by any means apply to the labouring and the coolie classes only, it applies also to our intelligent clerical labour

B-1916 Then do you agree that there is poor physique generally among the labouring classes?—Yes

B-1917 Is that due to the poor quality of the food or insufficiency of food?—I would say both poor quality and insufficiency, then there is disease, lack of housing, worry and so on. There are many causes, I do not think you can attribute it to food alone

B-1918 Is it a fact that a coolie and his family in Delhi Province when doing full work can earn from Rs 50 to Rs 70 a month. We were told that by one of your workers?—That is a statement which one of my workers made to you yesterday that the wage was somewhere in the region of 50 to 70 rupees. That is not in fact so as an average. The position is this: the coolie man draws 8 or 9 annas a day, generally in New Delhi it is 9 annas a day, the woman is also a worker and she draws 7 annas a day, the children are also workers, if they have passed the age of 12—at least we hope that they are past the age of 12—they draw four annas a day. If you take that family to be five in number you will have a round figure of about Rs 10 a month. When the children grow up and become or appear to be adult they will earn not 4 annas but 9 annas the wage of a man. So that you may take it that the average earning obviously varies in families according to the size of the family and the ages of the members of the family. I would put the figure at an average of about Rs 40, 42 or 43. The exceptional families which come forward and say they are drawing Rs 50 to Rs 70 a month are very lucky

B-1919 Taking your average figure of Rs 40 to Rs 43 would that be sufficient to provide a physiological diet for a family of five?—No, certainly not

B-1920 *The Chairman* By a "physiological diet" you mean an ideal diet?—An ideal diet

B-1921 *Col Russell*. With the necessary vitamins, vegetables, and so on.

B-1922 *The Chairman* The minimum scientific requirements for full health

B-1923 *Col Russell* Yes?—It may be described as a balance with the wages on one side and the diet on the other, they are just about holding the balance sometimes it goes one way and sometimes the other way

B-1924 *Mr Cliff* Is this physiological diet a minimum diet?

B-1925 *The Chairman* It is a minimum physiological diet It is what the doctors say we ought to have

B-1926 *Col Russell* Would not the opening of food shops by employers prevent the sale of inferior articles of diet to the workers?—Here in New Delhi there was a difficulty in getting grain at one time, the contractor, aided by Government, started a grain pressing machine where the grain was ground in a sort of common grinding place and sold at rather cheap rates. Later on this disappeared. Labour which comes from the Indian States into Delhi brings with it bad debts. As they bring with them bad debts the man who is looking for these bad debts accompanies them, namely the bania. He comes to Delhi and plants himself down with the labour, he is an importation with that batch of labour and I do not see how you are going to get over that difficulty. As the labour goes back to its own country so the bania goes with it. No doubt control of the supply of food in the sense of co-operative societies would benefit labour considerably.

B-1927 One of our Delhi witnesses has also stated that the economic value of public health is not understood by the management and industrial workers. Do you agree?—That is absolutely true in Delhi.

B-1928 Can you give us any idea as to the chief causes of absenteeism amongst the workers?—There are no statistics.

B-1929 You have admitted several times that there are no statistics available. Would you favour the formation of a body like the Industrial Research Board in England for collection of statistics?—Most certainly.

B-1930 How would you staff such a board?—It is difficult to staff from India, because workers from India would not have any facilities for learning work of this nature, and the only method would be to select and to send and to train Indian workers in other countries.

B-1931 You would send Indians to England to be trained?—Yes.

B-1932 Would you favour the passing of legal provisions for places at present outside the Factories Act?—Yes, most certainly, with definite clauses as far as housing, sanitation, water-supply, epidemic diseases and the like are concerned. The Factories Act, I am given to understand, is not very definite on these points.

B-1933 *Mrs Chatterjee* In answer to Col Russell, regarding the unsuccessfulness of the crèche, you mentioned two causes, one was that it was under an amateur organization and the second was breast feeding. Are you aware of the fact that the person who managed the crèche was a trained health worker brought down from the Lady Reading Hospital?—My inquiry showed that the management was started by a lady in New Delhi who was not a health worker and that a subordinate, so to speak, was employed who worked as a matron at the centre and that under her worked two ayas or nurses. I have an admission from the ladies who worked at the centre.

B-1934 Are you aware of the fact that I used to look after the crèche when that lady used to go to the hills during summer?—I am not aware of that.

B-1935 Are you also aware of the fact that at least Rs 300 or Rs 400 a month was being spent on this crèche whereas only about 20 babies on an average made use of it?—I was informed that the cost was about Rs 100 a month that the maximum attendance was 20 and that the average attendance was in the region of 6 or 7.

B-1936 You say the monthly cost was Rs 100. Can you tell me what the trained health worker who had full midwifery qualifications was paid

for that job?—That revolves round the question that the institution seemed to have been governed by amateurs.

B-1937. *The Chairman*: Your opinion on this particular point really is second-hand?—Exactly; I explained at the start that it was so.

B-1938. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: I supervised this thing myself during the lady's absence in the hot weather and I know as a matter of fact that Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 was being spent every month on this crèche, including the salary of the health visitor, the matron and the ayas. Do you not think that if you had four crèches in different areas of the working class people, you could have made the crèches more successful?—I admit that. I do not say that crèches are useless. I think they are excellent, but I do think that unless they are carefully watched and handled, not weekly or monthly but daily and some actual health worker is made responsible for their proper working, we cannot hope to achieve any success. The crèche that existed seems not to have been successful due to the facts which I have mentioned.

B-1939. Are you not prepared to admit that there are not sufficient number of crèches or child welfare centres in Delhi, and one of the chief reasons is that anything that is started either by Government or under European organization is made top heavy so much so your wants are to be restricted, whereas by maintaining a low paid staff your wants can be increased?—My experience is not that. At New Delhi when we had one centre it cost a lot of money; to-day we have six centres which cost on an average about Rs. 90 a month. I do not think that is too expensive.

B-1940. I do not blame you at all; I know that you are doing very useful work here. I am talking of other places?—That may be so.

B-1941. With regard to housing, will you tell me what is the average number of occupants of each house?—On an average about 5 for a family; you know that well.

B-1942. You say that a large number of labourers go back to their homes during the rains. What proportion of these labourers are agriculturists?—I have not investigated the actual figures, but I should think that the fluctuating population is about 40 per cent., and 60 per cent. are, at least here in New Delhi, more or less farm labourers. During rains, when brick kilns are closed down, they go to their villages and come back again after rains.

B-1943. Regarding the diet of the worker, a question has already been put to you for not including ghee?—Oil has been included.

B-1944. Have you read Dr. Lancaster's report on tuberculosis?—I have.

B-1945. I have not unfortunately read the report, but during a conversation I had with him, while he was making this inquiry, he told me that a great percentage of tuberculosis was due to the lack of supply of ghee in the food-stuffs, and the classes who suffered most from tuberculosis were those who could not afford to go in for ghee. As far as my knowledge goes, I am personally convinced that oil is not a good substitute for ghee?—I think I have made it sufficiently clear of what I think about it.

B-1946. About the weights of children. You are aware of the fact that I have been managing baby shows since 1921 and I have got statistics of weights of different babies. To my knowledge the weight of the labourer's baby is far below the average; I should say that 70 per cent. of the babies of the labouring classes in rural areas are under weight. In your child welfare centres two things are taught, first, cleanliness and, second, feeding of infants. According to the statistics that we have received from various people, we find that the earning of a labourer is only just enough to keep his body and soul together. Do you think it is possible for those babies who are under weight as it is, when they are brought to child welfare centres, to get average weight without any proper food?—That is a point that we have been trying to stress. Although food is not conveniently available, we are trying to impress upon them the necessity for improving food conditions

and the necessity for teaching your people to improve not only bodily but mentally.

B-1947. How can you manage that effectively?—It is a question of rupees, annas and pies, is it not?

B-1948. As a medical man, can you say that a child who is under weight will grow up to be a healthy man, fit to do physical work which he naturally will have to do?—That is a very difficult thing to argue. I give you the example of a baby who won a gold medal for being the best baby is now a miserable specimen. That I was told by a very well-known health worker in Delhi a few days ago.

B-1949. I also know of cases of babies who died the very year in which they won gold medals. Have you got any means by which you could increase the weight of the children?—I do not know what you want me to say. Naturally you want to improve their diet which we admit; if you have money you would spend it on improving their diet.

B-1950. You say in your memorandum that the average debt of a cooly is about Rs. 80 a year and you also say that for his marriage he spends Rs. 200 to Rs. 400. How does he meet these demands?—As far as I know most of the coolies own land somewhere although they may be in debt. They go on saving small amounts by which they buy a cow and land. The bania, apart from lending money against the possible cost of that land, will gladly lend them more and chase them for the rest of their lives, getting interest at 37·5 per cent. per annum.

B-1951. Have you made any personal investigation into this matter or only heard about it?—Investigation was made in 205 camps here. It is a well-known fact that all your labourers are in debt to the bania, and I am told that the investigation lasted sometime and the banias and the labourers were together; the banias were asked questions before the labourers and the labourers were asked questions before the banias and they had a little chat amongst themselves, and they put down the average debt at Rs. 80 a year and the interest at 37½ per cent.

B-1952. *The Chairman*: What puzzles me is that there is practically no margin between the dietary cost of living and the family income; yet the bania prospers well?—He does because they have got to find that money for paying him his interest sometime during the year: it goes on mounting up.

B-1953. Presumably he does not go on lending and lending without any repayment?—It practically amounts to that. Debts are carried on, and the general feeling is that he will hold that money, only collecting his interest: they thus never get out of their debts.

B-1954. He only spares his debts in paradise. In addition to that, is it not a fact that on an average the coolies send something like Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 every year to their village?—They do that although they are indebted to the bania.

B-1955. Still it is a little bit of economic puzzle?—The bania chases them to their village and back again to their work, and he is always in touch with them.

B-1956. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: You mention that there are no schools started by your Committee. Why is that so especially when construction work in Delhi has been going on for the last 15 years?—In New Delhi one contractor who was a member of our Committee was desirous of starting a school that was just when I came to Delhi. I was desirous of introducing welfare work first, to be followed by a school. I still maintain that if you have got your school you better educate your boys, and if you have got welfare work you better start schools; if you have money to do both it is well and good, but if you want to have only one of the two I say welfare work first and education second. You may not agree with me.

B-1957. I personally feel, after ten years or more of experience of health work, that we must put education first and health after. You are talking of preventives whereas people need curatives?—That leads to a discussion

of the academic training of education as opposed to the vocational training. If your education is going to be of a vocational nature and of knowing to write your name and to add up a few figures, then I say yes. But what is education? It is an academic training which does not touch on these vocational subjects which we know are necessary.

B-1958. *The Chairman*: You told us that the bania in your district only thinks of getting 37½ per cent.?—As I mentioned, that was the figure that was arrived at after discussion in the presence of the bania and the coolie. I am unable to say if that is the definite figure but I should think that it is fairly correct.

B-1959. So there are modest banias in your district?—It appears to be so.

B-1960. As a matter of fact, what really happens is that he does not so much want any return of his capital as a constantly increasing mortgage on the lives of the people at the rate of 37½ per cent.?—That appears to be the position.

B-1961. *Sri Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: In the process as between a bania and a coolie it is hardly possible that the bania will continue to give debts to the coolie indefinitely. Do you see that a possible explanation is that when the debt increases the man has got to minimize in his food, in his clothing and in various necessaries of life in order to be able to pay a portion of the debt and interest to the bania?—That is quite possible, but he holds on to his land and his cows as long as he possibly can.

B-1962. A stage must be reached, unless he pays up his debts by striving to live on practically nothing, when the bania takes possession of the land he may have or any cattle, and the fellow goes to ruin. Is not that so? Therefore the whole problem is an economic one?—Yes.

B-1963. *Mr. Clow*: We saw a large number of coolies, both men and women, this morning at the building of the New Press who were not getting what you described as the proper diet, yet to a layman's eyes they appeared to be fairly adequately nourished. Is that due to a lack of observation or is there any other explanation?—There are exceptions to every rule. You will see from my statement that I have given there two diets—one is the ordinary diet and in the other a little extra is added which may be called the luxury portion of the diet. If you study the figures the cost comes to about Rs. 40 for a family of five while wages is somewhere in the region of Rs. 40, 50, 60 or 70. If you investigate into the matter closely, you will probably find that the healthy looking people are getting that diet—chapatis and dal, which is called the basic diet, of the family, *plus* one anna per head per day for ghee, oil and *gur*.

B-1964. They told us they only got *gur* very occasionally when they had extra money?—Yes. That may have been sufficient to keep the pot boiling.

B-1965. *Mr. Birla*: Regarding the question of malaria and the prevalence of other diseases, do not you think it is very closely connected with the question of poverty of the people?—The actual infection of malaria is not connected with poverty, but the resistance on the part of the people who suffer from that disease, when it gets into the system, is very closely connected with poverty, because in our present state of knowledge we do not know everything about malaria.

B-1966. What I was trying to point out was that in view of the low vitality and the low resisting power, the worker is more liable to infection than he would be if he were properly fed and clothed, and if he had all vitamins such as you get in milk, ghee, etc., provided to him which he does not get at present?—Do you mean to say that if people are properly fed, housed and clothed, they will be free from malaria. Panama canal is an instance in point.

B-1967. Is it not a fact that malaria is more prevalent among the poor who cannot afford to purchase mosquito nets and provide themselves with such precautions as are necessary?—You are now referring to the subject of control. Naturally, the wealthy people live in better houses, some are protected with wire gauze houses, some have mosquito nets; some people take

precautions round about their houses to prevent mosquito breeding—as opposed to the unfortunate labourer.

B-1968. Therefore well situated people have better resisting power. In order to tackle the problem of all these diseases, you have, first of all, to tackle the question of poverty?—If we can get industrialists to realise that one of the most important diseases is malaria and if you could wipe out malaria from this country both by control work and by improving the state and physique of the people you would have achieved something which would transform the country.

B-1969. But you will agree with me that mere propaganda without side by side increasing the resisting power of the people will not tackle the problem fully?—No, I say both should go hand in hand. Propaganda, control of disease and improved food should all advance for the benefit of the people, but you should bear in mind that one of the most difficult problems that you must tackle is malaria.

B-1970. How do you compare the nourishing quality of vegetable ghee with that of the country oil?—It is a chemical point which I prefer a chemist to reply to, but generally speaking, oil is valuable as opposed to vegetable fat.

B-1971. You cannot give us any opinion on the question whether oil is more nourishing than vegetable ghee?—Vegetable ghee would be useful, as I mentioned before, in cooking; it contains fat but not vitamins; oil does contain some vitamins.

B-1972. If oil is more nourishing than vegetable ghee, would you consider the question of discouraging the import of vegetable ghee which is at present very largely competing with the country-made oil?—That is a very big economic question. What appears to be ghee is sold, and it comes and revolves itself round and about the subject of Food and Adulteration Act.

B-1973. *Col. Russell*: Vegetable ghee is a valuable fat food?—Undoubtedly.

B-1974. The only difference is it lacks vitamins?—Yes.

B-1975. *Mr. Birla*: You refer to the rural uplift scheme of Mr. Brayne. Have you any first-hand knowledge about the work which has been carried on by Mr. Brayne?—I have not only very close knowledge but I claim that we have done more rural uplift work in the Delhi Province than Mr. Brayne in connection with public health amongst 304 villages.

B-1976. What I want to know is if, after the departure of Mr. Brayne, the work has been suffering or is it still continuing in the same way as it used to be when Mr. Brayne was in India?—The work is continuing but it is not continuing with as much zeal as it did while Mr. Brayne was present.

B-1977. You mentioned that there is difficulty in getting the right type of men and women for social welfare work. Can you explain why it is so?—Our educational standard with regard to improvement in public health work, especially amongst the doctor folk, is the same as that which obtains in the West. Education was carried on for curative medicine, and it is comparatively recently that public health work developed. Due to the economic factor, there have been more doctors who do curative work than public health work. That is the real state in India. Local doctors concentrate their attention on curative study of medicines because they can earn more money out of it than out of public health work. Consequently in the first place it is difficult to secure public health workers if you do not give them a living wage. Secondly a public health worker is born and not made. He has to start with a true desire to help his people, and there are exceedingly few workers in India to-day who are sufficiently educated to realise that their work in the public health field is for the benefit of their people. Usually the work is carried out for the benefit of oneself and not for the benefit of others.

B-1978. *The Chairman*: In all other countries this preventive work is a comparatively new public service. It is not surprising therefore that the supply in India at present is small, but it should increase by the help of public opinion and of the universities as quickly as may be possible?—Yes.

B-1979. *Sir Alexander Murray*. You say in your memorandum that the labourer may earn 9 annas per day, and that in pre-war days he used to earn 6 annas per day. Therefore there has been an increase of 50 per cent.?—Yes.

B-1980. You say that the cost of living has risen out of all proportion; that is to say, the cost of living has risen more than 50 per cent.?—Yes, I base that on the cost of a *chapati*.

B-1981. But you make a deliberate statement that the cost of living has risen out of all proportion.?—Yes.

B-1982. You say that an average man eats five *chapatis* a day.?—Yes, it also depends on the size of them.

B-1983. You said that the cost of *chapati* has gone up from three pies to nine pies.?—Yes.

B-1984. At nine pies each, and taking five *chapatis*, that comes to four annas a day. Therefore he is spending four annas a day on *chapatis* if he eats five.?—Yes.

B-1985. But your table shows that he only spends three annas a day.?—The table which you now have before you is in connection with the Notified Area of Delhi. The statement with regard to the *chapati* basis was made from personal enquiries from the coolies in the camps in the New Delhi area.

B-1986. You say that the rise in the cost of living is about 70 per cent. as against a rise in wages of 50 per cent.?—Yes.

B-1987. You say in 1914 a *chapati* cost three pies, whereas to-day it costs nine pies, that is 200 per cent.—Yes, in other words, you doubt the statement with regard to the *chapati*?

B-1988. Very much so. Who gave you these figures.?—They were collected from the people themselves in the camps. The figures with regard to food were collected from the local baniya shops both in New and Old Delhi.

B-1989. *The Chairman*: Do you mean to tell us that the cost of the items composing *chapati* is 200 per cent. above pre-war.?—Yes.

B-1990. *Sir Alexander Murray*: That is not borne out by the figures.?—You are questioning the cost of the *chapati*.

B-1991. Absolutely; I question the whole of your figures and I am taking your figures of *chapati* as typical of the rest of your figures.

B-1992. *The Chairman*: They were not prepared by a trained worker in this class of investigation.?—The figures for the Notified Area were prepared by a gentleman who is now behind me, and the figures for New Delhi with regard to the diet, were prepared by a second gentleman sitting behind me.

B-1993. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Was their experience such as to enable them to do that.?—They have intimate personal contact with these coolie camps. Both these gentlemen have been here since 1914-15.

B-1994. Who is the gentleman responsible for the statement that the cost of living has gone up by 70 per cent., when the *chapati* (which is the main article of a worker's diet) has gone up by 200 per cent. You say that a single man can live on four annas a day. Taking your figure at 9 annas there will still be a margin of 5 annas a day.?—Yes.

B-1995. If he had only a wife, with no children he would still be able to live on 9 annas a day.?—Yes.

B-1996. If he wants to marry, the wedding ceremony would cost him from two hundred to four hundred rupees. Where would he get that money from.?—He would borrow it against his property.

B-1997. You say he has to pay Rs. 80 per annum to the baniya here.—Roughly speaking, each year, he gets Rs. 80 out of the baniya from time to time—spread over the year.

B-1998. Take 1927. He gets in that year Rs. 80 from the baniya. In 1928 he gets another Rs. 80.—Meantime he has paid back something, but the usual thing is that it keeps mounting up.

1999. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: How much has he paid back?—I have not the figures here.

2000. Does he pay back the original capital?—He does not.

2001. *Sir Alexander Murray*: You say that he is indebted to the money to the extent of Rs. 80 per annum?—Yes.

2002. What does he repay him?

The Chairman: Does not the Commission think that we shall get some help from skilled investigators who have been at this work?

Alexander Murray: I hope so; but this statement is so interesting that I thought it was put before us by skilled investigators and I wanted to put the figures as far as I possibly could.

Cliff: I understand this was compiled by a man who has been associated with the coolies for 14 years. It would be of advantage if we could get up this matter. I take this figure of Rs. 80 as representing the man's debt.

Alexander Murray: But how did he pay Rs. 400 for his wedding?

Cliff: I am dealing first of all with the Rs. 80. It seems to me that the man is borrowing new money to pay back the old money. He always has an ever-renewing debt of Rs. 80. And sometimes he is paying more in interest than what the original debt amounted to.

2003. *Sir Alexander Murray*: You say the interest is only 37·5 per cent. per annum; that mounts up.

2004. I am not taking your hypothetical figure. I am taking the actual figure which you give us in your statement, and you say that he is indebted to the extent of Rs. 80 and it includes a heavy interest of 37·5 per cent. per annum.

2005. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Does that figure 80 include the interest?—

2006. *Sir Alexander Murray*: You have taken these figures on trust; you cannot vouch for them? I personally have taken these figures from the coolies who were brought to the camp by my worker. I did not stay throughout the whole meeting. The coolies were put on one side and the discussion was put on the other and the discussion took a considerable time.

2007. *The Chairman*: These figures were prepared yesterday?—No, they were prepared six days ago.

2008. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Now I am getting at what I want. You say that the banyas and the coolies were both there when the examination place?—Yes.

2009. Do you think that a coolie would say exactly what he owed and make a clean exposure of it?—There was a most prolonged argument.

2010. Who was the argument between?—Between the coolies and the bania and the bania who was owed the money.

2011. Did you get the books produced?—No.

2012. *The Chairman*: Did the bania say to one man, "You owe me Rs. 100; come and write there Rs. 50"?—No. It is most difficult to get a coolie to say exactly what is owed to a bania.

2013. *Mr. Cliff*: The bania and the coolies finally agreed after an alternative, that Rs. 80 was about the figure. Is that clear?—Yes.

2014. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Were you there?—I was there part of the time.

2015. You were not there when they agreed?—No.

2016. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Does it mean Rs. 50 to Rs. 60 borrowed, plus interest?

Sir Alexander Murray: He does not know, he was not there.

2017. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Who is responsible for the taking charge of epidemics when they break out and what sort of epidemics are they?—Since

I have been here we have had an outbreak of cholera. We get information from our inspectors, who go round the camps after the first or second case. You may get 30 cases in a night amongst a big population. The moment I get information I personally go to the camp.

B-2018. Do you see that these epidemics are controlled and that medicines are supplied for that purpose?—Yes.

B-2019. Can you give me the number of deaths during last year from cholera, small-pox and plague?—Speaking from memory there were 34 deaths in the camps from cholera. The number of small-pox cases has been exceedingly few in New Delhi. We have no plague.

B-2020. It has not been a very bad year apparently for epidemics of this class?—No.

B-2021. Would you therefore be in favour of a system of sickness insurance?—No, because you cannot take a single year or even a few years as a guarantee of what is going to happen in future.

B-2022. What I am driving at is this since you have been in Delhi, have the epidemics been of such a nature as to make a scheme for sickness insurance impossible from a practical point of view?—No, not the short period. But it is impossible to base it on a short period.

B-2023. Since it is your duty to bring these epidemics under control would it not be better to have a systematic method whereby the workers could go to panel doctors, let us say?—I do not think that that system would succeed with our present state of disease.

B-2024. You deal with the matter when an epidemic breaks out. You have to spend money. You have to hand out medicines and send out doctors. Would it be difficult to do that systematically year by year?—Yes, because you get hundreds of deaths from disease when you least expect them.

B-2025. My point is that even now, when you get hundreds of deaths you have to treat them and you have to provide assistance?—We do. It is the cheapest and most effective method. If you left control work to panel doctors you would never get any control work done.

B-2026. Otherwise administratively you would have no difficulty?—No.

Sir Victor Sassoon: What do you mean by “administratively”?

B-2027. *Diwan Chaman Lall:* That is to say, if you have a system of panel doctors?—I could not get them to work properly if they were not directly under me. I would not risk control work being done by panel doctors at this stage of our education.

B-2028. Would you prefer that the system which you have at present should be extended and made more permanent and practical?—Yes, that is what I have striven for all along.

B-2029. *Mr. Clifff:* Is that not only for preventive medicine but also for treatment?—I do not deal actually with the treatment. There is a separate branch which deals with the curative side of medicine.

B-2030. *Diwan Chaman Lall:* Mr. Clow asked you a question about certain workers whom you saw and who looked fairly healthy. Have you ever taken any statistics about the weight of any of these workers in order to find out whether their weight was up to the average or below the average?—I have not. I have been so busy with all sorts of other matters that the weighing of workers has not been done. An investigation on this point is most desirable.

B-2031. With regard to the question put to you about indebtedness, is it not a fact that the workers borrow money mostly on the security of the little piece of land which they possess in the villages or on their cattle or on the ornaments of their women?—I understand so.

B-2032. So that the debt goes mounting up to the stage when the baniya goes and pounces upon the man's land and cattle?—I think it gets sometimes even beyond that stage.

B-2033. *The Chairman*: Is there any deed executed?—I cannot tell you. Very often the baniya cannot read or write.

B-2034. *Sir Alexander Murray*: What happens when the debt gets beyond that stage?—The man is ruined. What does he do then?

B-2035. *Mr. K. Ahmed*: He pledges his children?—I do not know that.

B-2036. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Is there any form of legislation which prevents the baniya from taking the land away?—Not that I am aware of.

B-2037. *Divan Chaman Lall*: You stated that during the War yourself lived three years in huts?—I lived in dug-outs which were under the ground and most unpleasant.

B-2038. Would you more or less compare the housing arrangements with those dug-outs?—The dug-outs were worse really, but it is not possible to say that it is absolutely impossible to live in them.

B-2039. *Mr. Cliff*: You say that you do not believe that an insurance scheme against sickness can successfully be introduced at present. Have you made any actuarial calculation?—No.

B-2040. You are primarily interested in the prevention of disease?—Yes.

B-2041. You say you have medical inspection of school children. Do you make any provision for medicine or anything of that kind?—We do. We have made provision in this sense—that the hospitals and dispensaries of Delhi have set aside a time when school-children can be brought there for treatment, apart from being taken to private practitioners for treatment. The treatment given at the dispensaries and hospitals, roughly speaking last year was between 30 to 40 per cent. of those actually requiring treatment. Considering that this work was only started 18 months ago, that is a very large percentage.

B-2042. Is the treatment easily accessible to the children?—Fairly so. These dispensaries are placed in various parts of the city.

B-2043. Are they given any nourishing food at all?—Some schools in the city have started a system of what is known as "Food for all" movement. The children go to the school with a small amount of pocket money, with which they can purchase good ghee, wheat and other materials for making *chapatis*, and sweets of various sorts. The children pay the cost price to the master who is running that particular branch.

B-2044. You said that prevention and good food should go concurrently. Do you think it is advisable that, while you are doing all you can in your branch, there should be a good medical service for the work people?—Do you mean an insurance service?

B-2045. First of all should there or should there not be a good medical service for the work people?—There should be a medical service. At present it is worked in conjunction with our public health work.

B-2046. Could the two branches work in conjunction?—They could most decidedly.

B-2047. Are you not compelled to admit the necessity of giving nourishment in cases of sickness?—You mean to individuals not going to hospitals?

B-2048. Even at hospitals, or to cases at home?—They do get in the hospitals what they require according to the nature of the disease.

B-2049. You say in your memorandum that it is not possible to give monetary benefit; does that exclude any other form of benefit?—I do not think an insurance scheme could be successful financially, taking into account the enormous number of epidemics, and the enormous wastage of life which is occurring over vast tracts of land. Taking a specific place such as Simla or Delhi or any similar small town you might be able to do something in that respect for a particular place, but it could not be generalized.

B-2050. Supposing you had a famine in India, is provision made for it?—Yes, a certain amount of *takavi*, as it is known, is given to the villagers.

B-2051. Is that provision only made in cases which may be said to be dramatic cases?—You may say so. We have had a fairly considerable famine

round Delhi affecting 304 villages owing to lack of rain, and the amounts of *tala* which we have been able to give have been really very small.

B 2052 Is it not incumbent upon all responsible parties here to increase the necessary provisions in order to improve the health of the work people?—
I say yes every time it is incumbent on us bearing in mind what money there is available for the purpose. We cannot give money if we have not got it.

B 2053 But it is necessary to make provision?—Undoubtedly.

(The witness withdrew.)

**NANNA, son of Elahi Baksh, called and examined.
(Diwan Chaman Lall interpreted).**

B-2054 *Mr Clif* What occupation are you following?—I am a mason

B-2055 Were you not in fact laying bricks this morning when we saw you?—I was laying bricks this morning

B-2056 What do you earn?—Rs 1-10 a day

B-2057 How long have you been working in Delhi on this work?—I came here from my village four months ago, I have been at work for two months and for two months I have been unemployed

B-2058 *Mr Clou* Where did you work before?—I am working at Dehra Dun, I was employed for some time and then I was unemployed for some time, and from there I went to Hyderabad (Sind)

B-2059 *Sir Alexander Murray* What pay did you get at each of these places?—I was looking about in Hyderabad for fifteen days in search of work but did not find work. I used to get Rs 2 per day at Dehra Dun

B-2060 *Mr Clou* Why did you go to Hyderabad if there was no work for you there?—I heard there was work and therefore I went there

B-2061 *Sir Alexander Murray* How long do you work in a day?—From 6'clock in the morning till dark

B-2062 When do you eat?—I have my food in the morning before I go to work and I come back and have my food again when I get back. I get no rest during the day

B-2063 Do you not take any food with you to work?—In summer when the days are long I take some food with me but not in winter

B-2064 *The Chairman* Is your family with you?—Yes, my family is with me

B-2065 Do they work?—I have one son two daughters and two sisters, they are minors and they do not work

B-2066 *Mr Clou* Does your wife work?—No my wife does not work; she is in puidah

Diwan Chaman Lall He is quite indignant that it should be suggested that his wife works

B-2067 *Miss Pouch* How many dependents have you?—One son, two daughters two young sisters, one brother myself and my wife. My brother is seven years old

B-2068 *Mr Clou* Is the whole family dependent upon you?—Yes, they are all dependent upon me

B-2069 *Sir Victor Sassoon* Have you any land?—No I had a little land, but I fell ill one year and sold it to pay the expenses

B-2070 Where was it?—In Bureilly in the United Provinces

B-2071 Is your father living?—No

B-2072 Where do you live?—I live at Puhugany and I pay Rs 8 a month rent

B-2073 *Sir Victor Sassoon* Do you owe any money?—I owe Rs 150 in Bureilly, I owe some to my brother-in-law and some to the bania. I have to pay the bania Rs 3 a year. A debt of Rs 8 remains to be paid to the bania

B-2074 How are you paying the bania?—I pay Rs 3 every year on the Rs 8 this is the last bit of the loan left

B-2075 How are you paying your brother in law?—I do not pay any interest on the money I borrowed from my brother-in-law. I owe in all Rs 150 Rs 8 of that I owe to the bania in Bureilly the rest I owe to my brother-in-law

B-2076. How much did you originally owe the bania and how did you pay him off?— I borrowed Rs. 50 from the bania originally.

B-2077. What interest did you pay on the Rs. 50?—Six annas per rupee per year.

B-2078. *The Chairman*: That is 37½ per cent.

B-2079. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Then you have been gradually paying him off?—Yes.

B-2080. When was that Rs. 50 borrowed?—When I went to Hyderabad I borrowed this Rs. 50.

B-2081. When was that?—Over a year ago.

B-2082. *The Chairman*: Then when you have steady work you pay what you can and try to get into a better position?—When I have steady work I pay back the bania.

B-2083. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: How much did you pay for your wedding and where did you borrow that from?—I borrowed no money when I married; I had the money; my uncle and my father were both alive and they saw to it.

B-2084. *Mr. Clow*: How many days work did you do in the last month, October (1929)?—21 days.

B-2085. *Miss Power*: Are you paid weekly or monthly?—After a month.

B-2086. Would you prefer to be paid weekly?—It would be better for me to be paid weekly.

B-2087. When you first got employment here were you obliged to borrow before you got your first month's wages?—I borrowed the fare when I came here, and until I got my work I lived with some people in Paharganj who make cotton carpets and I borrowed money from them to carry on.

B-2088. Did they feed you?—Whatever they spent on my food they debited to me.

B-2089. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: They gave you credit?—Yes.

B-2090. Where do you get your food from now?—From the bania.

B-2091. Does the bania give a month's credit?—Yes, I had to pledge the children's things with the bania in order to get credit from him.

B-2092. Do you pay every month for the food when you get your wages? Yes.

B-2093. If you paid him weekly would the bania make it cheaper for you?—If I were paid my wages every week I should not have to borrow but should buy things for cash.

B-2094. Would the things then be cheaper for you?—If I have to borrow it is naturally dearer.

B-2095. If you were paid by the week you would still have to get credit for a week, would not you?—The cash would be with me and then why should I go and borrow.

B-2096. The cash is not with you until you have worked a week?—I would ask the contractor to give me an advance on my wages.

B-2097. *The Chairman*: You think you would be less dependent on the bania if you were paid weekly?—That is so.

B-2098. If you were paid weekly, in your opinion you could pay cash and not be dependent on borrowing from the bania?—If I get paid week by week then there will be no necessity for me to depend on the bania.

B-2099. How much do you pay for your *atta*?—6¼ seers or 6½ seers to the rupee.

B-2100. That is what you are paying now?—Yes.

B-2101. If you had your money weekly and paid cash how many seers would you get to the rupee?—I get 6½ seers on credit and I get 6¾ seers for cash.

B-2102. *Sir Alexander Murray*: On what day after the end of the month do you get your pay?—Fifteen days after it is due.

B-2103. You say that if you were paid weekly, you would take the first week's money in advance from the contractor; why should you not take the first month's money also from the contractor?—I did not put in a full month's work; I only put in 21 days' work, and the contractor would not advance me a month's pay.

B-2104. *Sir Victor Sussoon*: Can you borrow at all from your contractor even now?—The mistrie takes the advance from the contractor and I take from the mistrie two rupees or four rupees as the case may be.

B-2105. *Mr. Cliff*: If you have a son or sons do you send them to school?—They are too small to send to school.

B-2106. Are you going to send them to school?—When they grow up I will send them to school.

B-2107. *Mr. Birla*: Have you to pay something to the contractor?—No, I give nothing to the contractor.

B-2108. Do you get full meals every day for your family and yourself?—I do not get any relief from the money-lender in respect of the money that I owe, but I try to make two ends meet.

B-2109. *Mr. Cliff*: Do you get full meals every day?—Twice a day.

B-2110. How do you spend your money?—I pay off the bania and I have three or four rupees left which I use up for the coming week.

B-2111. *Mr. Birla*: What did you have to eat to-day?—I had my *dal* and my *roti* this morning.

B-2112. How much?—Three annas worth of *atta* for the whole family this morning; one rupee's worth of *atta* lasts three or four days.

B-2113. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: What amount were you getting at Dehra Dun?—Rs. 2.

B-2114. What are you getting here?—Rs. 1-10.

B-2115. Why did you accept Rs. 1-10 here when you were getting Rs. 2 at Dehra Dun?—I accepted Rs. 1-10 because the contractor told me that he was not being paid more than that by the Government and therefore he could not pay me more.

(The witness withdrew.)

**PARA and KALLIE, representative women workers.
(Diwan Chaman Lall interpreted).**

B 2116 *Mr. Clo* What is your name?—My name is Para. My name is Kallie.

B 2117 What is your occupation?—(Para) I am a gardener. (Kallie) I am a sweeper.

B 2118 From which district do you come?—Jajpur.

P 2119 What wages do you get?—7 annas a day.

B 2120 Does your husband also work?—(Para) My husband is disabled and cannot therefore work. (Kallie) My husband is an old man and does not work. I have four children and get 7 annas a day. I find it difficult to maintain the family.

B 2121 *Sri Hercules Murray* What is your age?

Mr. Murray She cannot say. Generally they do not know.

B 2122 *Sri Hercules Murray* What are the ages of your children?—One daughter of 13 and one of 11, a boy of 9 and another of 5.

B 2123 Do any of them go to work?—No.

B 2124 *Dr. An Chaman Lall* Why not? Does not the girl of 13 go to work?—No, she cannot go to contract work at that age. Even when we do work we are sometimes thrown out.

B 2125 How much do you owe to the bannia?—I owe Rs. 200 to the bannia. All that debt has fallen on my shoulders because my husband is very old and my children are minors.

B 2126 What interest do you pay?—Two pice per rupee per month.

B 2127 How do you pay the interest?—If my balance is left after meeting the household expenses I pay, otherwise not. To enable me to pay to the bannia I have cut down my food. (Para) I also owe Rs. 200 to the bannia.

B 2128 What did you eat this morning?—One *ulli chiyati* with one green chilli.

B 2129 Was it that one?—Yes.

B 2130 Do you take milk and ghee in your diet?—No.

B 2131 Do you take *dal*?—Yes, sometimes, not every day. How can I get *dal* every day when I am so poor?

B 2132 *Dr. An Chaman Lall* Does anybody other than your family members live in your hut?—No.

B 2133 What rent do you pay?—12 annas a month. (Kallie) In my hut also no outsider lives.

B 2134 *Mr. Lall* What is the hut, is it you or the employer's?—We ourselves built the hut.

B 2135 Do you know that you actually owe Rs. 200 to the bannia?—No, we maintain no accounts, it depends upon the bannia.

B 2136 How long have you been working in Delhi?—(Kallie) 3 years. (Para) 1 year.

B 2137 Did you work on the same kind of work before you came to Delhi?—Yes.

B 2138 Where was it?—In Jajpur.

B 2139 What wages were you getting there?—We were getting grain wages.

B 2140 Did you make any representation to your employer that you should get more wages?—7 annas is the fixed rate and we accepted the fixed rate which was given. Who is going to give us more than 7 annas?

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Mr. J. A. WOODHEAD, I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, Commerce Department.

B-2141 *The Chairman* You are the Secretary to the Government of India Department of Commerce? Yes Secretary to the Commerce Department

B-2142 You have submitted to us a memorandum dealing with the question of seamen under the various heads from questionnaire. How long have you held your present office?—Since March 1929

B-2143 What posts have you held previously? I was Joint Secretary Commerce Department before that for 18 months. I was Financial Secretary Bengal Government before that

B-2144 Can you tell us how it came about that the question of seamen their recruitment and their conditions comes under your Department and not under the Department of Industries and Labour? I think because we deal with mercantile marine questions

B-2145 Therefore it is thought more appropriate presumably?—I think so. The provisions of the law which apply to seamen are in the Indian Merchant Shipping Act

B-2146 Is there any contact between your Department and that of Industries and Labour on these questions?—Not a very intimate contact. Each Department consults the other Department on questions affecting both Departments

B-2147 In your memorandum dealing with recruitment you say that the question of revising the system of recruitment of seamen at the principal ports of Calcutta and Bombay has been engaging the attention of the Government of India for some time past and it has recently been decided that there should be two methods of recruitment of searings and butlers. When was that decided?—The question of an employment register for searings has been under discussion for some time. A final decision was arrived at towards the end of last year

B-2148 That means that your department has definitely brought about the changes which you describe in your memorandum to us? Yes we have introduced these changes

B-2149 Was that following the recommendations of the Gow Committee Report?—That did not absolutely follow those recommendations. They follow only partially

B-2150 In your memorandum dealing with welfare you say that "the establishment of an Indian Sailors Home in Bombay has been under consideration for some time and a committee appointed by Government is now considering the whole question. Which Government is that? Is that the Central Government?—The committee was originally appointed by the Government of Bombay

B-2151 What do you mean by originally? The committee has been in existence for some time as the question of welfare work was formerly a subject dealt with largely by the local Government. We have taken this subject over since 1st April 1929 when the centralization of Mercantile Marine Administration took place. Before 1st April Mercantile Marine Administration was what we call an agency subject that is it was administered by the local Government on behalf of the Government of India

B-2152 So that it is now a committee of the Central Government—Yes it was originally appointed by the local Government

B-2153 And you have taken over the same committee?—Yes the same committee is continuing its work

B-2154 Has it approached a decision now?—We have not received any information with regard to that. We have not received their report as yet

B-2155 *Mr. Cliff* How long has the committee been sitting?—I am afraid I cannot say definitely. There was *interim* for some time and action

was postponed, exactly for what reasons I do not remember. They started sitting again towards the end of last year. It is a subject which we did not deal with originally; it came to us in April of this year.

B-2156. *The Chairman*: Are you taking any steps to promote the working of this committee?—The committee is sitting; we hope to receive the report before very long. The local Government is still taking an interest in the matter.

It seems to be falling between two stools?—I do not think so. We certainly hope to receive the report before very long. The Chairman of the Port Commissioners, Mr. Neilson, is the Chairman of the Committee.

B-2157. With regard to periods of wage payment dealt with in your memorandum is there any system by which Indian seamen can make allotments to their families during the time they are at sea?—The Indian Merchant Shipping Act provides for the making of allotments, but I cannot say definitely whether allotments are in practice made.

B-2158. I think it is a common practice in England, and seamen are encouraged to make allotments to their families during the time they are away?—Yes. Our Act also allows for allotments, but I have not heard of allotments being made. We have not got full information on this subject, because the administration was only taken over on the 1st April (1929) from the local Governments. Therefore on these questions it might be advisable to get information from the ports from the shipping masters.

B-2159. We shall pursue that no doubt, but do not you think it a very desirable thing that making allotments to their families should be encouraged?—You would have to take care that no mistake was made with regard to the persons to whom the payments were made. If a seaman has a wife she would not usually appear in public.

B-2160. The man himself would say to whom the allotment was to be made. Have you considered that?—No, we have not, while I have been in the Commerce Department, dealt with this question of allotment.

B-2161. With regard to indebtedness of seamen you say that "indebtedness of seamen in Calcutta is extensive", that in one case 85 per cent. are in debt, and in another 75 per cent., the debts ranging from Rs. 20 to Rs. 1,000?—Yes.

B-2162. Has any attempt been made to rescue these people by means of co-operative credit?—Co-operative credit is a local Government subject. I could not say how far the local Government has made any attempt to do that.

B-2163. Would it be with seamen whom you have taken under your own wing?—Yes, I think so. It must be remembered that the majority of Indian seamen do not live at the ports. Their homes are in the districts, miles away from the ports.

B-2164. I mean *qua* seamen, not *qua* citizens?—But then they are distributed all over the countryside; they do not live in one particular port.

B-2165. *Mr. Ahmed*: Mr. Woodhead, the Clow Committee report recommended two alternatives for the recruitment of crews and lascars?—Yes.

Mr. Clow: This report is a strictly confidential document. I understand it is not published at large. If evidence is going to be led about this I suggest that that should be confidential.

Mr. Joshi: Your recommendations are not confidential; they were published in the Government of India Gazette.

B-2166. *Mr. Ahmed*: There the report recommended that recruitment should not be through brokers which was an abuse. Is not that so?—Yes, the Clow Committee recommended that brokers should not recruit.

B-2167. That was in May 1922. Since then is not the same method of recruitment through brokers still in existence?—Not quite.

* The report has since been received.

B-2168. What do you mean by 'not quite'?—The recruitment is still through brokers; this nuisance is still existing?—Brokers were never employed in Calcutta by the British India and the Peninsular and Oriental Companies. In Bombay the British India I think, at present do not recruit through brokers.

B-2169. Do you know that they have paid brokers?—In Bombay the Peninsular and Oriental did not employ ghat serangs. In Bombay the ghat serang was a broker's man.

B-2170. In Calcutta?—They employ ghat serangs who are their own employees, but do not employ the brokers.

B-2171. They get a certain percentage of commission from the recruitment?—No, the ghat serangs at Calcutta are paid servants of the British India.

B-2172. He gets a certain amount of commission for supplying crews?—No, for advances paid, not for recruitment.

B-2173. You count that as being on advances made by them?—I think that is the statement in the Clow Committee Report.

B-2174. Do you know that the ghat serangs at Calcutta also charge interest on the money which is advanced?—No, I do not know that. It has been alleged that the serang who is the head-man in the crew, realizes certain sums from the crew.

B-2175. Have you yourself made enquiries about this?—No. The Clow Committee Report stated that the serangs did not pay the men the actual pay they received from the company.

B-2176. About three or four years ago, when Sir Charles Innes was the head of your department, the Government of India informed the Indian Seamen's Union at Calcutta that they had appointed a Special Officer for recruitment; but though this officer has been appointed nothing has been done up to the present and the brokers are supplying crews?—I do not think that the Government of India informed the Union that nothing has been done.

B-2177. I do not say that the Government of India informed them that nothing had been done. The Government informed them that a special officer had been appointed for the purpose of recruitment and that no brokers or ghat serangs would take advantage of the crew seeking employment; that it would be done by a special officer who was there. Since then nothing has been done, though as a matter of fact a special officer has been appointed?—I do not know which letter you are referring to, and hence it is rather difficult to deal with the question. If the Government of India made any statement it was to the effect that they had appointed an officer from the Mercantile Marine, Captain Darvell, as Shipping Master. Prior to the appointment of Captain Darvell the Deputy Port Officer, who is a Royal Indian Marine Officer, was in charge of the shipping office. Captain Darvell was appointed definitely in the hope that he would remove the evils which existed.

B-2178. But he is not the sole recruiting officer. They are getting crews through brokers and ghat serangs? The British India does not get them through brokers.

B-2179. They are paid servants; they are employees of the company?—The majority of the shipping companies in Calcutta are now maintaining employment registers for their own serangs. The marine superintendents, the masters, or the chief engineers, select the serangs from the men entered on those registers of serangs. The serang then selects his crew and brings them to the marine superintendent, master or chief engineer, who approves of the crew. By this means we hope that the broker will not be employed in the initial selection of the crew.

B-2180. That was not your hope when the report was written on 5th May 1922?—The report was written before anything was done at all. There have been developments since the report was written.

B-2181. When the report was written why was not your department able to give effect to it and abolish the broker system altogether?—It was suggested that we should have a Government bureau for the selection of crews by a roster system; it is doubtful whether a rotation system would work.

B-2182. What are the reasons, and who suggested that?—Government recognized that there were evils in the broker system, and we are attempting to remove the broker as far as possible from the recruitment of the crews.

B-2183. When are you going to make a start?—A start has been made in Calcutta now. The companies, other than the British India, have now opened employment registers for their own serangs. The British India has had such a register for some time.

B-2184. Is it not a fact that the formation of a committee was suggested on which employers and employees should be represented, both sides selecting the men?—The Clow Committee made two alternative suggestions. One was for a joint supply, and the other was, if such a joint supply was not possible, a Government bureau. I take it that a condition precedent to the introduction of a joint supply is that the majority of seamen should be members of the union or unions. I do not think that is so at present. The proportion of seamen who are members of the unions is extraordinarily small.

B-2185. Are there any seamen's homes or recreation grounds in Calcutta for Indian seamen?—No. The seamen live in boarding houses.

B-2186. Do the keepers of these boarding houses extort money from the Indian seamen?—I could not say personally. I think there is a statement to this effect in the Clow Committee's Report.

B-2187. No housing accommodation is provided for Indian seamen by the employers or by the Government?—No.

B-2188. And no school is provided for them or their children?—There is no special school, but I presume they attend the ordinary primary schools.

B-2189. Neither the employers nor the Government has provided any school for Indian seamen or their children?—The Government of India does not provide educational institutions in the provinces. That is a provincial subject.

B-2190. Do you know that there have been some criminal cases in connection with extortion of money from Indian seamen by boarding house keepers?—I do not know.

B-2191. Have you any experience of the food which Indian seamen get on board the ship?—The scale is prescribed in the agreement which they and the master of the ship sign.

B-2192. The cost of which is very small?—I cannot say what the cost actually is. The scale was prescribed some years ago. It prescribes the amount of each article or the diet.

B-2193. Do you know that the Indian seamen are not supplied with warm clothing when they go to the Mediterranean?—The Lascar agreement lays it down that they shall be supplied with warm clothing if they are taken beyond certain degrees of latitude. I believe warm clothing is always supplied when it is required to be supplied by the agreement.

B-2194. Is not the cost of that clothing subtracted from their wages?—No. The lascar is not so grossly ignorant in regard to these matters. He is, I believe, always supplied with warm clothing according to the agreement when he goes beyond certain latitudes. The agreement does not require him to be supplied with warm clothing in the Mediterranean.

B-2195. Will you tell me which rule that is?—You will find it in the seamen's agreement. When they are taken beyond certain latitudes, north and south, the agreement prescribed by the Government of India requires that they shall be provided with warm clothing. If they are taken further north still, the rule prohibits their being employed on deck.

B-2196. Do the steamship companies carry out that rule?—We have had no complaints so far.

2197. Have not you had memorials and resolutions from the Calcutta 1?—Not in my time.
2198. You were only appointed a few days ago.—Six months ago.
2199. Is it not a fact that since 1921 a great number of resolutions and memorials have been forwarded to you, and you have not paid any heed to them?—I cannot answer that off-hand. I can assure you that when they go beyond certain degrees of latitude the agreement requires that they be provided with warm clothing.
2200. With regard to rations, the scale only provides for a very small amount of rations, does it not?—The scale is adequate so far as we know.
2201. Is not the amount of wages received by crews of other countries about 25 times more than that received by Indian seamen?—I cannot tell.
2202. *Divan Chaman Lall*: Have you any comparative wage statistics?
2203. *Mr. Ahmed*: Is it a fact that Indian seamen are not supplied with quarters but have to sleep on deck?—No, certainly not. They are all supplied with quarters. Crew accommodation is supplied on board every steamer.
2204. That may be the rule, but is it always complied with?—I think the rule is complied with.
2205. They have no fixed hours of work?—I have given the hours of work in the memorandum.
2206. You must have travelled at least by the boats of the Inland Navigation Company?—I did not know you were talking about inland steamways.
2207. They work day and night on those steamers, do they not?—Not as far as I know.
2208. How many hours do the crew work?—I cannot say.
2209. It takes two weeks for the steamer to go from Calcutta to Assam, if the steamer is working all day and all night, is it not?—The steamer is working all day and all night, but that does not mean to say that the crew is working all day and all night.
2210. How many hours do they work—sixteen?—I presume the engine room crew work by shifts, and the deck crew are certainly not all on duty at night.
2211. I put it to you that they work from 12 to 16 hours a day. Is that correct?—I cannot say.
2212. *The Chairman*: How far has your Department any control over inland steam navigation?—We exercise no control, except so far as legislation in connection with inland steam vessels is concerned.
2213. *Mr. Ahmed*: Are you aware that only a month ago at Geneva it was decided to fix the hours of work on inland navigation boats the same as hours on the open sea?—The matter is under discussion at present in Geneva. I do not think any decision has been come to.
2214. An amendment was moved and accepted that inland steam navigation boats should be included.
2215. *Mr. Joshi*: What were your instructions to your delegates—to support the Hours Convention or not?—The instructions were the same as those given in connection with the Genoa Conference in 1920.
2216. *Divan Chaman Lall*: In 1920, Mr. Cuthbert Lawes suggested a differentiation?—The draft Convention of 1920, which was not accepted by the Conference provided for a differentiation.
2217. *Mr. Joshi*: Were those the same instructions?—Those, I think the same instructions to-day.
2218. *Mr. Glow*: As regards the Seamen's Recruitment Committee, what are the results of the alteration of system which has been introduced?—One

result will be, we hope, that the brokers will largely disappear as recruiting agents.

B-2219. Has there been any result, for instance, on the sums taken by the serang from the men?—That can only be found out by enquiry.

B-2220. You were Marine Secretary in Bengal, and you may have some knowledge of it?—No, I am afraid not, as the subject was dealt with by the Deputy Secretary.

B-2221. As regards the reduction of unemployment has there been any result of the change. Has it had the effect of reducing the large mass of unemployed seamen at Calcutta?—I do not see how it is going to reduce the mass of unemployed seamen. You can distribute the employment among the seamen, but the manner of recruitment will not affect the unemployment. That depends on the supply and demand.

B-2222. This system was designed to secure more regular work for the seamen, and to eliminate the large number of useless and unemployable seamen?—I do not see how any bureau is going to increase the total amount of employment.

B-2223. Obviously, by limiting the numbers on the roster, the others will disappear to their villages?—You suggest that men who are useless should be taken off the register and refused employment?

Yes. I do not know how many useless people there may be. It is difficult to say whether a man is useless or not.

B-2224. Let me put it in this way. Is the mass of unemployed seamen in Calcutta smaller than it was in 1922?—It must be, because the number of seamen employed is much greater now.

B-2224a. As regards wages, would you be prepared to agree that, taking into account the ration, the wage of a seaman is on the whole higher than can be obtained for the same degree of skill in other occupations in India?—Yes, the very fact that there is such a large number of men clamouring to be seamen proves that the employment is attractive. You can get any number in Calcutta. We have restricted the issue of continuous discharge certificates to recruits. Originally anybody could get such a certificate by going to the office and saying he wanted to go to sea. The number of men who applied was very large. The present position is that no recruit is supplied with a continuous discharge certificate unless he has obtained employment on board a steamer.

B-2225. Therefore your system has reduced unemployment?—It has in that way.

B-2226. As regards the Indian Ports Act of 1922, when we were in Karachi we saw some young children employed in coaling ships. Is that covered by the Act?—I think that is against the Act.

B-2227. How is the Act enforced?—The Act is enforced by the local Government.

B-2228. In practice what is done to ensure that no children under 12 are employed?—I am afraid, I could not say.

B-2229. You did it in Bengal yourself?—That was a matter rather for the labour department of the local Government. I think the Karachi case is an infringement of the law. There is no reason to presume that the word "goods" does not include bunker coal. The employment of children under 12 in loading bunker coal is, I think, prohibited by the Act.

B-2230. *The Chairman:* In the whole of India?—Yes, the provision is in the Indian Ports Act, which is an Act applicable to all ports in British India.

B-2231. *Mr. Clow:* Is there any provision for inspection by any independent authority in regard to the safety and health of the workers in docks?—I believe there is no inspection beyond that by the Port Commissioners; I however cannot speak with certainty.

B-2232. Do you not think it would be desirable to have some such independent authority?—Yes: we wrote some time ago to all the local Governments

enquiring what regulations are in existence as regards the safety of persons employed in the loading and unloading of ships and working in docks generally and whether they considered that regulations on the lines of the regulations in England known as the Dock Regulations would be suitable in India. We also enquired whether they considered that legislation should be passed to bring such regulations into effect. The opinions we have received are somewhat divided. The regulations in force at present are contained in the bye-laws framed by the Port Commissioners. Bombay, Calcutta and Rangoon have certain bye-laws which cover a considerable portion of the ground that is covered by the Dock Regulations in England.

B-2233. Not Karachi?—No; if I remember rightly only Bombay, Calcutta and Rangoon.

B-2234. I take it that in Karachi and Madras there are no regulations?—I think that is so.

B-2235. In ports the Port Commissioners who are in a sense the employers are responsible for securing safety of the workers?—That is so. I am speaking from memory but I think the Madras Government and the Madras Port Commissioners were generally in favour of legislation. The Bengal Government also favoured legislation, so also the Calcutta Port Commissioners and the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. There is, however, a difference of opinion in Bengal as to whether the legislation should form part of the Factories Act. The Bengal Government favours legislation as part of the Factories Act. The Calcutta Port Commissioners seem to be opposed to that; they want a separate Act. The Indian Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta seems rather doubtful whether any special legislation is necessary. The Bombay Government and the Bombay Port Trust are opposed to legislation. The Burma Government are also not convinced that legislation is necessary or desirable; they think that the bye-laws framed by the Port Commissioners are sufficient.

B-2236. What is likely to be done in the matter?—We have only just received all the opinions and it has been suggested that we should wait for the report of the Commission.

B-2237. Are there any statistics available to show the number of accidents in docks, apart from the Workmen's Compensation Act?—We do not maintain statistics of this character. I think the Bombay Port Commissioners gave figures for 1927-28. The Calcutta Port Commissioners have not, I believe, given any statistics. Burma has given figures for three years; in 1926 in Rangoon there was one death, 11 permanently disabled and 84 temporarily; in 1927 there was no death, 5 permanently disabled and 121 temporarily; in 1928 there were 3 deaths.

B-2238. Did the reference which you made as to the possibility of legislation relate to hours of work?—No, it only referred to safety.

B-2239. There are no regulations at present for hours of work in docks?—No.

B-2240. As regards workmen's compensation you give us particulars in your memorandum. You say that all the shipping companies have consented to the insertion of the article in question. Does that relate both to Bombay and Calcutta?—I think so.

B-2241. Is that obligatory now or is it voluntary?—It is not obligatory. The difficulty is that the majority of the ships are registered in the United Kingdom.

B-2242. You have some means of making it virtually obligatory, exercising compulsion?—I do not think so; it is voluntary.

B-2243. Is not there any method by which Government can virtually make it compulsory on shipowners?—Not as far as I know.

B-2244. The system has been working satisfactorily?—Yes, all the shipping companies agreed to this. If a ship is registered in the United Kingdom and not in India—there are very few ships registered in India—the Indian law, as far as I understand, would not, except for this voluntary arrangement, apply.

B-2245. *Mr. Joshi*: Have the conditions of Indian lascars on ships been investigated by any committee?—The only committee we had was the Clow Committee.

B-2246. The Clow Committee did not investigate the conditions on ships?—No.

B-2247. So for many years no investigation has been made into the conditions of lascars on ships?—You mean as regards crew accommodation?

B-2248. As regards accommodation and other working conditions?—What do you mean by "other working conditions"?

B-2249. Hours of work?—There has been no committee of enquiry as regards hours of work.

B-2250. Did the Government ever consider whether the conditions should be investigated or not?—I do not think so.

B-2251. Has the Government ever considered whether the legislation as regards conditions for seamen laid down in the Indian Merchant Shipping Act is adequate or not?—The Indian legislation follows very closely the English legislation. But there is a difficulty as regards the legislative power of the Government of India; it is limited very considerably.

B-2252. I suppose it is a sort of imperial subject?—Yes; there is the further difficulty that Acts of the Indian Legislature are usually limited to British India and cannot be given an extra-territorial effect.

B-2253. There may be some ships registered in India?—Very few. They are chiefly the ships of the Sindhia Shipping Company and the Bombay Steam Navigation Company.

B-2254. You do not think those companies have investigated this matter?—I do not know.

B-2255. Has the Indian Seamen's Union any complaint against the P. & O. Company?—So far as I am aware we have heard no complaint.

B-2256. You have said that the wages of seamen are a little higher than in other industries. Is this explained by the fact that the wages of a seaman are not really for the period of service but for a much longer period, because he necessarily remains unemployed?—Not always; not on the coasting boats. On the coasting boats the seaman is employed fairly regularly.

B-2257. I have here with me a statement presented by the Secretary of the Bombay Seamen's Union which is a union of the P. & O. Company lines. It says that if they are employed for 12 months they remain unemployed for 13 months, in the P. & O.?—I think the P. & O. has introduced that system because labour and the labour associations wanted some kind of system by which men could get employment in rotation, and the P. & O. Company in order to relieve unemployment has arranged that men who have been out of employment shall be given preference when a steamer requires a crew.

B-2258. *The Chairman*: Does that mean that there are twice as many men?—It is difficult to say how many seamen there are. In India a sailor is often an agriculturist as well; he finishes his voyage and then goes home to his agricultural pursuits, and then he goes back again to sea. The number of men available for employment at Calcutta is probably almost twice as large as the actual number in employment.

B-2259. *Mr. Ahmed*: They go home because they have no provision for housing?—I entirely disagree.

B-2260. *Mr. Joshi*: May I ask whether you have made any census of the wages of seamen in India?—I have, in my memorandum, given the wages paid by the P. & O. Company.

B-2261. You have no figures of other companies?—The wages of other companies, I think, are slightly lower. I gave you the wages in 1915, and also in 1923; there is a considerable increase between 1915 and 1923.

B-2262. As regards the broker system you said that it is not abolished but is being abolished. When do you think it will be abolished?—No new licenses are being issued.

B-2263. *Mr. Ulow*: It is proposed that recruitment should be carried out by Government officers advised by a committee. When will that system come into force?—At the present moment we think it will be extraordinarily difficult to recruit through a bureau, giving rotation.

B-2264. What is the difficulty in the rotation system?—One of the difficulties is that you are dealing with such an enormous number of men. They go away to their homes for months at a time; you do not know where they are. Another difficulty is that the serang, particularly in Bombay, brings the crew. I think the rotation system was tried in England and was abandoned.

B-2265. In England they have got a joint committee system?—Yes, they have what is called the joint supply, but it is not a supply by rotation; it is first come first served in England.

B-2266. *Mr. Joshi*: I want to put a few questions as regards the Conventions and Recommendations passed at the Geneva Conference and the action taken by Government as regards these Conventions. The memorandum submitted by the Industries and Labour Department of the Government of India mentions all these Conventions. First of all there is the draft Convention fixing the minimum age for admission of children to employment at sea.—No legislation has yet been undertaken, but the question of introducing a single Bill dealing with all the maritime Conventions, so far as they have been adopted by the Government of India, is under the consideration of the Government of India.

B-2266a. When is this legislation to be undertaken?—We hope it will not be long delayed now.

B-2267. *Mr. Cluff*: May I ask, in respect of that particular matter, whether you are waiting for the Commission?—No, we are not. As regards the Convention referred to by Mr. Joshi, the Indian legislature recommended that the Convention should be ratified subject to two reservations. It has not been ratified because a Convention cannot be ratified subject to reservations.

B-2268. *Mr. Joshi*: That was in 1920. There has been a delay. When you say "without delay", I want to know the approximate period. Will it be within one year?—Yes, I should think it will be within one year.

B-2269. Then there is the draft Convention concerning unemployment indemnity in case of loss or foundering of the ship. When will action be taken on that?—That will be in the same Bill.

B-2270. Then there is the draft Convention fixing the minimum age for admission of young persons. You accepted the principle of that, and ratified it, and yet no legislative action has been taken?—We have carried that into effect by executive action; it will be covered by the same Bill.

B-2271. Then there is the draft Convention concerning the compulsory medical examination. Will that be covered by the same Bill?—Yes.

B-2272. *Mr. Cluff*: Is there a draft of that Bill extant?—No, it has not reached that stage. First of all, we thought of legislating for these matters when we amended the Indian Merchant Shipping Act. That was a very heavy and difficult task, and it did not seem likely that it could be carried through at any early date. We therefore decided to take them in a separate Bill.

B-2273. *Mr. Joshi*: Can you tell me whether any action is going to be taken in that Bill as regards the draft Convention concerning seamen's articles of agreement, Ninth Geneva Session?—We propose to consult the interests concerned as regards that Convention. It will probably be in the same Bill.

B-2274. Will the draft Convention concerning the repatriation of seamen be in the same Bill?—No; the Indian Merchant Shipping Act already provides for the repatriation of Indian seamen, and so far there is no difficulty. There is, however, a legislative difficulty in regard to foreign seamen employed on a ship registered in India but engaged in their own country. It is beyond the power of the Indian legislature to deal with this point. Ratification by His Majesty's Government will require an amendment of the English Merchant Shipping Act. We are waiting for that to be carried out. If the

English Act is amended so as to bring it into line with the Convention we shall probably be able to ratify.

B-2275. So your Department is not responsible for this portion of the memorandum submitted by the Government in the Industries and Labour Department?—I have not seen a copy of the memorandum.

B-2276. I find in that memorandum that they have mentioned what action you propose to take on certain Conventions, but they make no mention about the recommendations passed by the Geneva Conference. Can you give us information on that?—There is a recommendation as regards the limitation of hours of work in the fishing industry. With the concurrence of the Indian legislature we propose to take no action. As regards the limitation of hours of work in Inland Navigation we propose to take no action, also with the concurrence of the Indian legislature. With regard to the recommendations concerning the establishment of seamen's codes the position is the same. Then there is a recommendation as regards repatriation of masters and apprentices. Here again the difficulty is a legislative one. We decided to wait and follow the lead of His Majesty's Government at home. Then there is a recommendation concerning the general principles for inspection of the conditions of work of seamen. We propose to give effect to this; effect was not given earlier because it was considered impossible to do so until the mercantile marine administration had been centralized. It has been centralized from 1st April of this year and we now propose to give effect to the recommendation.

B-2277. In the Indian Merchant Shipping Act there is a racial discrimination made as regards the accommodation to be provided and the rations to be given to lascars and European seamen?—Not as far as I know.

I am referring to Sections 85 to 91 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act.

The Chairman: I think we are fairly convinced on that point. You would not compel the lascars to wear boots, would you?

Mr. Joshi: I am not talking about boots; I am talking about rations.

The Witness.—I would like to say that the lascar is a popular seaman to-day, which is proved by the increase in the number of lascars taken in ships during recent years. Probably one reason why he is taken is because he is cheaper.

B-2278. You admit that in Section 90 there is also discrimination about the accommodation provided?

The Chairman: It is common knowledge that there is differentiation between a European and an Indian.

B-2279. *Mr. Joshi:* 10 feet of space is provided for the European while 6 feet is provided for the Indian lascar?—There is a difference there undoubtedly.

B-2280. I want to know whether this difference can be minimized or not, if it cannot be removed at all?—That is a question for the Government of India.

B-2281. Did the Government of India ever consider this question?—Not to my knowledge.

B-2282. Will it consider it?—I cannot answer for the Government of India.

B-2283. What is your view with regard to setting up machinery to fix a minimum wage for Indian seamen?—We have not considered it.

B-2284. Who can speak on behalf of the Government of India and give us their view on this matter?—So far as I know the Government of India have not considered it. I think our general line with regard to seamen would be to wait and see what was done with regard to other classes of work-people before we touched seamen.

B-2285. *Mr. Cliff:* Would it be possible for you to give us approximately the number of seamen there are in India?—It is very difficult to give the number of seamen because the only figures we have relate to the number of seamen signed on and discharged. I can give you the number of men signed on and discharged.

B-2286. Is that divided as to coasting, deep sea and inland?—In coasting ships, that is home-trade ships, the law does not require the men to be signed on before a shipping master, and we do not compile figures for these ships. We could, however, obtain the figure by reference to the agreements. These agreements are delivered by the master to the shipping office. I cannot get you the number for inland steamers. The Government of India do not deal with the inland steam navigation; that is dealt with by the local Governments.

B-2287. I want to get an idea of the number unemployed?—That is very difficult. Captain Darvell made a guess in Calcutta, and I can give you that guess for what it is worth. The difficulty is that the seamen do not all live in Calcutta. There is a certain percentage living in Calcutta, but the large majority live inland and they may be away from the sea for years.

B-2288. You have mentioned in your memorandum that under the new procedure the number enrolled each year is about 5,000, whereas it used to be 10,000?—Yes. We definitely limited new enrolments to those who had obtained employment, and this number works out at about 5,000.

B-2289. What is the difficulty about a scheme of registration and rotation?—The difficulty lies in the large number who live in their villages and not in Calcutta.

B-2290. You can take the men present?—And is not the system of rotation against the principle of freedom of choice laid down in the draft Geneva Convention of 1920?

B-2291. If you were taking a rotation, could you not take the men present?—Yes. There would be a tremendous mob outside the office. I think the system of rotation is opposed to the principle of freedom of choice for the employee and employer.

B-2292. *The Chairman*: But I understand you are trying to reduce the number of floating seamen, if I may so describe them, in Calcutta, so that there shall not be the same disparity between demand and supply?—All we have done is to decrease the number of recruits who can get a continuous discharge certificate.

B-2293. So that you will not have so many unemployed would-be seamen hanging about Calcutta?—That is so.

B-2294. *Mr. Cliff*: I am trying to see whether they are really effecting a reduction in the number of available seamen?—We are issuing continuous discharge certificates to 5,000 recruits instead of to 10,000, so I suppose the number is being reduced gradually.

B-2295. Is that all you are doing?—As regards the number of seamen available that is all we have done.

B-2296. Then you cannot really say that you are taking effective measures to reduce the number?—A reduction from 10,000 to 5,000 a year is pretty good.

B-2297. It is only a reduction in the new entrants; it is not a reduction in the number of seamen, is it?—I suppose if the body of new men coming in is reduced, it will have the effect of reducing the total number.

B-2298. You are not suggesting that the wastage is equivalent to that, are you?—I do not know; I should think the wastage is pretty heavy. A large number of those who go to sea for the first time in the monsoon never go to sea again; they sign on, obtain a continuous discharge certificate, and are entered in our books, but they may never go to sea again.

B-2299. Has this had any perceptible effect on the numbers waiting for employment?—The actual number employed is certainly larger than it was a few years ago, because the number of steamers visiting India has increased.

B-2300. And the margin above the demand is less?—Yes, I should think it is.

B-2301. Will it go on diminishing?—It is very difficult for me to say, but I presume so.

B-2302. It appears to be impossible to get a clear picture of what is really happening?—Obviously if everybody who, having been to sea, and having

got a continuous discharge certificate, is entitled to call himself a seaman, although he may have been away in his village for years or have been to sea for only a few months, it is very difficult to reduce the numbers rapidly.

B-2303. Have you any authority to test the rations of ships?—Yes, there is a section in the Indian Merchant Shipping Act by which we have power to inspect; the shipping master inspects the rations.

B-2304. Are they frequently tested?—I could not say from personal knowledge, but I believe the instructions are that they should be tested before each voyage.

B-2305. If there were reports, would they come to your Department?—They would not before the 1st April.

B-2306. Have you had any reports this year?—I have not seen any. We had a report from England as regards *ghee*. Some of the *ghee* was tested and found to be vegetable *ghee*.

B-2307. Who is the Minister responsible?—The Honourable Member, Sir George Rainy. The opinions I express here are not the opinions of the Government of India. I cannot bind the Government of India in any way. The opinions I give are my own opinions.

B-2308. You answered a question put by Mr. Clow as to bunkering coal. When we were at Karachi the Chairman of the Port Trust said there was no regulation or control on the waterside of the ship. Would you say that is correct?—I do not quite understand. I do not think there is any difference between the waterside and the landside of the ship.

B-2309. And so at the moment is there no regulation on the waterside of the ship if they do not make a by-law?—I believe the Section of the Act applies to the waterside of the ship; but beyond the local Government's officers on the spot there is nobody to see that the Section is complied with. The statutory provision is that children under 12 shall not be employed in the loading or unloading of goods from ships.

B-2310. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Is there any differentiation between the streamside and the dock side?—I do not think so.

B-2311. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: But as far as the Port authorities are concerned, they may say: We are only concerned with the dock side of the ship?—I should not have thought so.

B-2312. *Sir Alexander Murray*: In Calcutta, where they load in the stream, the dock authorities would not be responsible?—The Port Commissioners, who are the owners of the docks, have power to make by-laws regulating the loading and unloading of vessels within the Port, whether within the docks or in the stream. The prohibition against the employment of children under 12 years of age is not contained in these regulations, but in the Indian Ports Act, which applies to all ports. Of course, the Port Commissioners are not responsible for seeing that other employers of labour do not infringe the Act.

B-2313. *Mr Cliff*: I understood you to say that the question of statutory regulation of hours was left for this Commission to make recommendations upon?—No. I said that we had enquired of the local Governments and through them of the Port Commissioners as regards "safety regulations" in docks. In England the loading and unloading of ships has been declared under the Factories Act to be a dangerous process, and regulations have been issued controlling the loading and unloading of ships both as regards work on shore and on the ships. We wrote to the local Governments enquiring what regulations existed in India, and whether they considered that regulations on the lines of the dock regulations in England should be introduced in India. The opinions we got were somewhat divided. The by-laws passed by the Port Commissioners at Calcutta, Bombay and Rangoon cover to some extent the same ground as the dock regulations at home, but not entirely. We only got the replies recently. The 12th International Labour Conference at Geneva in May last considered the question of the loading and unloading of ships from the point of view of the safety of the worker. Doubtless this Commission will examine the subject also. At present we are waiting the result of the Labour Conference at Geneva.

B-2314. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: A statement has been made by the Indian Seamen's Union that there may be about 185,059 men on the registers between 1900 and 1923?—I cannot say whether that figure is correct or not. The registers go back to 1887. The registers will give the figures for new men signed on between 1900 and 1923.

B-2315. That is quite right; they are figures from 1887 to 1923; it is, 1,86,059?—It may be so.

B-2316. They estimate that if you deduct from that number 86,000, that leaves you with 100,000 seamen on the register who must be alive and seeking employment?—Seamen who registered in 1880 may be dead by now.

B-2317. I am presuming that 86,000 are dead; that is what the Union says?—They have no basis for that calculation. I can give you the estimate made by Captain Darvell which, however, is very largely guess work. Speaking from memory I think the estimate was that there were about 140,000 seamen available at Calcutta. I think he said the number actually in employment would be about half that number.

B-2318. The Union say that out of that number no more than 21,490 can be employed?—What do you mean by "can be employed"? A seaman who has been away at sea for 18 months will often go home for six months.

B-2319. The number of seamen available for ships at any given time is no more than 21,490?—I could not say; I do not know where they have got their figures from.

B-2320 *Sir Victor Sassoon*: That is a figure that could be got?—It is a figure we could get by writing to all the shipping companies, including the owners of tramps.

B-2321. *Diwan Chaman Lall* The statement has been made by the Indian Seamen's Union, Calcutta, that there are somewhere about 80,000 men who have been or who are eligible for work on ships, who are unemployed at the present moment?—Yes, I should think that is about the figure, as near as you can get it.

B-2322. Since 1920 this Union has been agitating for employment bureau on the lines suggested by the Clow Committee?—They have been asking for them at times.

B-2323. What has been your objection to giving them?—We think it extraordinarily difficult to work a bureau on the rotation system.

B-2324. What difficulty do you apprehend in working it?—You get men going home; you have thousands who are not employed. Further there is the difficulty as regards the attachment of the men to a particular serang.

B-2325. But what is the difficulty?—The difficulty is that you have registers containing thousands of names; you have to go through hundreds of names before you get to a man who is there.

B-2326. Do not you know that that sort of system prevails in other countries?—No.

B-2327. What is the system in Great Britain?—It is not that; there is no rotation in Great Britain.

B-2328. There are mercantile marine offices in Great Britain?—Yes, but they have nothing to do with the recruitment of seamen.

B-2329. Is it not a fact that in these offices seamen can sign themselves on for engagement on board ships?—They are signed on after they have been recruited. Recruitment is not done by the mercantile marine officer. He signs on the crew, and always has done so. We do the same and have always done so.

B-2330. In 1918 in Great Britain they adopted a different system, namely, of joint control?—That system is not worked by the mercantile marine office. The system of joint supply is worked by the National Maritime Board formed of the representatives of the shipowners and the employees.

B-2331. And joint control by the shipowners and the men's unions?—Quite true, but the joint supply is not at the mercantile marine office which is a Government office.

B-2332. There was joint control introduced in 1918?—Not completely, because although the Shipping Federation joined with the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, the Employers' Association of the Port of Liverpool did not join.

B-2333. Is it not a fact that the Mercantile Marine Office kept closely in touch with this method which was introduced?—What do you mean by "closely in touch"?

B-2334. Did they or did they not keep in touch with this office in regard to the recruitment of seamen?—The Mercantile Marine Offices did not take any active part in the actual recruitment of seamen; they I believe helped in disputes, as we do.

B-2335. My information is a little different from yours; I should like you to verify your information and I will verify mine?—I have mine from a note prepared by Mr. Gilchrist who studied the matter while in England.

B-2336. Is it not a fact that Japan has ratified the system, and other countries, such as Spain and Holland, have ratified the Geneva Convention?—I presume you refer to the Convention. Ratification of the Convention does not mean a bureau by rotation, because that would obviously be against the article of the Convention which prescribes freedom of choice.

B-2337. Would you be prepared to ratify the Geneva Convention as regards India?—I cannot say what the opinion of the Government of India would be; I would, however, point out that the Geneva Convention definitely laid down that there must be complete freedom of choice both for employer and employee, and I suggest if you have a system of rotation, you have not got that freedom of choice.

B-2338. Supposing a demand is made on behalf of the seamen here that there should be set up a bureau jointly controlled, with compulsory advisory committees?—A joint bureau and a compulsory advisory committee are entirely different; a joint bureau is a joint bureau organized by the employers and employees.

B-2339. Would you be agreeable to that system?—If the trade unions were representative of all the seamen, then I think there would be no objection; you have got it in England.

B-2340. For a number of years you have had a recommendation to that effect made by the unions?—Yes, but the unions are not as yet fully representative of the seamen.

The Chairman. Was it made by all the unions?

Diwan Chaman Lall: Yes—According to the figures we possess, the membership of the unions at Calcutta is as follows:—Indian Seamen's Union 8,000, the Indo-Asiatic Union 2,000 and of the Indian Quartermasters' Union 1,500; that is out of a total say of at least 100,000 seamen.

B-2341. *Mr. Cliff*: Is there any other body able to express the opinions of the seamen?—Those are the only bodies we know which are representative of seamen.

B-2342. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Supposing you took those bodies and said: We shall deal with you, what difficulty do you apprehend in the working of this system?—I think the condition precedent for the establishment of a system of joint supply is that you should have a representative body of shipowners and a representative body or bodies of seamen. You have not got a representative body or bodies of seamen.

B-2343. It does not matter whether the membership of the unions is 8,000, 10,000 or 20,000; it makes no difference; you would not restrict your muster rolls or registers to members of the unions.

B-2344. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Would it not be rather forcing the men into the unions?—That would be the natural result and it happened in England.

Dewan Chaman Lall: The alternative system is that of a State did you reject that?—We have not rejected it absolutely, but my opinion is that the working of a State bureau with a system of such enormous difficulties, and I express the opinion that a system is opposed to the Geneva Convention.

Do you will have neither the Geneva Convention nor the system proposed; is that the idea?—No, I have not expressed that opinion.

Will the Government of India will content itself with the appointment of masters?—I have not expressed the opinion that if you had unions represented the large majority of seamen it would be impossible to have you call an employment exchange.

The Chairman: May we leave it at this, that under present conditions do not see your way?—We do not see our way under present conditions would like to make the point clear that joint supply in England is possible by rotation.

Is that quite clear.

Dewan Chaman Lall: You said there was no promise given by the Government in regard to the setting up of any bureau?—I do not think

there was a letter sent by the Deputy Secretary, Marine Department of Bengal, in which he said: "I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter ... in which you ask to be informed whether a recruiting bureau will be started and the name of the officer who will be appointed as the head of the bureau. In reply I am directed to state that the Government of Bengal hope to appoint a special officer with a view to the new method of recruiting at an early date." That letter is dated 1st August, 1924?—At that time it was not contemplated to start a

How would you interpret this reply which was given?—We have not proposed a new system as I have stated.

Did you have any representations made to you in regard to the compensation of seamen who were killed during the war?—You mean compensation of war benefits?

Yes?—I do not think we have received any representations lately.

You do not know that there has been a great deal of correspondence between the Government of India, the India Office and the union on this subject?—There has been no fresh correspondence through the Commerce Department recently.

Who could give us this information?—I do not know exactly what is referring to.

I am referring to the question of German reparations and war pensions as not clear as to German reparations and war debts. Pensions have been given in respect of men who lost their lives or were injured in the war.

There were 3,427 Indian seamen killed during the war?—Probably I do not know the exact number.

The question was raised as to what was to be done in regard to the compensation of these seamen?—Yes.

The Government of India were approached and in reply they said that the Government of India and His Majesty's Government were making full provision for the dependants of lascars who died in the war, that if money was obtained from Germany it would be used for that purpose; that it was very likely that the full amount would be obtained. The Union approached the India Office, but the position remains the same, namely, that no satisfactory arrangement has been received from the Government of India in regard to this question?—What is the question at issue.

The question at issue is what sums of money are you obtaining from the German Government and what sums of money are you going to pay

to the dependants of these seamen?—I have not seen any correspondence about that.

B-2361. Will you look into this matter and tell us the latest that the Government of India has to say in regard to this matter?—Yes, I will look and see if there is any correspondence.

B-2362. In regard to the question of racial discrimination, is it a fact that for the same work Indian and European seamen are paid different wages?—Wages are not on the same level.

B-2363. Is it true that a European fireman gets £9-10-0 a month, which is equivalent to Rs. 142-8-0, whereas an Indian fireman gets only Rs. 23 per mensem?—I do not know what the actual wages of British firemen are; you will get that from the standard rates of wages laid down by the National Maritime Board.

B-2364. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Does the efficiency differ?—I do not employ lascar seamen or British seamen, and I really could not say.

B-2365. What is the system of recruiting in Liverpool, which you said just now was different?—The system of recruiting at home under the National Maritime Board is this: only one union of seamen is recognized and represented on the Maritime Board; there are other unions, but these have not been recognized by the employers and are not represented on the Board. The union which is represented on the Board is the National Seamen's and Firemen's Union; that is Havelock Wilson's Union. The employers are represented by the Shipping Federation and the Employers' Association of the Port of Liverpool.

B-2366. You said that Liverpool was different?—That was at the time when the Maritime Board and the system of joint supply was first introduced. The Employers' Association of Liverpool did not at that time join with the Shipping Federation in introducing the joint supply with the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union.

B-2367. What did they do?—They kept aloof, but they joined subsequently in 1925.

B-2368. What was their method while they were keeping aloof?—I am not certain. Under the present system of joint supply there are at each main port officers called "Port Consultants"; that is one representing the shipowners and another representing the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. As a matter of fact, a man who wishes to get employment often goes to the ship first of all and gets a letter from the officers of the ship to the Port Consultant.

B-2369. *Mr. Cliff*: He must go through the Union?—Yes, he must go through the Union.

B-2370. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: The Union, of course, covers a large majority of the seamen?—Yes. There is, however, another union called the Amalgamated Marine Workers' Union; that was organized by Shinwell and Lewis.

B-2371. *Mr. Cliff*: That is dead?—It is dead now, but it was alive a few years ago.

B-2372. The seaman must go to the Union in order to sign on; the officers of the ship will not sign them on unless they present their card from the Union office?—I think that is right; but I think I am correct in saying there is no rotation system.

Mr. Cliff: There is no rotation system.

B-2373. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Do the majority of the seamen belong to the Seamen's Union?—Yes.

B-2374. *Diran Chaman Lall*: If you did recognize this joint control, would it not help this union to bring in those who are not members?—I think a system of joint supply is impossible till the union has grown and is representative of the large majority of seamen.

(The witness withdrew.)

**Mr. E. E. COOMBS, Controller of Printing and Stationery,
Government of India, Delhi.**

B-2375. *The Chairman:* Mr. Coombs, we have in front of us a memorandum by Mr. Charles T. Letton. That was written while you were on leave?—Yes.

B-2376. Under your instructions?—No, under the instructions of the Department of Industries and Labour.

B-2377. But you have no doubt since you return from leave read that memorandum?—Yes.

B-2378. And you have come before us to-day in support of that memorandum?—Yes.

B-2379. Dealing with the experience of your Department with regard to Works Committees, the memorandum says "I was Manager of that Press," does that refer to you or not?—No, that is Mr. Letton.

B-2380. That appears to suggest that works committees have had a very varied career?—Rather.

B-2381. Depending greatly on the personality of the Manager of the particular press?—To a certain extent, yes, not totally; for instance at Aligarh Press the Works Committee has hardly ever functioned very well, because I consider the employees there are a very poor lot of illiterate men and they really do not understand the benefits of the Works Committee although they have been explained to them.

B-2382. Do you not think that the more ignorant the man may be the more tact it needs on the part of the management?—Yes, it does need a lot of tact in that instance, but we have tried to get them to take a more real interest in it and they do not seem to do so in the Aligarh Press.

B-2383. How does the position stand in Delhi?—I should say it works very well; they meet regularly every month and I get the minutes sent to me regularly every month; they try to help the Manager and the Manager listens and decides nearly every question in committee with them.

B-2384. In that case you have found that it has been beneficial both to the management and to the workers?—Yes, certainly.

B-2385. How long has this Delhi Committee been in existence?—I do not know when the first committee was started; but they were all started more or less at the same time; they have been functioning ever since I have been here, and that is five years.

B-2386. We are told that the one in Calcutta became defunct in 1924-25, while the one in Simla flourished from the very start?—Yes. Mr. Letton was in Simla in 1924-25, and then he went to Calcutta. I was not here then, but I suppose that the Calcutta Committee was not working very well.

B-2387. The memorandum tells us that in Calcutta after Mr. Letton had taken charge he resuscitated the Committee and when he handed over charge in 1927 he found it also substantially advantageous to the management and to the worker?—Yes.

B-2388. So that evidently Mr. Letton had taken a live interest in its success?—He has always.

B-2389. Does not that seem to show that it requires certain qualities in the management as well as in the workmen?—Yes, it does, but if you read further on you see that the manager of this Simla Press had even drafted questions for them and they did not take any interest in it.

B-2390. That is to say the manager of the Simla Press, after Mr. Letton had left it?—Yes.

B-2391. That suggests to me that his successor did not take the same live interest or possibly had not the same personal qualities?—I think they all try to help them as much as possible. But every man is not quite as good as another in these matters.

B-2392. Of course it is recognized in England that it does require certain qualities on both sides to make a real success of organization of that kind and that they vary practically in proportion to the qualities which such men possess?—Yes, that is so.

B-2393. But very often the lack may be just as much on the part of the management as on the part of the workmen?—That may be the case.

B-2394. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: The memorandum states: "In order to provide for the training of Indians for supervising posts in the Government of India Presses five apprentices are trained in the Government of India Press, Calcutta. The period of apprenticeship is five years during which an apprentice is paid Rs. 50 per mensem as subsistence allowance." That is to say, it requires five years training in Calcutta before he is considered qualified for appointment. "Facilities are also provided for the higher training of apprentices in England at the rate of one each year".—If he is going to stay out in this country altogether and not be sent to England, we consider that five years is necessary for his training, but if he is going to be sent to England he goes by selection; he is generally selected after two years and then sent to England for three years, so that he has five years in all. Only selected men are sent to England.

B-2395. What are the prospects of the men who are not sent to England, that is to say the men who put in five years in India against those who put in two years in India and three years in England?—The prospects are that if they are capable they can become readers, foremen, section holders, etc.

B-2396. Are the prospects uniform?—No, the prospects are rather better for those men that are sent to England.

B-2397. On what pay would you start these people who are trained in England?—It depends on the vacancies that we have for them.

B-2398. What about those who return from England duly trained?—We have only had one so far; he returned this year.

B-2399. You say that the training of apprentices at the Calcutta Press is not altogether satisfactory. Why?—Because we have not got sufficient staff of the proper kind to train them.

B-2400. Do I understand you to maintain that even with regard to printing there are not in India adequate facilities for full training?—Certainly not; there are not adequate facilities.

B-2401. That is to say there is something special which is required for printing work which can only be learnt in England?—That is my opinion.

B-2402. Can you explain to us briefly what that distinction is?—Yes; to begin with, the printer at home starts work and works with men who know their trade, who have learnt their trade by five or seven years apprenticeship. In India these men start and learn their trade from men who have never learnt their trade properly as they do in England.

B-2403. How long is this process to continue in a trade which I should think is a very ordinary trade required in every country. Must it always depend upon foreign training?—Unless we start proper schools for training these people such as they have in England, I am afraid they will never make any headway.

B-2404. But you know that India has a very large number of printing presses spread over the whole country. Is it your view that those printing presses are not up-to-date?—I will not say that of all of them.

B-2405. In how many of these presses are there English qualified officers?—The Press of the Times of India in Bombay, for instance, is worked pretty well up-to-date, but if you take the number of Europeans in the Press of the Times of India and compare it with the Government of India Press, you will find they have a very much higher percentage than we have.

B-2406. Is the idea of sending the apprentices to England for training to gradually Indianize the services?—That is the idea.

B-2407. Your memorandum shows that under this scheme the first man started training in 1922, but up to 1932, that is ten years, only four men

will have been qualified?—But the scheme for sending them home to India did not start until I came here in 1926; I put it up to Government when I came over from Bombay.

B-2408. But Mr. Sen started apprenticeship in Calcutta in May 1922?—He then went to the Government Security Press, Nasik.

B-2409. He was then sent to England for training in 1926; that is to say, he had four years training instead of five years?—That is a peculiar case because Mr. Sen was originally one of the Government of India apprentices; and he was transferred to the Security Press after a time. When Government gave a scholarship to send a man home to England he was the selected man.

B-2410. If you take all the four cases, the first two drew Rs. 50 a month as a subsistence allowance while the other two were unpaid apprentices?—Because they asked in the beginning to be taken as unpaid apprentices.

B-2411. After getting all this training extending over five to seven years, on what pay will they be started and what prospects have they of rising in their profession?—Mr. Sen who has just come out has been appointed Officiating Overseer in the Government of India Press at Calcutta, on a starting pay of Rs. 250 a month.

B-2412. What are his prospects; how far can he rise in the department?—He can rise to be Controller of Printing and Stationery if he is good enough.

B-2413. In how many years?—That depends on vacancies.

B-2414. I am asking you this question because you say in your memorandum that of recent years the type of man taking up printing as a livelihood has deteriorated, due to the fact that the emoluments available offer insufficient inducement to the type of men you obtained 20 or 25 years ago?—But that is not speaking of apprentices; that is speaking of the ordinary workmen of the press.

B-2415. Then do you get the right class of recruits for apprenticeship?—Yes, because we select them.

B-2416. Is there a great demand for these posts?—I get large numbers of applications for them.

B-2417. As you have pointed out, the prospects after seven years are Rs. 250 to start with?—I get quite a large number when we advertise every year for them; that is because we pay them Rs. 50 a month to start with. They are selected men who are graduates.

B-2418. I take it that in your view it is not possible to provide the necessary training in India and that in order to Indianize the services British training is essential?—I consider so under present conditions.

B-2419. How long do you think that process will continue before some effect is produced in the services?—I am afraid that is a question I cannot answer.

B-2420. *Mr. Clow:* With regard to that statement to which Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola referred, have you a long experience of printing in India?—Yes, a fair amount.

B-2421. Do you agree with Mr. Letton's statement that the type of man taking up printing has deteriorated?—I do not know; judged by my personal experience at Bombay and here I should think it is about the same; I should think the same class of men is still taking up the work; we are not getting a better class of men.

B-2422. The pay which is given in your press for such workers as linotype and monotype compositors compares very favourably with the pay which an ordinary maticulate can get in any profession?—Yes, I should think it does. If they once become monotype or linotype operators they have not much prospect. I think that would keep away the maticulate and other educated people.

B-2423. There are a good number of unemployed matriculates?—They have to learn the trade first without getting very much, and they do not like that.

B-2424. I take it that your system of recruiting apprentices has some reference to the probable vacancies in the department?—Yes, except that as far as apprenticeships in the Calcutta Press are concerned we take in one every year. As far as sending them home to England is concerned, it would probably depend on the vacancies that are likely to occur. Government might quite possibly stop the scholarship if they found they had sufficient men under training. The Bombay Government have got a scheme, I think Madras also has, and I am not sure about Burma.

B-2425. As regards medical facilities, have you any statistics of sickness in your presses?—No, we have not got any actual statistics. As Mr. Letton has said in his memorandum, on an average 15 per cent. of the men are away because of sickness or other reasons. It is generally sickness because they cannot get away unless they get a medical certificate. But I cannot give you any statistics as to the sickness.

B-2426. Have the recent additional medical facilities which have been provided had any noticeable effect upon absenteeism?—I cannot answer that because I have not had the figures. I should not think so; I think it is just about the same.

B-2427. Have you ever experimented by altering the intervals of rest, substituting a large number of short rests?—I have not done anything like that; they have always had the same intervals, as far as I know.

B-2428. Do you think it would be worthwhile to make such experiments?—Do you mean instead of half an hour?

B-2429. Yes, if it is possible under the Factories Act?—It would be very inconvenient for the presses, to stop more frequently and then go on again. Every time a man stops he generally stops for more than half an hour, and if you stop him for ten minutes he will probably make it 15 minutes.

B-2430. *The Chairman*: But most of your men are on piece-work?—Only the compositors, the binders and the machine menders in Calcutta, and the compositors here in Delhi; the other men are on monthly wages.

B-2431. Were not we told that the linotype men were on piece-work?—The linotype men are on monthly wages, but they have to give a certain out-turn for their pay; they are not actually paid so much per piece.

B-2432. *Mr. Clow*: Is the service pensionable?—In all cases except temporary men, and some of the temporary men are now given pensions after 25 years' service. We have now abolished most of the temporary places.

B-2433. Do you find that there are many vacancies occurring or do men stay with you throughout their service?—Once they get in they never want to leave. They do not want to leave the service of the Government of India because they are paid so much more than in other presses; the pay and conditions are very much better than they can get in the ordinary printing press.

B-2434. Then do you get a better type of men than there is in the private presses?—I cannot say that they are a better type of men. I should not think they were.

B-2435. You ought to get a better type of man?—Yes, but then we have not done any recruiting for a very long time. The reason why we do not get a better type of man is that when they start they have to start on a very low pay; it is only when they have learnt their trade for a number of years that they are able to earn better money.

B-2436. *Sir Alexander Murray*: What is the starting pay?—There are various starting pays.

B-2437. You say the reason you do not get a better class of men is that they have to start on a very low pay?—A compositor would come in as quite a young man and would only get Rs. 15 or 20 a month; it will probably be 7 years before he can earn Rs. 40 or 50.

B-2438. *The Chairman*: He is a learner?—Yes; they do not learn their trade in the way they do in England as an apprentice starting on 6s. a day and going up to £1.

B-2439. *Mr. Cliff*: Why do they not learn their trade?—They pick it up in the best way they can; there is no system of apprenticeship for them.

B-2440. Then why does not the Department go into that problem and set up a proper system of apprenticeship?—It could be done, of course.

B-2441. But the Press has been going on now for a very long time. If you go on like this, a man is never going to learn by working alongside a trained man, is he?—Not unless they are trained first.

B-2442. Is there any reason why the men have not been trained in a proper way?—Yes, because we have not the trained staff to teach the men.

B-2443. But are you not going to make a beginning?—I am perfectly willing to make a beginning if the Government will give me the money and I can secure the men.

B-2444. *Mr. Clow*: If, as you say, you are paying substantially higher than other presses, surely you ought to be able to attract men who have been trained in other presses?—But you see we have not done any recruiting lately.

B-2445. *Mr. Cliff*: I gather you do not recruit journeymen; you only recruit apprentices or learners?—We have not been recruiting for some years at all.

B-2446. I have two documents in my hand and to the best of my knowledge they are printed in the Government Press. Do you say the standard of efficiency in printing amongst certain of your people is not sufficiently high for them to train others?—No, I do not think it is, not to train them in the way they would be in England.

B-2447. Never mind about England for a moment; can you commence to train these men with the men you have already got in the Press?—They will only teach them their own methods; that is all. If the Manager has time to give them personal instruction he would do so, but he has not time.

B-2448. *Mr. Clow*: Normal conditions are restored now; I take it you do not contemplate any substantial reductions in your staff?—No, I do not think so.

B-2449. So that from now onwards you should be able to recruit a better type of man?—Yes, if they are available to be recruited. I do not say they are in Delhi. I should think we have in the Government Presses the best available class of men.

B-2450. There are many presses in Delhi?—Yes, but I do not suppose the men are as efficient as our men are.

B-2451. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: I take it your real difficulty is that you have not recruited since 1922?—We have not.

B-2452. If you were recruiting, I take it you could get one or two trained men from outside who would very quickly get into your ways, and then you could use them as a start to train the journeymen, if not the apprentices. Your trouble is that you have got nobody who can train men into your own ways; your present men have bad habits and they will not get out of those habits; is that it?—Training is rather a difficult problem. The men would have to be put into a section and learn their work in that section. There might be a dozen sections and the man at the head of one section might be quite capable of training while the man at the head of another section might not be capable.

B-2453. What you really want is a series of section trainers to start training the young men when you start recruiting?—Yes.

B-2454. You would thus get a nucleus?—Yes; I should like to get a very much better class of men to train, if it were possible.

B-2455. Would it be difficult to start one section of apprentices, and get ahead in that particular section, and when you are next recruiting get a better class of apprentices at the start?—I think that might be done.

B-2456. Do you think it would involve serious cost?—No, I do not think it would. We should start it in the composing department and teach a number of men in that department.

B-2457. I am assuming that in your composing department you have one man whom you could use as a teacher?—I should have to make enquiries about that before I could give a definite answer. Teaching is quite a different thing from doing the ordinary work.

B-2458. You hope that somewhere in the whole organization there is one man who is suitable to be a section head for teaching?—Yes, I think we could find one in each press who could probably give them a fair training.

B-2459. Then that would be the man to choose to train your better class apprentices?—Yes. He would have to devote an enormous amount of his time to that work.

B-2460. I suggest he would be almost a specialist in that work?—I agree. In other words, I should have to ask Government to sanction a special post for the purpose. If Government can give me the men and the staff, we can do the rest.

B-2461. Could you find such a man to put into this position in your existing staff?—He would not be a man trained in the way an Englishman is trained; that is the only trouble.

B-2462. What you really want is one of these apprentices who go to England?—Yes. Your suggestion is that these apprentices trained at home should be used in the first place not in an executive capacity but in a tutorial capacity. They could use their latest knowledge from home to train these other people.

B-2463. And you would be able to get a better class of apprentice to put under them?—If it would attract the right kind of man. I do not think the educated man likes manual labour very much in that way, and it does not attract him.

B-2464. But surely that type of man would rise quicker than your present men?—He should rise quicker, but we do not get applications from that type of man at all.

B-2465. But is not the point that if you had the system, you might then get applications when they could see a future?—Yes, but are you prepared to pay these people for learning?

B-2466. You would pay them for learning?—A very small amount.

B-2467. If I remember aright, on the railways they pay them Rs. 20 a month while they are learning in their railway school, and they are getting a good class of men?—If Government would sanction that.

B-2468. I think they pay them Rs. 22 and arrange to mess them if they want it?—That is a scheme one would have to work out; I would have to get Government sanction for it.

B-2469. I take it if the increase in cost was infinitesimal Government would be more likely to be sympathetic than otherwise?—It depends what you call infinitesimal.

B-2470. Rs. 22?—But you would have to pay the overseer as well.

B-2471. At the present time you are paying these newcomers Rs. 18 or 20, are you not?—No, they get what they earn as compositors. They may only earn Rs. 15 or 20 a month or what they actually pick up by piece-work. There is no system of training them at present. Nearly all the new hands are pieceworkers as far as the compositors are concerned. In the bindery they are salaried hands in Delhi; they are on piece work in Calcutta.

B-2472. What would you give an untrained man coming into the binding department in Delhi?—They start here on Rs. 18.

B-2473. So that if the railway system were put into force you would only be giving them about Rs. 4 a month more?—Yes, and if we had really good men it would be worth it.

B-2474. *Sir Alexander Murray*: What apprenticeship does a printer or a linotype man do in the printing trade at home?—Five or seven years. I served seven years.

B-2475. Do all apprentices still serve seven years?—I think it is five now.

B-2476. What is their pay?—I started on 6 shillings a week.

B-2477. What do they start on now?—I cannot tell you.

B-2478. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: What did you get at the end of your apprenticeship?—£1 a week after seven years.

B-2479. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Is it the experience at home that boys can break away in the fourth year of their apprenticeship and seek a job as workmen elsewhere?—No, I do not think so.

B-2480. Have you had any experience of apprenticeship in this country?—Only those I have got in the Calcutta Press.

B-2481. Do you find them going away and seeking jobs elsewhere?—No.

B-2482. You have not come across cases such as I have in some of the Government workshops where a boy serves an apprenticeship on a salary for two or three years of his apprenticeship and becomes a comparatively skilled worker and then leaves before the end of his apprenticeship?—I have not come across cases like that.

B-2483. How do you meet that difficulty here? There are a great many printing establishments outside your establishment. How would you be sure that the boy would stay on and serve his full time?—I really cannot tell you whether we have any particular rule on that subject—whether we take a certain amount of their pay and keep it back for that; I cannot answer straightaway.

B-2484. You say that over-time work at Delhi is excessive?—During the cold weather season.

B-2485. Are the men paid piece-work during that time chiefly?—The compositors are paid piece-work or time wages.

B-2486. Do you find that longer hours have an effect on their health?—It must have an effect on their health when they are working such long hours without any recreation. I cannot say individually that I know of particular cases where it does affect their health, but it is obvious that where a man works for three months at high pressure it must affect his health to a certain extent.

B-2487. Mr. Letton in his memorandum stated: "I am afraid the only conclusion to be arrived at is that the health of the employees is indeed in a bad state if their general health can be judged by the number of medical certificates received." What do you mean by that?—Mr. Letton evidently means that a man gets a medical certificate on every possible occasion in order to get leave; it does not follow that he is really ill. Lots of people have colds and stop at work while other people who have colds stay at home.

B-2488. Do you mean to say that if a certificate is brought to you signed by a properly qualified medical practitioner you accept it?—We have to accept it.

B-2489. Even if a medical certificate is brought to you no matter from whom, or whatever your personal opinion may be?—We have got to accept it.

B-2490. You have no medical officer attached?—There is a sub-assistant surgeon attached to the Calcutta Press who gives medical certificates there.

B-2491. A Calcutta man can come with a certificate from any medical officer?—Supposing he is ill at home, unless we send the medical officer down to find out whether he is really ill we have to accept a private medical practitioner's certificate.

B-2492. Naturally he would go home and get a certificate from his private practitioner and send it on to you?—Yes.

B-2493. Do you find that instances of sickness and medical certificates are equally bad in Calcutta as in Delhi and Simla?—I have always found that a tremendous number of medical certificates are being submitted; if a man wants leave he invariably sends in a medical certificate.

B-2494. *The Chairman*: He does not receive pay for his absence?—Yes, if it is casual leave. If he is a piece-work compositor he gets 16 days in the year up to 10 years service and 23 days over 10 years up to 20 years service, 31 days above 25 years service.

B-2495. *Sir Alexander Murray*: How long does the time-worker get?—He gets casual leave—a month's privilege leave every year, and leave on half-pay for sickness beyond that, and all Government holidays.

B-2496. Are these leaves to which a man is entitled taken full advantage of?—Yes, in 75 per cent. of the cases.

B-2497. *The Chairman*: Has not the system been long in operation?—Yes.

B-2498. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Does it mean that if a man can get a certificate from anybody he can take his maximum leave?—There are only a few who do not do so.

B-2499. You say "In the Delhi Press it is noted that the physique of the workers appointed locally appears to be somewhat better than that of the Bengalee employees who were transferred from Calcutta." Do you mean to tell us that the type of men that we saw working in your press are better than the average Bengalee?—That is Mr. Letton's opinion. I cannot say.

B-2500. They probably are. Dealing with trade unions you say that the Press Employees Association "has not received recognition by the Government of India as it does not conform to the requirements under which such organizations are to be recognized". What is that?—That I am afraid I must refer you to the Government of India. (Mr. Clow): Speaking from memory, the Government instituted that, as a general rule, unions of servants shall be confined to Government servants and should not embrace other employees.

B-2501. Is there any objection to your workers having a union?—None whatever, as far as I know.

B-2502. *The Chairman*: This point is dealt with by the Industries and Labour Department in their memorandum.

B-2503. *Mr. Cliff*: In Mr. Letton's memorandum it is stated: "In the the Calcutta Press, they could not be much worse. Here a large number of the workers perform their allotted task daily with the aid of artificial light as the workrooms in places are dark and badly ventilated. They are overcrowded." Do you concur in that opinion?—I think it is a very unsuitable building for a press.

B-2504. Can you tell me which is the body that one can speak to about it?—Industries and Labour Department.

B-2505. Again, it is said in the memorandum "The possibility of a reduction in the working hours of the Presses is a question which has periodically arisen during the last 20 years." Do you deal with that or does the Industries and Labour Department deal with it?—The Industries and Labour Department have fixed the number of hours, but they cannot control the number of hours of over-time altogether; that depends upon the work that is sent in to the press.

B-2506. It is said that this emergency has arisen during the last 20 years. Would it be up to you as Manager of this Press to put up a solution or is it the Department of Industries?—I should have to put it up if anybody did have to put it up. I have already asked for more staff for the Delhi Press. If that is sanctioned the over-time will be reduced to a certain extent.

B-2507. Does it mean more machines or more shifts?—Neither; it means more staff.

B-2508. Can you cope with the work with the machines that you have at present?—With over-time we do it somehow or other.

B-2509. If you were going to have the same machines would you not have shifts if you were going to reduce over-time?—It is only at certain times of the year that this over-time occurs, when the budget is on and the Legislative Assembly is in session.

B-2510. It seems to take about five months?—Yes: it is from the middle of November to the end of March.

B-2511. Have you made an application for more staff?—We have got a floating grant by which we can employ, and do employ, more staff during that time. But we never know what work is coming in: we cannot say whether we are going to get 5 pages or 500 pages.

B-2512. *Miss Power*: What is the average number of hours of work done during that pressure?—I should think it is 10 to 12.

B-2513. *Mr. Joshi*: How do you get over the Factories Act during that period?—We get exemption.

B-2514. Who gives you the exemption?—The Chief Commissioner of Delhi.

B-2515. *Mr. Cliff*: Does the Chief Commissioner of Delhi go on giving you exemptions without seeing that you are really facing this problem and endeavouring to find a solution?—The exemption has been given every year so far; in fact, we have a general exemption.

B-2516. What is your solution of this problem?—Less work.

B-2517. With the work that is confronting you, what is your solution?—I do not know that I could suggest any particular solution at the moment. It would want careful thinking out.

B-2518. It is being under consideration for 20 years?—The over-time, not the work.

B-2519. Over-time, according to Mr. Letton's memorandum, has been under consideration for 20 years. Am I reading the document wrongly?—The question has cropped up periodically for 20 years.

B-2520. This matter has been in front of you as a department for a very considerable number of years, and I am anxious to know what is the solution you have put up, or which you can put up, to do away with it. Can you farm out some of your regular work?—That would not make any difference to this particular over-time work.

B-2521. In 1922 there was a considerable reduction in the number of staff. Recruitments which have taken place have been taken from that staff. That indicates that there are still a considerable number of unemployed printers in Delhi. Is it not possible to have a reserve staff out of that unemployed list for these five months in the year?

The Chairman: I take it your point is that there ought to be a sufficient number of men and machines to do this special five months work without unreasonable over-time and to regard the work as average for the whole year.

B-2522. *Mr. Cliff*: I think so. If you want additional staff do you have to make application to some other department?—Always.

B-2523. Is that the Industries Department?—Yes.

B-2524. With regard to the fixing of wages, you say that these rates are sanctioned by the Government of India. Is that the Department of Industries and Labour?—Yes, and the Finance Department.

B-2525. Does that same department determine the cost of living figures?—No, it does not.

B-2526. Is it your department that fixes these cost of living figures?—No, I do not think that any department fixes the cost of living figures.

B-2527. How do you fix the wages without knowing the cost of living?—This question I could not possibly answer.

B-2528. What I do not understand is this. Here is a department outside yourself. They fix the wages. Do they not fix the wages on your recommendation?—They listen to me sometimes, but not always. Generally they cut them down.

Mr. Cliff: I will not press it any further as the department responsible is not here.

B-2529. *Mrs. Chatterjee:* You mentioned that applications for leave on account of sickness are not general. Is it not a fact that the workers generally work in an unhealthy area?—I am afraid I cannot say whether it is a very unhealthy area or not. The Health officer will be able to say that.

B-2530. Are you not aware of the fact that a number of employees when attacked by malaria go on attending work till they are absolutely compelled to stop?—They do it of their own will. They can always get leave if they are ill. We do not compel any man to work if he is ill.

B-2531. *Col. Russell:* Most of the members of the Commission were impressed by the fact that the general body of the workers in the Press were of very poor physique compared with other workers outside. Can you give us an idea why it is so?—I cannot tell. I have not seen any other workers to compare them with.

B-2532. You do not admit that they were of a lower physique than others?—I do not think they are any worse than other press-men in the city.

B-2533. *Mr. Joshi:* With regard to the recognition of the union can you tell us which condition the union does not fulfil?—I cannot tell you.

B-2534. You told us that you did not get the type of men you used to get?—It was Mr. Letton who said that. I said that I did not think there was much difference between them.

B-2535. With regard to works committees have you ever thought that such committees could be made compulsory by legislation?—It has never entered by mind.

B-2536. The memorandum says that the committee considered certain questions which were beyond their purview. Can you mention some of these questions which were considered to be beyond the purview of the committee?—They probably questioned the rulings of Government which have been settled and then they wanted to discuss them in committee. Really they should not discuss them. They should put them up through their manager to the Controller who would go up to the Government about them.

B-2537. With regard to quarters for inferior servants, are they all single room tenements?—I think they are all one room tenements. However they are moving out of these as soon as new buildings are put up.

B-2538. With reference to the remarks contained in the memorandum on industrial disease, why is not a thorough medical examination made in order to find out whether there is industrial disease or not?—They are not examined to find out whether they have industrial disease in them.

B-2539. Is not printing one of the trades which is liable to lead poisoning?—Yes.

B-2540. Therefore from time to time should you not see by medical examination whether there is industrial disease or not?—That will mean an examination of the men about every six months. There has been nothing arranged for such an examination.

B-2541. *Miss Power:* Is there any system of ascertaining whether employees who are absent for longer than ten days are entitled to workmen's compensation if they are suffering from compensatable diseases? Does the Government take no responsibility for seeing whether an employee gets compensation when he is entitled to it?—If he is away on medical leave he gets pay.

B-2542. *Mr. Joshi:* With regard to temporary men, they get ten days' leave?—Yes.

B-2542a. Do these temporary men serve only for a few months or for a long period?—It used to be like that. We have lately made a great number of temporary men permanent. So it only applies to a very much fewer number.

B-2543. The table given in the memorandum shows a much larger number? —I have now got that matter under consideration. I have asked for reports as to the number of permanent and temporary posts, and I am going up to Government to make as many as possible permanent.

B-2544. Do you interpret regular employment by an attendance of 90 per cent. hours of work?—That was when the old rule was in force, but the rules have been altered. They now get 16 days leave in a year.

B-2545. Without those conditions?—Yes, without those conditions.

(The witness withdrew.)

DELHI
ELEVENTH MEETING
Tuesday, 5th November, 1929.

PRESENT:

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, BART. Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt., K.C.S.I., C.I.E. Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S. Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.		Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A. Mr. JOHN CLIFF. Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A. DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A. Miss B. M. LE POER POWER. Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL (<i>Medical Assessor</i>).
Mrs. J. C. CHATTERJEE (<i>Lady Assessor</i>) Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S. } (<i>Joint Secretaries.</i>) Mr. A. DIBDIN.		

**Mr. J. A. SHILLIDY, I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India
 in the Department of Industries and Labour, and Mr. A. M.
 ROUSE, C.I.E., Chief Engineer, Public Works Department,
 New Delhi, called and examined.**

B-2546. *The Chairman:* Mr. Shillidy, will you tell the Commission how long you have held your present post?—About a fortnight.

B-2547. Your previous office?—Home Department of the Government of India.

B-2548. I understand that your immediate predecessor in your present office was our Secretary Mr. Lall?—No; Mr. Lall was the Deputy Secretary.

B-2549. And before that our colleague Mr. Clow?—Yes.

B-2550. So we have the benefit of a good deal of knowledge on the subject of your Department at our table?—A good deal more than I have.

B-2551. May I first thank you and your Department for the memorandum that you have given to us on the subject of our inquiry. I propose myself to confine my examination, in the first instance, to two points. The first is some remarks that are made with regard to the question of recruitment. In your memorandum it is stated: "Owing to the illiteracy of the workers and the variety of languages spoken by them, employers in India find it almost impossible to maintain any direct touch with their workpeople. This accounts for the presence of intermediaries, who are largely responsible for the abuses which have sprung up in connection with recruitment." Further on it is stated: "It would appear therefore that education and organization are the only means by which Indian workers can escape from the clutches of intermediaries who like harpies are ever ready to prey on them." Arising from those two statements I want to ask you whether you have any knowledge of cases where an endeavour has been made to overcome those difficulties by the appointment within the works of labour officers who form a direct contact between the illiterate workers and the heads of the firm?—The only instance I can think of on the spot is the garden sardars at the Assam tea gardens.

B-2552. The garden sardars in the tea gardens are not the kind that I am referring to. I mean a labour officer whose duty it is to be in touch with the humblest workers in a large industry and at the other side to have contact with the directing heads of the firm?—I am told—but I should like to verify it further—that in some of the Burma oil mills they have their own labour officer in that way.

B-2553. Do you not think that what you say in your memorandum emphasizes the need for some such labour officer to deal with the two points that you have raised, namely, the contact between the employer and his workers and also to bring some organization into the system of recruitment of labour?—That would be a matter, I think, for each industry and each business to decide. I do not know how we could lay down any general precise rule that this must be so.

B-2554. No, I was not suggesting either legislation or administrative action. It would be a question of course, as you say, for each industry, but it seems to me to follow from what you have said that there is a need at present unfulfilled by the majority of industries?—I think it would be rather difficult to make a general reply without reference to the detailed conditions of each industry and each business.

B-2555. If there was such a labour officer within an industry then welfare work in its broad sense would be based from the beginning on the co-operation of the workers themselves, not imposed from the top, but there would be an opportunity at any rate of letting them feel that all kinds of welfare work, including provident funds, were partly their own work?—It would depend a good deal on the relations established between a particular labour officer and the workmen in general.

B-2556. Of course it would; it would call for a man of high quality to fill such a post. My second question is with regard to the proposals that have been made from time to time, which are set out in your memorandum, for such social services as sickness insurance and unemployment benefit. You have given us in the memorandum a very complete picture of how these proposals have been examined by the Government of India and by the Provincial Governments up-to-date. There is one thing I find lacking in the memorandum, perhaps because it does not exist, but I wish to ask you whether any actuarial estimate has been made on these subjects of the cost to the worker, to the employer and to the State?—You mean of a sickness insurance scheme?

B-2557. Yes.—Not so far as I am aware.

B-2558. Is there any machinery in the Government for making such an estimate?—The Director of Commercial Intelligence might be able to help us and probably would be brought in.

B-2559. So far as you are aware no work has been done on those lines?—No definite detailed work has been done on that line.

B-2560. The only references that I find in your memorandum are two: One to the case of Japan where the labour circumstances are very different from those of India, and the other is to a small estimate made by Professor Jevons in Burma and probably covering only a very small number, I think 60,000 workers?—I think the reason why no actuarial statistics have been carefully gone into is that we have decided not to proceed at the present moment with the legislation and that we are awaiting the recommendations of this Commission.

B-2561. But do you not think that any recommendations wherever they come from must be based on an actuarial estimate?—Yes, they must when they come or when they are to be put into force, but there is a certain amount of doubt as to whether it is practicable in the conditions of the country to introduce this scheme.

B-2562. In considering the question of practicability surely an actuarial estimate lies at the basis of the whole thing?—It does, but it was quite evident that the cost would be large; I do not think that would be denied

and that sickness insurance, at all events, was a bill which the local Governments would have to face and the local Governments simply stated that they were not in a position to face it.

B-2563. You are aware no doubt that the English scheme was based on the cumulative experience of the friendly societies and the trade unions, and to some extent on the experience in Germany with a somewhat similar population?—Yes, I have no doubt that if we took it up, and of course that will depend upon the recommendations of this Commission, all that inquiry will be made, but so far we have not got to that stage. I think it is evident that it will cost a good deal, and as the burden will fall on the local Governments, and they have stated that they are not in a position owing to their finances to contemplate such a scheme at the present moment, further detailed actuarial calculations hardly seem necessary at this stage.

B-2564. I should have thought they were the basis of proper consideration of the problem?—I think for a full consideration of the problem, certainly.

B-2565. But there is nothing existing even in the form of a provisional actuarial estimate?—No, there have been certain rough estimates; somebody said that so many workers will require so much on a certain average; nothing beyond that.

B-2566. Based on the sickness rate, for instance?—No.

B-2567. No estimate of the incomings and outgoings of the fund?—No; I am not aware of that.

B-2568. Then you could not say in the least, I take it, if there is to be a proper insurance fund, whether it would mean two annas a month, four annas a month or eight annas a month contribution from the workers and employers?—No; I am not prepared to say that.

B-2569. Nor as to the period which would have to elapse before benefits accrued in order to put the fund on a sound basis?—No, we have not gone into details of that kind.

B-2570. *Sir Alexander Murray*: May I follow up these questions of the Chairman regarding sickness insurance and other things for the benefit of the workers? Can you tell us actually what the relations are between the Central Government and the Provincial Governments in that respect at the present moment? Let me explain. In your memorandum, taking the question of sickness benefits as an instance, you explain how you wrote to the provinces and how you got replies stating which local Governments were of the opinion that any system of sickness insurance would be practicable or impracticable under present conditions, and you go on further and say that the main difficulty with the local Governments was the question of finance. Let us take these points. What is the position? Supposing you were to introduce a system of sickness insurance, what would be the procedure; who would pass the legislation and who would be responsible for its administration and for finding the money?—Under the Devolution Rules, industrial matters included under provident funds, industrial insurance, general health, accident and housing, are provincial reserved subjects.

B-2571. Does that mean that for sickness insurance it is not the Minister but the Member who would be responsible?—Yes.

B-2572. We have a very interesting book in front of us called "*The State and Industry*", by A. G. Clow. On page 24 of that book it is stated: "The development of industries became a transferred subject in all provinces, and with the introduction of the Reforms at the end of 1920, the main responsibility for the development of industries by official agency passed to the newly appointed ministers." Now, is it the Ministers or the Members in the reserved departments that are responsible?—The development of industries is with a Minister, but industrial matters included under the head, welfare of labour, including provident funds, industrial insurance, general health, accident and housing is a reserved subject.

B-2578. You pass a law to bring into effect sickness insurance—that could be done in Bengal or Bombay as the case may be with the previous sanction of the Government of India?—It is subject to legislation by the Indian Legislature, *vide* Item 26 in Part II of Schedule I to the Devolution Rules. All reserved subjects are under the superintendence, direction and control of the Government of India.

B-2574. But take maternity benefit; it has been passed into law by the Government of Bombay. Would sickness benefit be equally passed by the Government of Bombay?—It can be passed.

B-2575. Assuming that the Bombay Government decides to pass a sickness benefit scheme, where would the money come from?—From the provincial revenues. The general constitutional rule is that all expenditure on provincial subjects must be from the provincial revenues and expenditure on central subjects from central revenues.

B-2576. Therefore, if a scheme for sickness benefit is to be brought into effect by the Bombay Government, the finding of the money shall be the responsibility of the Provincial Government?—Yes.

B-2577. And the Central Government will practically have no control over it?—It is generally recognized that following on the division of powers, central revenues must not be spent on provincial subjects and provincial revenues should not be spent on central subjects.

B-2578. The welfare of labour generally is a provincial subject?—Yes.

B-2579. The Central Government retains control of customs and income-tax and other central forms of revenue?—Yes.

B-2580. Would it be by means of taxation, or, how would that provincial Government find the money necessary for introducing such a scheme?—It will be by taxation.

B-2581. Fresh taxation presumably?—If they could not provide it from their present revenues, fresh taxation of course.

B-2582. Take housing as well as sickness benefit. The Holland Commission in 1918, that is ten years ago, recommended that something ought to be done to give facilities to employers of labour and to workmen generally to acquire land for houses especially in towns and other crowded areas. I know that you circularised the local Governments and other public bodies regarding the advisability of giving effect to the recommendation. Can you tell me whether anything has been actually done?—I cannot say about all the local Governments. In Bombay, of course, you know of the Bombay development scheme.

B-2583. Yes, that is one; is there anything else?—I cannot tell at the present moment. I may point out that the present constitution came into force after the Holland Committee made that recommendation.

B-2584. And this is also a subject in the hands of the Member of a Provincial Government?—It is a provincial reserved subject.

B-2585. In Bombay we saw that an arrangement was made with the Government whereby these charges were borne, but apart from Bombay I cannot see any reference to legislation having been introduced by any Provincial Government authorizing the compulsory acquisition of land for the benefit of either the employers or the workers for housing purposes?—I am afraid I cannot say straightaway what the Provincial Governments have done in the matter. If you are very anxious to know I can make inquiries. Mr. Clow can say whether anything has been done.

In my home town in Bengal, near the mill areas, we have found it necessary frequently to acquire land for workmen's houses and we have found it impossible to acquire land in the immediate vicinity of the mills. Even where the surroundings are very insanitary, it is almost impossible under the existing legislation to do anything for the improvement of these areas.

B-2586. *The Chairman:* The point is that the present law only applies to public purpose?

Sir Alexander Murray: That is so. The Holland Commission recommended that there should be an amendment of the law to the effect that where Government was satisfied that the acquisition of land would be for public good or for housing accommodation, the land could be acquired.

The Chairman: Yes; but nothing has been done?—*The witness:* Nothing.

Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola: I know there is a judicial decision that if Government declares any land to be required for public purposes, the land can be acquired for it, and there can be no question as regards the decision of the Government.

B-2587. *Mr. Ahmed:* You have stated in your memorandum that the work-people are very badly treated and are the prey of the money lender. Has Government taken any steps to remedy this evil?—That is rather a broad question; I should be glad to know in what particular direction your question is put?

B-2588. With regard to indebtedness?—We have a Usury Act, if that is what you are referring to.

B-2589. Has your Government taken any steps with a view to a limitation of the rate of interest?—I am not aware of any definite limiting of the rate of interest as such.

B-2590. Do you think that the condition of the people could be greatly relieved by the introduction of a weekly system of payment of wages instead of monthly or fortnightly?—I think all these provisions of an arbitrary or a hard and fast kind can be evaded. The chief provision in which some persons were lately interested was the definite limitation of interest. But it was found that they were attempting too much; that so far as the benefit to the debtors was concerned it was a very simple matter to evade the provisions of the law. We prefer to deal with it in the way we have under the Usury Act, which empowers a court to re-open proceedings and to examine the history of the case.

B-2591. Do you think co-operative societies would be helpful in this direction?—Co-operation is a very large question which hardly comes within my particular purview at the moment. Co-operative societies are also a provincial subject and they are primarily the concern and interest of the local Governments.

B-2592. *The Chairman:* We of course know about the village co-operative movement, but how far have co-operative societies been established in industrial areas?—If you make your enquiries in Bombay I think you will find that co-operative societies in industrial matters have been very largely taken in hand and there are a large number of them.

B-2593. *Mr. Abel,* the Inspector of Factories, told us he was in favour of increasing the number of inspectors. Are you of the same opinion?—The inspection of factories is a reserved subject.

B-2594. Would your answer be the same?—Not necessarily.

B-2595. Will you agree with what *Mr. Abel* has said?—I am not prepared to agree to anything until I have seen the full statement of the case. I do not think we can necessarily take the opinion of one officer as conclusive.

B-2596. *Sir Alexander Murray:* But factory inspection still remains a central subject in the hands of the Government of India?—No, factory inspection is a provincial reserved subject.

B-2597. *Mr. Clifff:* Has your department any power to intervene in a dispute between employers and workpeople?—We would intervene in our own Department.

B-2598. Would you intervene in industry generally?—There again it is primarily the concern of the local Government.

B-2599. When you say you would intervene in your own department, do you mean that you would intervene as an employer?—No, I do not think so.

ould you intervene in a dispute between railway workers and the Railway Board?—Yes, we would intervene.

By what power?—The ordinary administrative power.

Could you spell that out for me so that I may know how far you are referring?—I am not quite sure in what way you mean.

Regarding the Bombay trouble; there has been the Fawcett enquiry; a committee of enquiry set up under the provincial Government?—Yes. Regarding the fact that there is a dispute between railway workers and the Railway Board; are you distinct and separate from the Railway Board?—Yes, as far as that matter.

Would you intervene in a dispute?—We could set up a similar committee.

What if a strike has occurred?—Or if a strike is anticipated.

Could you tell me of any case where a dispute has been apprehended, but not yet reached the stage of a strike when your Department intervened?—No; I cannot say that straight off.

Do you think it is likely that there is a case on record?—

Cliff: I think Mr. Shillidy has misunderstood the question; could the Government of India intervene between a Department and its own employees; could the Government of India do that?—I am referring to the Government of India.

Did you refer to a Department?

Cliff: I am referring to the Department which you represent.

Could you tell me the exact scope of your Department in relation to labour legislation is concerned?—Yes. It is the supervision, direction and control, and that is all. I think that our position really with regard to all labour questions is primarily the concern of the local Government, but is, like the subjects, under the superintendence, direction and control of the Government of India.

Is it with regard to legislation and enforcement of legislation that the actual administration of the subject is provincial?

Under the normal operation of industry, is there any intervention of your Department where a dispute is apprehended; have you power to try and effect a settlement?—No, not as a rule.

Have you at any time endeavoured to establish a satisfactory index in your Department?—Not in our Department.

Could you tell me about the Government of India?—The Director of Labour Intelligence may have one, but he is not under our Department. I am not quite sure to what extent he has carried out his duties.

Do you know whether it is under consideration to obtain a living index figure by your Department?—It is not under consideration.

Would it be within your scope?—I do not think so as the constitution stands.

Victor Sassoon: That is within the scope of the Government as the constitution stands, yes.

Cliff: I do not think that is correct, because we made an Act in 1922?—I am well aware of that. But the Act had only just been passed when that particular Department was abolished one of the reasons for not opposing it at all was the fact that all questions with regard to labour are provincial subjects.

Cliff: All subjects with regard to the welfare of labour are provincial subjects?—Yes.

B-2621. Is this the position that the compilation of a cost of living index is regarded as welfare and is therefore a provincial subject?—I should regard it as such.

B-2622. *The Chairman*: From your memorandum it is clear that you do take steps with regard to legislation?—Yes.

B-2623. *Mr. Cliff*: I want to get, if I can, a clear distinction with regard to welfare?—The welfare of labour is a provincial reserved subject; it is therefore primarily a concern of the local Government, subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the Government of India.

B-2624. When you come to interpret welfare, your present interpretation is that the compilation of a cost of living index figure is welfare?—Yes

B-2625. Apply that if you will for a moment to the Railway Board and the railway system in India. Would the establishment of a wage fixing machinery under that system be interpreted by you as being a matter of welfare?—Yes.

B-2626. And would it be impossible for you to take steps to recommend legislation for the purpose?—Where a subject is Central, the Government of India take the position of the local Government.

B-2627. *The Chairman*: And Railways?—As a rule, yes.

B-2628. *Mr. Cliff*: So that as far as railways are concerned, you would be able to move if it were considered desirable?—Yes.

B-2629. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: As a Department or as the Government of India?—Always as the Government of India.

B-2630. *Mr. Cliff*: I am a little confused as to the distinction between the Department and the Government of India?—All work done and all orders issued by the Department are issued in the name of the Governor General in Council.

B-2631. You are the Department?—We are the Department issuing orders but they are the orders of the Governor General in Council.

B-2632. *Mr. Cliff*: Yesterday we had before us an officer from the printing works, and he said that wages were fixed with the sanction of the Government of India?—Yes.

B-2633. When we pressed that a little further we found that subject to consideration by the Finance Department you settle the wages?—No.

B-2634. Will you make that clear?—We deal with that question, but the orders issued are the orders of the Governor General in Council. The Department as a Department does not issue an order.

B-2635. Do you practically settle these wage rates?—We consider them and the whole examination is carried out in our Department, subject to the approval of the Finance Department.

B-2636. *The Chairman*: The actual executive act is in the name of the Governor General in Council?—Yes.

B-2637. *Mr. Cliff*: We were told yesterday that the wages were fixed first in relation to the cost of living and that your Department had very largely settled these rates. Can you tell us on what basis you proceed to settle the wages in your Department?—I cannot say now; I imagine that is fairly old history, is it not?

B-2638. I think some of these have been settled as lately as 1927?—We certainly examine them in connection with the cost of living and on the figures and facts as they are reported to us.

B-2639. As I understand from the Printing Department, you exercise the responsibility of rejecting their recommendations or modifying them?—Yes.

B-2640. I was trying to ascertain on what basis you do that?—We should consider on the facts and figures as they were presented to us, whether the recommendations of the Controller of Printing were supported by the facts and figures that he put up.

B-2641. Is there no settled basis on which you determine these things?— I am not quite sure that I know what you mean by a settled basis.

B-2642. First of all the Printing Department tells me you do it in relation to the cost of living?—That is one of the factors.

B-2643. *Sri Victor Sassoon*: Is it in relation to the cost of living or in relation to the rise of the cost of living?—Well I take it that it is mainly cost of living.

B-2644. *Mr. Cliff*: I take it you have no satisfactory index of cost of living?—We may not have a satisfactory cost of living index, but we have figures which must be put up to us on these occasions showing how prices have risen, and these will be taken into consideration.

B-2645. Do you determine the rates for any scale that there may be in any particular grade?—Yes, I suppose so.

B-2646. I am wondering about the competency of the Department really to determine these wages? I cannot say anything about the competency of the Department.

B-2647. If labour commissioners were desirable, they would have to be appointed by the provincial Governments?—Yes. Will you tell me what were the precise powers of the commissioners of labour that you had in mind?

B-2648. Mr. Lall says to me that there is nothing to prevent the Central Government passing legislation?—Yes.

B-2649. Would legislation to appoint a labour commissioner be desirable?— I want to know exactly what the powers would be and what powers you propose to give; it is a question whether it could be done by executive powers.

B-2650. There is a Commissioner appointed for the depressed classes?— Yes.

B-2651. Who acts really to serve depressed classes as I understand it?— That is only in Madras; there was no legislation there.

B-2652. There was no need for legislation?— I said there was no legislation.

B-2653. *The Chairman*: It was an administrative act?—Yes.

B-2654. *Mr. Cliff*: If commissioners were desirable to assist labour and to be an aid to labour, would you require Central legislation or could that be done administratively?— It would depend on the powers which you propose to give to them.

B-2655. How far could the powers go?—I am afraid I cannot say that.

B-2656. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: With regard to sickness insurance you said that no actuarial estimates have been made. In your memorandum there is some sort of an estimate which is not an actuarial estimate. The gentleman who writes those words contemplates that the Government of India working on a basis on which Japan works, would require about 90 lakhs if they had accepted the amendment moved by Mr. Joshi. Would there be much difficulty if a scheme like this were to be brought into force, costing, roughly, say a crore of rupees?—The first thing I should want to know is whether it would cost a crore of rupees.

B-2657. Supposing it did?—That I imagine is a matter for the local Government to decide, whether their revenues can stand it; I cannot give an answer to that.

B-2658. Supposing you were to centralize it, the Government of India I take it is quite capable of passing legislation with regard to sickness insurance?—Yes.

B-2659. And centralizing the whole subject?—We are not capable of doing that unless the Devolution Rules are changed.

B-2660. What is there in the Devolution Rules which would prevent the Government of India undertaking legislation with regard to sickness insurance applicable to the whole of India?—There is nothing to prevent them

undertaking legislation, but on the other hand when the cost of any such scheme would fall on local Government and local Governments in reply say that they are not in a position to meet the cost, it would be absurd to pass legislation which the local Government cannot give effect to.

B-2661 Is there anything to prevent the Government of India from making a contribution up to a crore of rupees towards this scheme?—The general rule is that central revenues shall not be spent on provincial subjects and provincial revenues shall not be spent on central subjects.

B-2662 Does that apply to the Road Board which has recently been set up Is it not a fact that so far as the Road Board is concerned, central revenues are being spent for provincial purposes?—That point at the present moment is under process of discussion and some of the provincial Governments have objected.

B-2663 That is an objection in regard to administration. The point is, is it not a fact that the Government of India are not prevented by any Devolution Rule from spending the money which they receive from the excise on petrol for road development purposes in the provinces?—

The Chairman: We have been told Mr. Shillidy, that there has been a proposal with regard to roads, to divide expenditure between Central and Provincial Governments.—I have not the papers here but I think in that particular matter some change was made.

B-2664 *Diwan Chaman Lall:* You may take it from me. I was a member of the Road Committee and also a member of the new committee. The position is as I am putting it. Central revenues are being applied and are intended to be applied to the provinces. Is there anything in the Devolution Rules preventing a contribution of a crore of rupees to be made to the provinces for the purpose?—I do not accept the analogy between the two. I am not fully acquainted with the Road Board cases at the present moment. I have an impression that some change was made in that regard. The general rule and the one which we have always followed is, with the division of provincial and central revenues, and with the division of provincial and central subjects, central revenues cannot be applied to provincial subjects, and provincial revenues to central subjects.

B-2665 *The Chairman:* Is not the position this? The Central Government could give a subsidy if they pleased in aid of certain provincial subjects.—No, it goes beyond that. It has been held that they ought not, in the spirit of the constitution, spend central revenues on provincial subjects.

B-2666 *Mr. Chow:* They cannot, on Transferred Subjects.—I am giving the general rule.

B-2667 *Diwan Chaman Lall:* I want to be perfectly clear about the position put to you by the chairman, and it is a very pertinent question. Is there anything to prevent the Government of India from making a contribution to the provincial Governments in the way of a subsidy?—I should say, yes.

B-2668 *The Chairman:* But by practice rather than by law?—The general rule is that it is contrary to the spirit of the constitution, in view of the division of central and provincial subjects, to allot funds from one to the other.

The Chairman: I think it is for us to consider whether the present system is right or not.

B-2669 *Diwan Chaman Lall:* In your memorandum, dealing with unemployment you say that "unemployment, as it is understood in the West, does not exist". What enquiries have been instituted in order to find out whether unemployment as understood in the West does or does not exist?—We did make enquiries about the establishment of unemployment agencies, and the general reports were as we have put it down here.

B-2670. The general reports were from the local Governments, I understand?—Yes.

ve you any information as to whether the local Governments tituted any enquiries?—They made enquiries and reported

at sort of enquiries?—They appointed enquiry committees, in the provinces.

ve you read the Unemployment Committee Report of the a afraid, not.

it similar to the reports which other provinces have furnished?

art from this you have no information as to the existence or of unemployment in India?—No.

their despatch to the Secretary of State regarding unemploy- vement of India say: "We have under consideration the creating regular public employment agencies in such cases."

that they did not proceed with this matter, because there ave been a series of reports in 1921 that unemployment did ause there was an excess of supply over demand of industrial as because we made these enquiries and received these replies ot go on.

t you say further on in the same despatch: "We are under- mination of the possibility of collecting further information employment." Would it not have been the proper method, ter a resolution had been passed by the Legislative Assembly, a committee of enquiry to find out whether there did or did employment in India?—That I think, is a matter of opinion.

at further examination, apart from the reports you received Governments, did you undertake, having made this promise ent of yours?—We have made further enquiries from the local

art from further referring the matter to the local Govern- further examination have you undertaken since 1921 in order ether the situation has changed since then or not?

an: As far as the Central Government is concerned, enquiries riting round.

an Chaman Lal: In almost every page of your memorandum ement about the migratory character of Indian labour. What you instituted in order to find out whether the statement is or —I do not think it was necessary to institute any enquiries.

it a matter of pure intuition on the part of the Government , not in the least. It is a matter of very close observation.

at observation?—We find it in individual places and we ly.

it a question of individual observation or of definite enquiries you?—In Delhi, in 1914-15, April, there were 22,000 labourers

October, they sank to 6,000. They went to their fields. y we were told by a contractor that he had recruited 1,000 time and 500 at another and taken them to the Punjab. tantly fluctuating and migrating.

ve you seen the statement of the Inspector of Factories, Abel, to the effect that 80 per cent. of skilled labourers in manent?—I have not seen it.

art from these individual observations, observations which 1914. - No, we have charts which show the seasonal

Cliff Does that apply to Bombay?—Yes, it applies to

would like to see these charts—I have not the figures for speaking as a District Officer in Bombay it came to my

information that people are constantly coming from the districts to the mills in the off-seasons and returning for the harvest to their fields.

B-2688. *The Chairman*: Is that not common knowledge?—*Diwan Chaman Lall* will not admit it is. The question is as to the proportion; its existence is common knowledge. I understood that *Diwan Chaman Lall* denied the correctness of the statement that it was migratory.

B-2689. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: What I am driving at is this. Does the Government of India take this statement more or less on trust as it has taken the statement about absenteeism: "The only recent figures of absence from work are those given in the Bombay Labour Gazette for the textile mills in Bombay Presidency..... . ." Do you not know that the Bombay Government memorandum says that these figures are incorrect? Yet you take them as being correct?—They may be incorrect in odd calculations, but these figures are worked out for very many years. Possibly the method of calculation in giving the average may have been wrong.

B-2690. The Bombay Government memorandum says: "As is pointed out in the section dealing with insurance, the monthly absenteeism statistics may not be strictly accurate owing to possible variations in the falling off of returns, because all mills do not follow a uniform practice with regard to marking absentees."—That was a matter of difference of opinion as to the correct method at which to arrive at statistical averages.

B-2691. *Col. Russell*: In your memorandum, dealing with industrial diseases you say that "little information is available about the prevalence of industrial diseases in India". Is there any source at present from which you could get reliable statistics of the incidence of disease and ill-health among workers?—I do not know of any.

B-2692. In the same connection you say that "the Government of India did not consider it necessary to establish a special medical service for the purpose, but they pointed out to Local Government the desirability of strengthening the medical services of the country in areas where many unhealthy industries are situated". Did the Local Governments take any action in this respect?—I could not say; I am not aware of any.

B-2693. Apart from the question of industrial diseases, there are such questions as the effect of fatigue and long hours and the result of introducing rest periods with regard to the efficiency of the worker. You have no department or individual who would investigate such questions?—We have none.

B-2694. Do you not think that it would be a good plan to institute some agency by which such information could be collected?—I am sorry I must go back again to the question of provincial and central subjects

B-2695. Apart from it being provincial or central, do you yourself who have been associated with labour questions for some considerable time, think it would be a good idea to have some agency for the collection of these important matters?

The Chairman: Do you mean a central agency?

B-2696. *Col. Russell*: Either central or provincial?—I do not think I am free here to express what I personally think.

B-2697. In Great Britain, during the last fifteen years they have had a board called the Industrial Health Research Board for the investigation of such matters. Do you think that an institution similar to that board in India would be useful or not?—We shall be very glad if the Commission in the course of enquiries will go into this matter and let us have their recommendation on it, when I can assure them, it will be dealt with carefully.

B-2698. You yourself are not prepared to express an opinion?—No, I am not free to express an opinion.

B-2699. *Miss Power*: With regard to the abolition of the Central Labour Bureau referred to in your memorandum, do you not think that there is great necessity for an All India Bureau for industrial research as well as for the collection of industrial statistics?—I am sorry I have to be obstinate.

I have to get back to the division. Development of industries including industrial research and technical education is a provincial transferred subject.

B-2700. Would that necessarily preclude a research section?—I am afraid it would.

B-2701. If it does so, without such machinery, what exists to enable the different provinces to learn by each other's experience in the industrial field; that is to say, to pool experience such as is done for the different Departments of Industry in America by the Federal Department of Labour?—I am not aware of any. There is none at present.

B-2702 Is not that a great lack, if the constitution is such that no machinery can be instituted?—That I think, might be a defect in the constitution. But the Labour Commission might give us the benefit of their investigations and recommendations in this regard.

B-2703 *The Chairman* On this point of the Labour Bureau which had a brief existence of three years, is there in existence any report of its activities during that period? It would be interesting to the Commission if we might have a statement of its initiation, its relation, its work during that period and its abolition.—The abolition was on the recommendation of the Incheape Committee. If you would like I can let you have a note on the matter.

B-2704. *Miss Power*: In your memorandum you say that between 1921 and 1928 the number of registered factories has increased by 85 per cent. Apparently there has been nothing like a corresponding increase in the inspection staffs of the different provinces; and I am anxious to know whether the Central Government in pressing for increased inspection gives any guidance to the local Governments as to the standard of industrial inspection which it considers necessary?—Yes, it does under its powers of superintendence, direction and control.

B-2705. Exactly what sort of guidance does it give?—It considers whether in any particular province there is a lack of inspectors and suggests to the local Government that the number should be increased where they find it necessary.

B-2706. It simply says, "increase them", but does not actually set a standard of industrial inspection?—I am not aware of any hard and fast standard of the kind having been laid down.

B-2707. In your memorandum you say that "the number of women employed in factories in 1927 was 35 per cent higher than in 1921". Later on you say "In 1921 the Government of India drew the attention of local Governments to the desirability of appointing medical women as lady inspectors, but, so far, only one such appointment has been made." Has the Central Government taken any further steps since 1921, to bring this matter to the attention of local Governments in view of this big increase in the number of women employed?—I am not aware of any.

B-2708. Does the Central Government admit the distinction between medical and industrial inspection and the necessity for appointing women inspectors other than medical for the purely industrial side of inspection?—I should think there would be a natural distinction. I am not aware if it has insisted on any such distinction. I shall look up that particular point.

B-2709. In your memorandum dealing with carpet factories you say: 'An enquiry has been addressed to the Government of the United Provinces regarding the conditions under which children are employed in the carpet factories situated within the province and the reply of the local Government is awaited.' Has any reply been received?—We have received replies, not official replies. We made enquiries and found that the Governments of the Punjab and the U. P. were of the opinion that it was not necessary to bring these carpet factories under the Factories Act.

B-2710. Were the conditions similar to those in Amritsar?—I cannot say, but I understand that children were employed in the United Provinces and in Amritsar.

B-2711. That brings me to the question of unregulated factories and workshops. Is the Central Government making any enquiries as to the numbers employed in those of the larger places where no power is installed, with a view to considering the necessity of bringing them under the Factories Act?—I am not aware that any enquiries are being made.

B-2712. With regard to minimum wages what sort of investigation is meant by a "thorough enquiry"? Does that imply a circular letter to the local Governments, or does it imply a central investigation, or does it apply to the investigations of the Royal Commission?—I think you have hit it correctly there. If an investigation was started, I think we should write to local Governments. We would then see the amount of information we have got. If the information was not sufficient and if we considered it necessary to arrive at a more satisfactory solution, I have no doubt we would appoint a committee; but I cannot commit myself till I know what amount of information we shall get from local Governments on the subject.

B-2713. When requests are made by the Central Government for investigation by the Provinces, what steps are taken to see that Provincial Governments look all round the question and do not merely apply to employers and employers' associations; in fact that they include the workers' point of view?—When a local Government reports, it also sends up with its report the letters it has received from various associations, and we can see for ourselves from the letters that we have received both from employers' associations and labourers' associations, whether the conclusions of the local Government are such as to appeal to us.

B-2714. Suppose there are no associations of labourers?—I am afraid we cannot distrust the local Governments.

B-2715. Suppose there is no arrangement made by a local Government to try to get the point of view of the workers?—I can only speak for one local Government, the Government of Bombay, and I know that the Bombay Government invariably goes out of its way to try and find out the views of labourers.

B-2716. That is one province?—I cannot speak of other provinces. We cannot of course issue definite instructions distrusting local Governments to the extent of supposing that when we ask them to make full enquiries, they are only going to make one-sided enquiries. I think it is reasonable to believe that local Governments will exercise their responsibility wisely and impartially.

B-2717. *Mr. Joshi:* In your memorandum there is a reference made to an *interim* injunction issued against the branch of a registered trade union at Sholapur in spite of the passing of the Trade Unions Act. Has the Government of India taken any steps in this matter?—I am not quite sure to what Mr. Joshi refers. We could not take any action with regard to an *interim* injunction which was issued by a civil court. I think it is an unregistered trade union.

B-2718. My point is that they have defeated the object of the legislation by asking for an injunction saying that the union is not a registered union?—I think that is a legal question.

B-2719. Has the Government of India considered whether the law is defective in that respect?—No. That is assuming that the law is defective.

B-2720. Has the Government of India not considered the matter even after seeing that such a prosecution has taken place in spite of the law?—We could not any way consider the point until the prosecution, or the *interim* injunction or whatever it is, had been disposed of by the court.

B-2721. *The Chairman:* And that is not the case at present?—Not that I am aware of.

B-2722. *Mr. Joshi:* The object of the employers is not to get a conviction because their object is served by the *interim* injunction which may last for ten years.

The Chairman: Surely an *interim* injunction cannot last for ten years.

Mr. Joshi: The employers are not anxious to go on with the case because their purpose is served. However, I will leave the point at that.

B-2723. We were told at Lahore that the Government issued a circular to the Registrar of Trade Unions in Lahore stating that the unions of Government servants should not be registered. Is that a fact?—I am not aware that we issued any instructions.

B-2724. The statement was made by the Director of Industries, Punjab, who is the Registrar of Trade Unions there?—The whole question of the association of Government servants and the conditions under which they can form associations are at the present moment under the consideration of Government.

B-2725. My question was whether such a circular was issued?—No, not by the Government of India.

B-2726. *Dewan Chaman Lall:* Was it not issued by the Home Department?—When instructions were being issued on the subject I was in the Home Department, and I know that no such circular was issued.

B-2727. I can assure you that it has been issued?—The Home Department has issued no such instructions.

B-2728. *The Chairman:* Then the Registrar at Lahore was misinformed?—He may have been.

B-2729. *Mr. Joshi:* May I ask you, as your opinion, whether such instructions will not be against the very law itself because the decisions of the Registrar are subject to appeal to the High Court?—That is a matter of the interpretation of the law.

B-2730. You have given in your memorandum the activities which are permitted by the Act, but forbidden by the Government Servants' Conduct Rules. Take item (iii)—the maintenance of a member of a legislative body. Will you explain the reason why this should not be done by a union of Government servants?—I think it is on the whole desirable that Government servants should not as a rule be implicated in politics.

B-2731. When Government servants are given votes, they are certainly given the power to elect any one they like and even to pay for him?—No, not to pay for him.

B-2732. You think they should not elect a man and pay for him?—No.

B-2733. In spite of the fact that the law gives them the vote?—The maintenance of a member of a legislative body is a thing that is forbidden by the Government Servants' Conduct Rules.

B-2734. *The Chairman:* Following the question just raised, of the rules applicable to Government servants restraining them from taking part in certain political activities, which to some extent follows the English system, I notice a remark in your memorandum which I do not understand: "Pending the consideration of this difficult question, Government have relaxed the provision contained in the existing Rules for the recognition of associations consisting of its employees which requires them to register under the Act." Can you elucidate that sentence?—There are two sets of rules: one is the Government Servants' Conduct Rules, and the other is the Recognition Rules. In the Recognition Rules it is stated "In the event of legislation being passed which will permit of the registration of the association, the association shall be duly registered." Legislation was passed, and when this question came up, of the conditions on which Government servants should be allowed to form associations, it required very considerable examination and, in order not to put these people in a wrong position, it was decided to relax this rule which said that in the event of legislation being passed which will permit of the registration of the association, the association shall be duly registered.

B-2735. That is to say that associations of Government servants have a right to claim registration; at least the Government agrees to their registration, but they are still subject to the rules relating to the Government Servants' Conduct?—Under the rules, the individual servant should abide by the Government Servants' Conduct Rules.

B-2736. *Mr. Joshi*: Do you apply the same rules of Recognition to the industrial employees of the Government as well as to the other employees of the Government who receive pensions and are entitled to leave?—An inquiry at the present moment is going on as to the distinction that may be drawn between permanent salaried employees and what are called artisans, associations of Government employees.

B-2737. Is there any central department which looks after the welfare of the employees of the Government of India?—Do you refer to the centrally administered areas?

B-2738. I want to know which department is responsible for labour welfare in the central territories managed by the Government of India themselves?—The local administration is, in the first instance, responsible.

B-2739. And the Government of India is not?—Not in the first instance, but they are under our control.

B-2740. You do not look after the welfare of labour?—We do watch it.

B-2741. The administrations which are responsible for labour welfare in the territories managed by the Government of India directly have no legislatures to help them?—No.

B-2742. Is there any central department which looks after the welfare of the employees of the Government of India themselves?—I am not quite sure in what way you want it to be done. There are various departments and the department concerned will do that.

B-2743. But the Government of India as a whole does not concern itself about the welfare of the workers employed by themselves?—I am not quite sure what you mean by "the Government of India as a whole".

B-2744. *The Chairman*: Except in so far as your department exercises supervision and control?—The general question of welfare naturally comes to our Department and we consider the general lines and principles under which it is to be administered.

B-2745. *Mr. Joshi*: For instance, there are employees in Government railways, Ordnances and other Government factories. I want to know whether the Government of India have certain policies of labour welfare for their own employees, corresponding to the appointment of a labour member on the Railway Board?—No.

B-2746. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: There are territories which are directly administered by the Government of India. Do not the Chief Commissioners in charge of the administrations administer them in the same way as the head of a provincial government does?—Quite so.

B-2747. *Sir Alexander Murray*: Can they pass legislation?—No; they are subject to all-India legislation.

B-2748. *Mr. Joshi*: As regards the labour bureau which was abolished, I want to ask you whether such a bureau or such a machinery is not necessary for considering labour legislation?—I have already said that we should be very glad to have recommendations of the Labour Commission on this point.

B-2749. As regards the migratory character of the labour, has the Government of India considered whether it cannot be changed so long as the housing conditions are as they exist in Bombay and so long as there is no provision for old age?—I do not think the Government of India have to take up any special policy to change the migratory character of the labour.

B-2750. *The Chairman*: You have in your memorandum referred to the desirability of improving the position of migratory labour?—Yes, but not necessarily doing away with the character of it.

B-2751. *Mr. Joshi*: As regards Assam, you have under consideration a Bill dealing with recruitment. Does that Bill provide for repatriation of workers? If it does not, has the Government of India considered that repatriation should also form part of the Bill?—The Bill relates to recruit-

ment only and not to the conditions of employment in the fields and tea gardens.

B-2752. *The Chairman*: Repatriation therefore is not considered part of recruitment?—Not of the worker who is already employed, but of the worker who goes for employment in the tea gardens.

B-2753. *Mr. Chow*: Does it contain provision for repatriation of recruits who go there?—This is the relevant section of the Bill. "Subject to any orders which the local Government (that is the Assam Government) may make in this behalf, the District Magistrate (or any other magistrate empowered by the local Government in this behalf) may, if he thinks fit, detain and send back to his native district or to the place of his recruitment, in spite of the fact whether this Act applies or not, any person found within the jurisdiction of the said magistrate, together with his dependants (if any), on the ground that that person was recruited for manual labour on the estate by any coercion, undue influence, fraud or misrepresentation, or of any irregularity in connection with his recruitment, or on the ground that that person is unfit for work on the estate."

B-2754. *The Chairman*: The actual repatriation after a period of service is a matter of good-will on the part of the employer?—The question will then come whether it is on the ground of irregularity or on the ground that that person is unfit for work on the estate.

B-2755. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: After the man works for some time, unless it is for any of the causes just now mentioned by you, the employer is not bound to repatriate him?—As I said, this Bill deals with recruitment. But if the District Magistrate finds that a man is unfit for work on the estate he may order for his repatriation.

B-2756. *The Chairman*: The Bill has no reference to the repatriation of a man after a period of satisfactory service?—No; this is a recruiting Bill. There is another section in the Bill to which I might draw the attention of the Commission; it is Clause 10 of the Bill; the Bill appears as Appendix I in the memorandum that we have submitted.

B-2757. Is that the existing law or the draft Bill?—It is the draft Bill.

B-2758. *Mr. Joshi*: Is there going to be separate legislation providing for inspection of plantations and regulating the sanitary and health conditions on plantations?—It is not under contemplation.

B-2759. How is that to be done in that case?—The Assam Government will have to do that.

B-2760. Is the Assam Government going to do that?—Not that I am aware of.

Sir Alexander Murray: They have an Act already.

Mr. Joshi: That Act applies to workers recruited under a certain Act; that Act is not applied to workers who are recruited under this Act.

The Chairman: That is one of the points we will look into.

Sir Alexander Murray: Clause 16 of the Bill empowers the local Government to frame rules to carry out various things, and I think inspection of tea gardens is included in that.

B-2761. *Mr. Birla*: As regards the question of housing, the difficulty so far as the employer is concerned has been twofold: one is about the land to which you have already replied to Sir Alexander Murray and the other is the question of money. Would you approve of a scheme under which the Government may advance loans to the employers to the extent of 50 per cent. at a reasonable rate of interest for building houses for their workers?—I do not think this question has been discussed by the Government of India; at least I have not seen any discussions and am not aware of any conclusions they arrived at; I am not aware that this subject has been discussed, but I would point out, harping back again, that this is a provincial subject and therefore the money should come from provincial governments.

B-2762. I am not concerned at present where the money should come from—whether from the provincial Government or from the Central Government. What I am trying to find out is whether such a scheme would be a feasible one?—That I think you could only tell after enquiry from local Governments. I do not think you can make it applicable to all places in India.

B-2763. For instance, if such a scheme was approved of by the Government of India, do you think the Government of India would be prepared to recommend the same to the provincial Governments?—I am sorry, I cannot answer that question.

B-2764. To what extent do you think the Trade Disputes Act has been useful? It has already been on the Statute Book for seven months;—I think it is rather early to express an opinion on a very important Act like that after only seven months' working.

B-2765. After this Act was passed how many strikes in all had we in different industrial centres?—We can let you have the figures if you like, but I cannot quote them straight off; I have not got that information.

B-2766. In how many cases was the Act utilized?—Only in the Bombay strike, as far as I know.

B-2767. *The Chairman*: It set up an enquiry?—Yes.

B-2768. Is there any case other than the Bombay strike?—I am not aware of any.

B-2769. *Mr. Birla*: You know there have been strikes at other centres; at one centre a strike has been in existence for the last five or six months; so far as I know an enquiry was demanded not only by the workers, but also by the Provincial Council and by the Legislative Assembly. Why in the face of such public pressure was not an enquiry set up? I am referring to the tin plate workers strike.—I cannot deal with any particular instances now straight off, but it is a matter for the local Government to decide whether the matter should be referred to a court of enquiry or not.

B-2770. *Mr. Joshi*: You have the power of supervision, direction and control?—The Act says the local Government may do so.

B-2771. *Mr. Birla*. That does not solve the difficulty as far as a layman is concerned; the strike is there; an enquiry has been demanded by the Provincial Council; by the workers and by the Legislative Assembly; and in spite of all that an enquiry has not been brought into existence?—Without looking at the papers and committing myself too far as to the actual facts, I should say it is a matter for the local Government to decide.

B-2772. *The Chairman*: Presumably the local Government in spite of what the Legislative Assembly said, decided in the negative?—I do not know; I presume so.

B-2773. *Mr. Birla*: Can you suggest any solution of such a difficulty if it should arise in the future? It is very easy for the Government of India to say it is a matter which concerns the local Government; but that does not help the situation. Is the law defective?—I do not think the law is at all defective. It gives the power to the local Government; it is for the local Government to decide; it may disagree with the representations of the Legislative Assembly.

B-2774. Is it in the power of the Central Government to make recommendations to the local Government in such circumstances?—It would be within our power to make recommendations.

B-2775. And do you mean to say that in spite of your recommendations the Provincial Government has refused to set up an enquiry?—I did not say we made recommendations.

B-2776. *The Chairman*: But evidently you are very chary about treading on the toes of local Governments, as happens in other countries?—We must be.

B-2777. Where you have given responsibility you destroy that responsibility if you are always interfering?—Exactly.

B-2778. *Mr. Birla*: I am trying to find a solution for future difficulties of that nature, and I am afraid Mr. Shillidy has not been able to suggest any solution for such a difficulty?—I could only suggest a solution which has received the approval of the Government of India.

B-2779. I think your Department is the only Department which can suggest a solution for such a difficulty?—I could only suggest solutions which have received the approval of the Government of India.

B-2780. *Mr. Clow*: I take it that when the Central Legislature has definitely entrusted certain responsibilities to the provincial Government, it would not be correct for the Government of India to issue directions?—It would not.

B-2781. Unless the Act contains the words "subject to the control of the Governor General in Council", as it does occasionally?—Yes.

B-2782. So that on this occasion it would not be a correct procedure for the Government of India to say "This responsibility which has been given you should be exercised in a particular fashion"?—It would not be correct.

B-2783. I understand both the local Governments and Central Legislature are competent to legislate on labour subjects?—Yes.

B-2784. In the case of the local Legislature sanction is required; is that the sanction of the Governor General or Governor General in Council.

Mr. Giff: In the memorandum it says "Governor General".

The Chairman: Section 80A of the Act definitely says "Governor General". In the early part of your memorandum you say "with the previous sanction of the Governor General". That is right, is it not?—Yes.

B-2785. Then later on there are several references to the "Governor General in Council"?—Those are different things.

B-2786. Therefore there are two categories?—Yes, there is a distinct difference between the "Governor General" and the "Governor General in Council".

B-2787. *Mr. Clow*: With the exception of the Industrial Disputes Bill in Bombay, do you know of any occasion on which sanction was withheld to the introduction of a labour measure?—No.

B-2788. As regards a cost of living index number I think you suggested (1) that it was not competent for the Government of India to do it, and (2) that they abandoned the proposals because of the views of the Incheape Committee?—I am afraid I do not know what happened; I can look it up and give you the details.

B-2789. Is Statistics a Central subject?—Yes.

B-2790. You publish or did publish statistics for some time as to prices?—Yes.

B-2791. And a wholesale index figure?—You must know; I do not.

B-2792. It would be perfectly competent for the Government of India to publish figures showing the cost of living of the working classes and to incur expenditure on that account?—I think it then at once becomes a question of what is the purpose of these statistics.

B-2793. *The Chairman*: Apparently there is some question as to whether it comes within your sphere?—Personally I have no doubt about it at all.

B-2794. *Mr. Clow*: The whole of Statistics is a Central subject?—Yes.

B-2795. And statistics published by the Central Government may be on a large number of provincial subjects?—They are sometimes, I think.

B-2796. For example, statistics as to factories?—We call them "returns" under the Act.

B-2797. I take it that the Labour Bureau during the period of its existence was mainly concerned with legislation?—Yes.

B-2798. And though it was abolished in name, efforts were made to carry on most of its work?—Yes, in the ordinary Department.

B-2799. You do publish statistics as to strikes?—Yes, quarterly.

B-2800. Do you regard that as falling outside the province of the Government of India?—No.

B-2801. But it is a provincial subject?—I do not think so; under our Factories Act we must do it.

B-2802. You publish statistics as to strikes in concerns which are not factories?—We may do so.

B-2803. I was putting it to you that the publication of certain central intelligence in this matter is not regarded as a function lying outside the functions of the Government of India.

The Chairman: General information of industrial importance covering all British India?—I am not willing to bind myself to any general statement.

B-2804. *Mr. Clow:* I am only asking because earlier you made some general statements?—I still maintain my previous statements.

B-2805. As regards superintendence, direction and control, I take it the general attitude is that whatever may be your view as to what a local Government is doing, you do not interfere unless the matter is one of substantial importance?—Yes.

B-2806. You have issued instructions from time to time relating to the inspection of factories?—Yes.

B-2807. In fact I think you suggested to one province that they must appoint a wholtime inspector?—Yes.

B-2808. You have also issued instructions regarding the granting of exemptions?—Yes; we have reviewed exemptions proposed to be given by local Governments from time to time.

B-2809. And issued general instructions?—I have not been long enough in the Department to have seen those, but I have seen cases where we have actually written to local Governments about the exemptions which they proposed to give under the Factories Act. In these cases the Act definitely specifies that exemptions are to be granted subject to the control of the Government of India.

B-2810. The Department of which you are the head is a Department subordinate to the Governor General in Council?—Yes.

B-2811. The Railway Board is in the same position?—Yes.

B-2812. If therefore it was desired to interfere between the Railway Board and the employees in a particular dispute, that could not be done by your Department, but could only be done by an authority superior to the Railway Board?—The Department as a Department does not issue orders; it issues orders as orders of the Governor General in Council. If therefore it desires to issue orders affecting any Department the matter must be referred to that Department and the views of that Department must be obtained. If an agreement cannot be obtained, the matter must go to the Governor General in Council who will issue orders which in fact control all Departments.

B-2813. The responsibility for the welfare of railway employees is a matter for the Governor General in Council and not for your Department?—Yes.

B-2814. *Mr. Cliff:* But if the Department initiated a movement to try to effect a settlement on the Railways, it would go to the Governor General in Council.

Mr. Clow: I think it would be outside their province to do so under the distribution of work made by the Governor General?—We certainly should not interfere in the matter of a railway strike under the Railway Board.

The Chairman: I take it the point is this that the Railway Board is parallel to the Department of Industries and Labour.

B-2815. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Is it under Commerce?—No, it is not actually under Commerce.

B-2816. *The Chairman*: Its relations are direct with the Governor General in Council?—The Railway Board is directly under the Member for Commerce, who is of course a Member of the Governor General's Council; the papers go direct from the Railway Board to the Member; there is no other Department intervening in those discussions, except so far, of course, as they might affect other Departments: If they affect any other Department the views of that Department must be obtained. But there is no other Department intervening between the Railway Board and the Member.

B-2817. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: In the first part of your memorandum you say that more than 70 per cent. of the adult male population derive their livelihood from the land. For many years I have heard that percentage stated. Has the Government of India any statistics showing the total population dependent upon agriculture; I mean in numbers?—Those figures have been obtained from our census statistics.

B-2818. Is there no information now available with you showing what has been the increase in population? If the population increased or decreased it would alter the percentage engaged in agriculture. I do not think this memorandum contains anything more than what was the position at the last census in 1921. My point is this: I propose to deal with unemployment; it is therefore essential that the extent of dependence upon agriculture by the population should be known, not in percentages, but in numbers, so that we may be able to judge what population the land can support by agriculture?—These figures can no doubt be got from the census statistics; I have no figures other than those.

B-2819. You will admit that if population increases by a few millions every decade, the percentage would be altered?—I think it decreased last time.

B-2820. The general impression is that the population of India is steadily increasing. If that was so, it would mean that the land would throw out of work the additional population and they would drift to other occupations?—I presume so.

B-2821. Therefore if other occupations are not available, there would be increased unemployment?—It would depend on the extent to which there has been intensive cultivation and how much more population the land would hold for the purposes of agriculture.

B-2822. *The Chairman*: Is not that dealt with in the Report of the Linlithgow Commission?—It may be.

B-2823. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: If occupation is required for more people in this land, it becomes very important to consider how to provide it in order to enable it to live. I now draw your attention to the statement in your memorandum: "The latter half of the 19th century, however, saw the rapid decline of the indigenous handicraft industry. It is not necessary here to examine the causes which produced this result, but the point which it is important to bear in mind is that this decay had set in before modern industrialism had been established to any appreciable extent, with the result that the population of the country was to an increasing extent thrown back on the land." Do you think one of the causes of the decay of these handicrafts was the development of the railway system and the import of cheaper goods carried to the local markets in competition with the hand-made goods produced there?—I am sorry, but I cannot answer that question straight away.

The Chairman: That is a large historical question.

B-2824. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: It is of material importance to the Labour Commission because what we wish to investigate is not only the conditions of labour but the question of unemployment and the causes which have led to that unemployment. It was because of these factors that industrialism by machinery became necessary. It did not occur till the latter half of the 19th century as you say; but subsequently as the old handicraft

occupations of the people gradually disappeared from these causes, people had to seek employment in other directions and to start manufacture by machinery in competition with goods which were being supplied to India from abroad at cheaper rates. Lower down you say: "Over 20,000,000 workers in industry, including cottage industries, mines and transport; railway mileage in excess of that in every country except the United States." I take it that your estimate of 20 million workers includes different industries, such as mines and transport. Have you separate figures as to manufacturing industries, mines and transport?—I understand these figures are derived from the Census Report.

B-2825. The Census Report is of 1921, but we are now in 1929. These are industrial statistics. Am I to take it that the Government of India have not kept themselves up to date in regard to these statistics of employment, but have depended simply on the census?—We have certain figures.

B-2826. In your memorandum you say: "The vast majority of the industrial labourers belong to the poorer classes of peasants who have been driven by adverse circumstances from the fields in their native villages to seek employment in a factory." Do you think increase of population has anything to do with these statistics?—Very probably it has some bearing. I do not know that it is due to population; I have not gone into the question of agricultural economics.

B-2827. Then I take it that you mean that these people are driven out from these villages to industrial occupation through want?—Yes.

B-2828. Through inadequacy of the means of livelihood?—Yes.

Then you say "The true explanation of the scarcity of labour is to be found chiefly in the unattractive conditions of employment and also partly in the conservatism of the labourer who is always reluctant to wrench himself away from his fixtures". What do you mean by "unattractive conditions of employment"?—Housing is I think one of the factors.

B-2829. That brings me to your reply to Mr. Joshi. You know as a matter of fact that the Bombay Government decided to supply this want and decided to build 50,000 one-room tenements to meet sanitary requirements for the housing of industrial labour in Bombay city. You further know that the Government of Bombay had to stop short after constructing 16,000 one-room tenements. You further know that a large portion, more than 50 per cent. of the 16,000 rooms remain unoccupied. Then how can it be said that housing is one of the causes of the unattractive conditions of labour? Here the Government of Bombay has, at public expense, provided sanitary accommodation for these people. They only built about 30 per cent. of the estimated requirements, but still more than 50 per cent. of that accommodation is not utilized by labour. Can you give me any explanation of that? Surely very attractive conditions of housing are present?—Attractive from our point of view but not necessarily from the labourer's point of view.

B-2830. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Supposing this Commission decided to recommend that certain all-India statistics should be prepared, would not the Governor General in Council through you issue a direction to the provinces to get certain statistics to enable it to prepare all-India statistics?—I cannot say straight away, but I think it would be something on those lines.

B-2831. Apparently you cannot force a province to collect statistics in the form you desire? Have you any control over the provinces on this question: if you are trying to get all-India statistics naturally all those statistics would have to be in the same form. The direction therefore to each province would be to get out these statistics in a certain definite form?—I do not think there would be any difficulty about that. Statistics is a Central subject.

B-2832. Then the Central Government is in a position to instruct the provinces to get statistical results for them so that they can make up all-

India statistics?—Subject to a closer examination by the experts of the constitutional position I should say “yes”.

B-2833. I am now talking of statistics *qua* statistics. Will the Government of India be in a position to say: We want statistics as to cost of living in your province so as to make out an all-India average cost of living figure. Would that be considered as welfare and would the position be that you would not be allowed to ask for them?—I prefer not to say straight away. I think I should like to examine that question before I give my opinion.

B-2834. It seems that this is a matter which it is necessary for the Commission to know; I feel it would be very helpful if we are going to make recommendations to know the powers of the Government of India, because naturally we should only get all-India figures by having the provincial figures collated?—If the Commission would like to have a note on that subject I would have the question examined and put before you; I can get legal opinion on the point as to what the exact constitutional position would be in that respect. I am not willing to commit myself at the moment because these constitutional questions are sometimes very difficult.

B-2835. *The Chairman*: Perhaps you will see that we have a note on that?—We did consider at one stage the question of a Central Statistical Bureau. I do not want to commit myself to any statement, but we did find a considerable amount of opposition from local Governments on the point. For example, one local Government wrote and said: “As for the centralization of statistics this Government are not in a position to agree to hand over to the Central Government the control of compilations for the publication of which they have to find the funds and for which they are answerable to the Council.”

B-2836. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: There might be costs?—Yes. I am not prepared to say straight away how these particular costs would be met, whether from the Local Government or the Central Government.

B-2837. Will you therefore consider whether, if the Central Government decides to defray these costs, that would be in accordance with the Devolution Rules on the point?—Yes. Another Local Government said: “If the Committee’s proposals”—that was the Indian Economic Enquiry Committee—“involves the exercise by the Central Bureau of any measure of control over the collection and compilation of provincial statistics, then the Local Government must take strong exception to it. The functions of the Central Bureau should, in the opinion of the Local Government, be advisory only, and the provincial Administrative Department should be free to accept or reject the advice tendered.” It is not a simple question; it is a very thorny one.

B-2838. *The Chairman*: That puts very clearly the difficulties you find yourself in?—Yes, it is a very difficult question, and that is why I am diffident in expressing any opinion at all.

B-2839. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: If you are correct in your last opinion it would not be possible for you to bring the census figures up to date?—I do not know that that follows.

B-2840. Could not the local Government take the view that it need not follow your advice and supply you with census figures under the headings of agricultural workers?—Surely “Census” is a Central Government subject.

B-2841. You might get powers as to statistics?—I cannot say; it is a very difficult question. I am merely quoting these two Governments to show how difficult the question is and how impossible it is for me to give anything in the way of a definite final opinion at the present moment.

B-2842. In the note which you are going to supply it would be most useful to the Commission if you would consider the point of view of the Commission considering the advisability of getting statistics for All-India?—You want information on two points: whether we can get statistics for All-India and the method of getting them, and the question of cost.

B-2843. Yes, how we could recommend getting these statistics which could either in the first instance be All-India or eventually collected and collated

so as to become All-India. Would it be necessary to have legislation or an alteration of Devolution Rules or what?—You want to know whether under the constitution as it stands the Central Government could give orders, in detail if necessary, for the collection of statistics in a particular form, and in addition to that, how the burden of the cost of preparing these statistics would have to be borne?

Sir Victor Sussoon: That is right.

B-2844. *The Chairman*: In your memorandum, you say that in 1922 there were "over 20,000,000 workers in industries, including cottage industries, mines and transport". Could you bring that up-to-date and also sub-divide that under the various heads—textile, jute, coal mines, and so on—so that we might know the number of workers in various industries?—I will make a note of that and do my best.

Q. Pushing a little further the point with regard to migratory labour, I take it from what you have said, that your department views the migratory system as it exists as not an evil?—No, I did not say that. It has not been decided that it is not an evil. I understood Mr. Joshi to ask me whether we were going to take steps to do away with the migratory system. I replied that it has not been decided that the migratory character of Indian labour was a necessary evil.

B-2845. No doubt we shall report our views on that; but assuming that it is not an evil, and a thing which has grown out of Indian life and custom, a good thing in itself, there still remains the problem of how far it can be improved. You suggest in your memorandum that "Education and organization are the only means by which Indian workers can escape from the clutches of intermediaries.. " What had you in mind when you used the word "organization"?—I could not say; I was not the author of the memorandum.

B-2846. There are two possibilities—one is trade union organization which obviously might be considered to be in an elementary stage and capable of improvement; and the other, what I may describe as stabilization of migratory labour, by which the migratory worker could be encouraged by employers to go again and again to the same work, so that they might accumulate certain amount of skill and thereby be of more value to their employers?—It may be so. But I have not examined that point, and I am not aware that Government have come to any definite and final decision that it would be good thing to introduce stabilization.

B-2847. *Sir Alexander Murray*. Mr. Clow mentioned the Trade Disputes Bill which the Government of Bombay had drafted. They were told to wait by the Government of India who then proceeded to put through an All-India Trade Disputes Bill.—Yes

B-2848. What were the special circumstances that caused the Government of India to do that in this case? If they could do that with the Trade Disputes Bill, why cannot they do that with all factory legislation?—They can do it with all factory legislation. They do not always consider it necessary or desirable. Local Governments also can legislate for themselves.

B-2849. Quite true, but you told us that "Trade Disputes" was a transferred subject?—No.

B-2850. A provincial subject?—Yes.

B-2851. Here the Trade Disputes Bill was drafted in Bombay and the Government of India said: "Wait, and we will make an All-India Bill." What is there to prevent them dealing with All-India labour questions in the same way as they dealt with the Trade Disputes Bill?—Anything which comes under this heading is subject to legislation by the Indian Legislature: "factories, settlement of labour disputes, electricity, boilers, welfare of labour including provident fund, industrial insurance, general health, accidents and housing".

B-2852. When you tell us that that is a provincial matter, as a matter of fact, the Government of India can initiate legislation dealing with welfare?—Yes, we can legislate.

B-2853. That gives me an entirely different impression from what I had two hours ago. I was under the impression that all these things were provincial subjects not capable of being dealt with on your initiative by the Central Government?—We can legislate. There are two separate things; one is administration and the other is legislation.

B-2854. Is there anything to prevent your putting through any Act dealing with welfare work and various other things of that description throughout the whole of India?—But we must carry Local Governments with us so far as we can.

B-2855. You say you can put through legislation for the whole of India, but money may be necessary to administer it?—Yes.

B-2856. That is where the local Governments come in?—Yes.

B-2857. Have you no means of devoting a certain amount to encourage local Governments to come in with you?—That is how it has always been expounded to me on authority that we cannot spend money from central revenues on provincial subjects.

B-2858. Although you can legislate for the spending of money by the Provincial Governments?—Yes.

B-2859. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Can you legislate so as to cause the provincial Governments to spend their money?—Yes. For instance, we might provide in the Factories Act for certain staff of factory inspectors, or something of the kind.

B-2860. *Sir Alexander Murray*: You told us that factory inspection under the Factories Act was not a central subject in any way. But in your memorandum you say: "When the revision of the Indian Factories Act was under consideration, the Government of India impressed on local Governments the necessity of strengthening the whole-time inspecting staff in the provinces." Presumably you have the power to make that recommendation?—We have the power of superintendence, direction and control.

B-2861. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: It is difficult to know where it ends?—I quite agree it is a very wide term. You will find in the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils that any provincial subject is primarily the concern of the local Government.

B-2862. *Sir Alexander Murray*: In your memorandum you say: "A complaint which is often repeated in the factory reports is the inadequacy of the fines inflicted by magistrates for deliberate violations of the factory law". Is it not within your province to send a circular to anybody suggesting that adequate fines must be imposed?—I think it would be most improper.

B-2863. There is a difference between instructing a factory inspector and instructing a magistrate?—Yes, we cannot possibly instruct a magistrate as to what he should do in the exercise of his magisterial duties.

B-2864. One is instructing an executive officer and the other a judicial officer; there is a clear difference between the two?—Yes.

B-2865. *Mr. Cliff*: Are those functions sometimes combined in one person?—Yes. But I do not know of a factory inspector who is a magistrate.

B-2866. You could not tell a magistrate as you can an executive officer, to do something?—I am quite certain, if we did anything of the kind the High Courts would take exception to that.

B-2867. You cannot tell the executive side to do something which would react on the judicial side?—No, certainly not.

B-2868. Why is it then that you have retained "Mines" with the Central Government and not transferred it to provincial Governments?—I am afraid I cannot go back to the original division of subjects.

B-2869. But "Mines" is a big industry like the "Factories". In the one case the Central Government transfers them, to the local Governments;

in the other case it retains them with themselves.—I do not remember exactly what reasons were given for this division. If you are very anxious to know why “Mines” were placed in the one and “Factories” in the other, I will look it up. I can only get it from the definite reports and decisions. I do not remember exactly why this distinction was made.

B-2870. *Sir Alexander Murray*: There is a movement among the people to transfer everything to Provincial Governments. If you do that, how would you deal with International Conventions in a case of that description?—If the Provinces were entirely autonomous with regard to Industries, I do not know where they would rank. It is a very difficult constitutional question, on which I should not wish to give an opinion. I imagine constitutional lawyers would argue many an hour upon that particular point.

B-2871. I notice that in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report when the Reforms were introduced, they were very strongly of the opinion that if the resources of the country were to be developed, Government must take action. They proceeded to say that the Government must shoulder its responsibility for the industrial development of the country. Is that the Government of India or the Provincial Governments?—I could not say without looking at the sections.

B-2872. *Mr. Ahmed*. If registered unions correspond with your department do you generally send them a reply?—I think we do.

B-2873. Do you reply to their resolutions and recommendations when they are sent to you?—Yes, we do.

B-2874. Generally speaking, if unions put their house in order and satisfy the rules of recognition, you have no objection to recognizing them?—I presume we recognize ordinary trade unions if they are registered.

B-2875. I am referring to industrial workers' unions generally?—Do you mean ordinary private labour?—Yes. We generally recognize them.

B-2876. *Mr. Rouse*, the contractors recruit labour and thereby make a profit. Instead of that if you recruit them direct and pay them direct the contractor will not make a profit. Is that not advisable from the point of view of labour?—It may be advisable from the point of view of labour, but I am not sure.

B-2877. Are you in favour of such a system?—No, I am not in favour of employing labour direct.

B-2878. Will not the labourers get more wages if they are recruited direct instead of through contractors who make a profit?—That is a matter of opinion.

B-2879. Is it not an admitted fact that the contractor makes a profit out of his recruitment?—He makes a profit out of his contract.

B-2880. Therefore if you paid the labourers direct instead of through contractors, they would get more?—(*Mr. Shillidy*) The contractor takes up a piece of work and he has to employ labour.

B-2881. And out of that he makes a profit?—Out of the price he charges for the work, not out of the labour.

B-2882. What protection do you secure to the labourer to see that he is not swindled by the contractor?—(*Mr. Rouse*) I have no legal or official standing to give any such protection. But whenever I hear a complaint that a contractor is not paying his labour properly, I make it a point to enquire into the matter. If it happens that the contractor's bill has not been paid and that he has not sufficient money to pay his men, I direct my Executive Engineer to put the contractor in funds and see that he pays his men. Beyond doing this unofficially I have no legal or official powers.

B-2883. Do you see that the contractor supplies pure drinking water to the men under him?—The supply of pure drinking water is under the control of the Health Officer. The labourers get the same pure water supply that we drink here.

B-2884. But you are only confining yourself to the city of Delhi?—I am working in Delhi; I carry on also a certain amount of Central Government works in Dehra Dun and in the United Provinces.

B-2885. So that you are answering questions from the point of view of these three places?—Yes.

B-2886. Not on behalf of the Central Government or Public Works Department?—No.

B-2887. Is there any provision made in the contracts for the supply of pure drinking water to the workmen?—No, there is none.

B-2888. Are you in favour of inserting a provision to that effect?—(Mr. Shillidy) I could not express an opinion as to whether such a condition should be inserted or not. It is a provincial transferred and not a provincial reserved subject.

B-2889. *The Chairman*: If the P. W. D. is carrying out a piece of work in the United Provinces, have you no right to stipulate with the contractor as to the conditions of labour?—I do not say we have no right. I say we cannot express an opinion here as to whether such should or should not be done in the provinces, because in this matter they are not under our control. (Mr. Rouse) The work I do in the United Provinces is work done for the Central Government. It is under my control and I am referring to that and not to works done by provincial Governments in their control.

B-2890. I am speaking only of works done by your department whether here in Delhi or in another province. You told us that at present there was no clause in your contract dealing with supply of pure drinking water to the workers?—Yes.

B-2891. Mr. Ahmed is asking you whether you would be in favour of the insertion of such a clause?—I think the contract might be made more specific.

B-2892. Your opinion would be the same with regard to housing and conservancy arrangements?—Yes, but that is my personal opinion. In this connection I should like you to refer to paragraph 277 of the P. W. D. Code which lays down sanitary rules on extensive works. As regards the works I do in the United Provinces, they are mostly small works, possibly up to three or four lakhs of rupees. They are all in towns where you have the necessary accommodation. You get your labourers who live in the towns. It is only in such big works like the building of the new capital at Delhi, and the building of the Forest Research Institute and the Railway Transportation School at Dehra Dun, where you have to employ a very large mass of labour, at a site which is far away from the towns, and where the accommodation already existing is not sufficient for all, that you have to establish camps for the temporary accommodation of labour. But the works in the United Provinces to which I have just referred are not big enough to necessitate the establishment of temporary camps.

B-2893. Would you approve of a provision being made saying that where more than 200 workers are to be employed for a longer period than six months, necessitating importation of labour for which there is not adequate housing accommodation within a reasonable distance, suitable arrangements must be made to provide temporary accommodation for the workers?—Yes, I would.

B-2894. *Mr. Ahmed*: You would not allow child labour below 12 years of age on your works? In England, I think it is not allowed below 14?—I would get that information for you.

B-2895. I say this, because yesterday we went out to inspect and we found two boys one 10 years of age and the other 11 years. One boy was emaciated, weak and appeared to have had nothing to eat. He had no clothing and was perfectly naked, a skeleton, getting 2 annas per day. There was another boy 10 years old, getting 1 anna 6 pies per day. One comes to this place coming from the Western Hostel on the way to the station. They are building the new printing press. It is only about 500 yards from here, I may tell you.

The Chairman: Is that building being done by your department?—Yes. The work is being done by our department through a contractor.

B-2896. *Mr. Ahmed:* The boy 10 years old is getting 1 anna 6 pies per day and the boy 11 years old is getting 2 annas a day.—I shall make an enquiry into that, such cases have never been brought to my notice.

B-2897. *The Chairman:* I suppose you have a rule as to the age at which labour can be employed.—In factories. This is not a factory. There is no legislation that I know of with regard to labour on this sort of building.

B-2898. Then the only question that arises is as to whether you could make conditions with your contractor or not as to the conditions of labour?—We could put it in the contract.

B-2899. *Mr. Cliff:* Have you any effective control over the hours of labour worked at the site of the new printing press?—No.

B-2900. Do you know anything about the hours of labour at all?—I know as a matter of practice that you will not find much work going on in the cold weather before 8 o'clock in the morning, and the works begin to shut down about 5 o'clock.

B-2901. We were told that there was no interval for meals in winter, and there is an interval in summer?—In practice there are many intervals. I dare say it is true that officially there is no interval in the winter, but in the summer there certainly is. You will not see anyone at work then for probably about two hours in the middle of the day.

B-2902. Is there any suitable housing accommodation available for the labour working on that site?—That labour nearly all lives in the camps which you saw, which are less than a mile from there.

B-2903. Some of the people do not live in those camps?—There are some who live in the city.

B-2904. Is this frequent leaving of work, and many intervals, caused by the fact that labour is so cheap that the proprietor allows it?—I should say it is simply because you cannot control it entirely. They are controlled more by their output than by the hours of work.

B-2905. You remember there was a man approached us who was entitled to workmen's compensation but the contractor had gone bankrupt. Did you ascertain, with regard to that question, as to whether a man having workmen's compensation was entitled to have first claim on the assets?—I have been making such enquiries as I could, but I have not yet got a definite answer. I am asking the Government Pleader whether he can give me an opinion.

The Chairman: The Act provides that here in India the first claim on the assets, if there are any, is the workman's compensation.

B-2906. *Mr. Cliff:* Has the Department ever taken a wage census in any industries?—(Mr. Shillidy) No.

B-2907. Do you exercise any control over ticket-of-leave labour or convict labour in prisons?—No.

B-2908. Do you take any account of their conditions at all?—We have not so far.

B-2909. You refer to absenteeism. Would you give me your definition of absenteeism?—I am afraid I am not prepared to give a definition at the moment.

B-2910. *The Chairman:* Perhaps you can answer the question to this extent. Does "absenteeism" as used in your memorandum, and as used generally in India, cover absence from sickness; and does it also cover return to the village?—It covers all kinds of absence.

B-2911. *Mr. Cliff:* Does it cover absence through lock-outs or strikes?—No, I do not think it covers that.

Sir Victor Sassoon: It does not as far as the textile mills in Bombay are concerned.

B-2912. *Mr. Cliff*: Does it cover those people who go back to their villages for 2 or 3 months?—No.

B-2913. *The Chairman*: I thought you told me it did?—No, it does not cover those people. It refers to the absence of people who are working in the factory at the time.

Sir Victor Sassoon: In the case of textile mills, when a workman goes home he provides someone to take his place, and then he does not get marked as absent.

Mr. Cliff: So that if a worker provides a substitute when he goes home for a month or a week from the mills he is not regarded as absent?

Sir Victor Sassoon: No.

B-2914. *Mr. Cliff*: But absenteeism does include sickness?—So far as I know.

B-2915. If the Central Government desired to initiate social legislation, and that cost money, could the Central Government make financial provision from its own revenue in order to meet that cost?—Not if it is a provincial subject.

B-2916. That is to say, a provincial reserved subject?—A provincial subject.

B-2917. Of any character?—In regard to a provincial subject, if it is social legislation, the Central Government cannot make financial provision, but it can impose legislation?

Sir Victor Sassoon: Only if it is reserved.

The Witness: Yes, if it is reserved.

B-2918. *Mr. Cliff*: Therefore the Central Government can initiate legislation and impose on the provincial Governments, according to the Constitution, certain financial liabilities?—It can, but it does not do so without consulting local Governments.

B-2919. In regard to work which is undertaken by the Central Government, in which they engage contractors, does your Department ever make any provision in the contract for the protection of the labour employed on those contracts?—(Mr. Rouse) No.

B-2920. That can be taken for all over India as far as Central Government is concerned?—Yes.

B-2921. The Trade Disputes Act says that if any trade dispute exists or is apprehended between an employer and any of his workmen, the local Government, or where the employer is the head of a Department under the control of the Governor-General in Council, or is a Railway Company, the Governor-General in Council may by order in writing do certain things, and have a Court of Enquiry or a Board of Conciliation. Assume a dispute in one of the Departments which goes direct to the Governor-General (and you are in a Department, as I understand, which goes direct to the Governor-General), who initiates the movement for effecting the steps which are provided under this particular clause?—(Mr. Shillidy): I do not think it would necessarily mean that it would always be one and the same person. It may be an application from one of the parties, or we might do it on our own initiative possibly if we saw a dispute was proceeding and we thought it necessary to bring it to a head.

B-2922. If both parties apply then it says there "shall be". You said this morning in the case of disputes on the railways, your Department would not move. It seems to me under this clause that you can move, and I am wondering where the drive comes from in order to get any attention paid to a dispute that has either actually occurred or is apprehended?—I do not know how you can read from this that it would be our Department who would deal with it.

B-2923. I am wondering whose business it is. The reason I ask you is that you are the Department of Industries and Labour. It would be the Ministry of Labour in England who would commence to move. I am wondering whether your Department would really initiate any steps?—They could.

B-2924. But would you?—If we received an application we could, yes.

B-2925. *The Chairman*. That is to say, the Minister at the head of your Department would be the person who would advise the Governor-General in Council. That is the position?—Yes.

B-2926. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Is not the position this that in the case of Railways the Railway Board or the Member in charge takes the place of the employer?—Yes.

B-2927. So if he agrees and the other agrees it goes through automatically. But supposing he does not agree and the men ask for it, would it be the Department of Industries and Labour who would take the position of the Government?—We would issue the orders of the Governor-General in Council.

B-2928. In that way you would initiate it?—Yes.

B-2929. *Mr. Cliff*: The Fawcett Committee say that unclaimed wages should be paid. Is legislation necessary to secure that payment?—I am sorry I cannot give an answer on that. It would be a matter of an ordinary civil contract between labour and its employer.

B-2930. I understand at the moment that there are certain rules in operation in these factories whereby the worker forfeits his right to the unclaimed wages; but the Fawcett Committee recommended that they should be paid in any event. Am I right in saying that with that rule there, legislation would be necessary?—I do not know of any legislation whereby we have the power to make the employer and the worker enter into a contract.

B-2931. That is the rule in the factory. Would it require legislation to upset that rule? Will that rule stand in the civil court?—It seems to me it would. It depends on the nature of the contract and the agreement between the two parties.

B-2932. The Fawcett Committee Report dealt with that. I am wondering whether your Department considered that question and whether legislation was contemplated?—So far we have not.

B-2933. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Mr. Shillidy, in your memorandum you have made certain statements on the strength of the report of three Committees, the Indian Industrial Commission, the Assam Labour Enquiry Committee, 1921-22, and the Indian Coal Committee, 1925, in which certain allegations are made against the worker regarding drink and increase in wages leading to greater idleness and so on. Can you tell me whether a single labour organization gave evidence before the Indian Industrial Commission?—I am afraid I cannot answer that question.

B-2934. Can you tell me whether it is not a fact that the Assam Labour Enquiry Committee themselves stated that they did not examine a single worker in Assam, believing in the testimony of their own eyes rather than the testimony of any witnesses, who could come before them to give evidence?—If they have stated so, I am prepared to accept it.

B-2935. Can you tell me whether it is true that the Indian Coal Committee never examined a single workmen's representative?—I do not know; I can only say by referring to the proceedings of that Committee.

B-2936. In your memorandum you say that the question of a compulsory scheme of maternity benefits is premature. Why do you say it is premature?—Such enquiries as have been made seem to show that a compulsory scheme which meant contributions from the workers would meet with very considerable opposition from the workers themselves.

B-2937. What do you mean by "compulsory"?—Compulsory and contributory.

B-2938. What is the opinion of the Government of India in regard to a scheme like the one which is introduced in Bombay?—It came up for the Governor General's approval and there was no objection raised at all.

B-2939. Could you tell me why it was that the Government of India opposed Mr. Joshi's Maternity Bill?—I will have to look up the speeches.

B-2940. Then I will leave that question. Could you tell me something about the correspondence that has passed between the Indian States and Lord Birkenhead when he was Secretary of State for India in regard to bringing the Indian States on to line with British India in the matter of factory legislation?—I am afraid I cannot give you any information on that.

B-2941. If it is not confidential, could you make the correspondence available to us?—I could not possibly undertake to produce it.

B-2942. Could you tell me who could produce it?—I will make enquiries as to whether I can produce it or not.

B-2943. Then one question about the Trade Disputes Act. Are you aware, when questions were put to you by Mr. Birla as to how you would get over the difficulty that has arisen at Golmuri, of a suggestion that was made while the Trade Disputes Bill was being discussed, that the right should be given to either party to demand a court of enquiry or a board of conciliation?—It may have been so.

B-2944. Are you aware that it was the Government who opposed that suggestion and insisted upon both parties coming with a joint demand?—I was not in the Department at that time and I cannot say.

B-2945. Would this have materially solved the difficulty that has arisen at Golmuri—an amendment of the Trade Disputes Act on those lines?—I cannot say, I should have to get the facts of the Golmuri case before I could express an opinion on that.

The Chairman: You are aware of the discussions which have been going on in England on this particular point—that it would really detract from the collective bargaining between parties if it were possible for one or other party to be always saying “Well, I will have recourse either to conciliation or arbitration”.

B-2946. *Colonel Russell:* I raised the question this morning of the collection of statistics by some organizations, such as the Industrial Health Research Board, and I would like you to refer to the Devolution Rule under Schedule I on page 202 of the Government of India Act. No. 33 says that the Central Government retains control over central agencies, institutions for research, etc., or for the promotion of special studies. It seems to me that under that section the Central Government has complete power to institute boards such as the Industrial and Health Research Board?—I understand you were referring almost entirely to industrial research. If I may refer you to Part 2 of Provincial Subjects, you will find “Development of industries, including industrial research and technical education”.

B-2947. But that is subject to Devolution Rule 33?—No. 33 is not a Devolution Rule. No. 33 is No. 33 in the list of Central subjects and No. 25 is No. 25 in the list of Provincial subjects.

B-2948. But under 26 it says. “Subject to legislation by the Indian Legislature”?—26, yes; but not No. 25.

B-2949. Under this section the Central Government has no power to form such a body as the Industrial Health Research Board although it says distinctly here “for the promotion of special studies”?—It would be a very difficult matter to know whether any single proposal of that kind would fall under No. 33, or under No. 25 of the Provincial subjects. You would have to explain what precise duties were going to be allotted to your Industrial Research Board.

B-2950. Similar duties to those carried out by the Industrial Research Board in England?—I am afraid I do not know what those are.

B-2951. *Mr. Clow:* Diwan Chaman Lal suggested that it might solve the difficulty present to his mind if any employee or group of employees could have a court of enquiry or a conciliation board on application. Do you not think that would give rise to an impossible position if Government were compelled to appoint a court for every group of employees who alleged a dispute with their employers?

Diwan Chaman Lall: It does not say "group"; it says "majority".

The Witness: I think we should have a great many courts of enquiry going on.

B-2952. *Mr. Clow*: As regards consultation with local Governments, has not your Department on many occasions expressly asked local Governments to consult the associations both of employees and employers?—That is always the rule. They always do ask local Governments to consult both sides.

B-2953. In practice, do you think the local Governments do what they can to consult both sides?—Judging by the letters and reports that we get there is always a strong attempt made. We get a large volume of labour opinion, and I know that in the local Government of Bombay there was a large list drawn up of unions and associations which had to be consulted on all matters relating to labour. I cannot say what the practice is in different Governments. I think if one looks at the replies which are received from Governments on any questions which have been referred to them, one will find that there are a great many replies coming from labour associations.

B-2954. What is the ordinary procedure in labour legislation? After a start has been made by a suggestion in the Assembly or on the initiative of the Department, what happens then?—We examine it, and consider whether we can put before a local Government certain general principles, on which we ask for their criticisms. When we get their replies we go on to a further detailed consideration in order to see whether we can draw up a Bill or not at that stage. It is possible that we may be in a position to draw up a Bill at that stage and introduce it. On the other hand it is quite possible that we may bring in certain details which are mentioned by one Government and which have apparently not come to the consideration of other Governments. This may mean administrative measures, or it may mean matters of finance. If we are going to adopt those, and they mean any expenditure or any difficulties in administration, it is quite obvious that we must get the opinions of local Governments generally on those points before we proceed to the definite drafting of a detail Bill. In some of these respects local Governments have at times been rather critical of our action in proceeding with legislation, or in proceeding with the drafting of Bills or proposals which subject them to financial expenditure or to difficulties in administration, when they have not been consulted before hand. Once we have got to the stage of introducing a Bill into the House, it is not possible definitely to say whether we shall always move for circulation or go on. It will depend on what has happened up to that date as to whether we move for circulation. It very often happens that the House itself prefers that the Bill should be circulated, and we may have to yield to that. It is not possible to say definitely whether Government will, as a general rule, move to proceed to the first, second and third readings, or to a reference to a Select Committee, or will agree to a motion for circulation. It will depend on what the developments up to that stage have been and whether we consider the Bill, as drafted, is sufficiently well known to local Governments and that we have been fully apprised of their opinions to permit us to go on without further consultation.

B-2955. It is possible for the Government of India to legislate in respect of all provincial subjects—for the Province of Delhi, for example?—Yes.

B-2956. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: Several questions have been put in regard to the Trade Disputes Bill. That is a piece of central legislation relative to Provincial subjects. Is it the position of the Government of India that once the Trade Disputes Act is passed it will be administered by Provincial Governments and that they will have nothing to do with it thereafter?—Where the Legislative Assembly has definitely put a duty upon the local Government, and upon the local Government alone, that duty can be performed only by the local Government.

B-2957. My question is the operation of that central legislation, the Trade Disputes Act being in charge of local Governments. Is it your pos-

ion that once that piece of legislation has passed through the central legislature the Government of India has nothing further to do with it?—No.

B-2958. Then what is your position? Would you interest yourself further in it?—We might.

B-2959. Would you consider that you have a right to interfere, or interest yourself, in the manner in which that Act was being worked?—Yes.

B-2960. Take the case of the Bombay strike. You know that the Government of Bombay appointed a Committee of Enquiry. That Committee made a report and, apart from the relations between the work-people and the employers, certain aspects have been brought to the notice of the Government of Bombay as the result of that enquiry. The report was submitted several months ago. The public are not aware of any action having been taken by the Government of Bombay in connection with that Report. Would it be one of the duties and functions of central Government to ask the Provincial Government why they have taken no action with regard to it?—We could do it, but I do not know that you could call it one of our functions.

B-2961. You have the power to do so? Interpellations in the Legislative Assembly would be relevant on the subject?—I am not quite sure about that, because the rule runs "Matters which are primarily the concern of the Local Government."

B-2962. But this is an Act passed by the central Government and the central Legislature?—Labour disputes are primarily the concern of the local Government."

B-2963. That is to say, then, that there is no authority which could influence the Government of India to interest themselves?—I do not definitely say no, for the simple reason that if a question of this kind is put it has to be decided whether it does relate to a matter which is primarily the concern of the Governor General in Council.

B-2964. *The Chairman*: The President would have to decide that point in the Assembly?—Yes.

B-2965. *Sir Ibrahim Itahimtoola*: Apart from that, can you suggest any way by which any representative member of the public can bring the matter officially to the notice of the Government of India?—I do not like to give an opinion definitely one way or the other. It would depend on each particular question. I do not think I can commit myself to a general statement. Some of the questions might well be within the limits, and other questions might well be ruled out.

B-2966. In your memorandum about recruitment at the mill-gate it is stated "The employer does not recruit himself the men required for his establishment, but holds the overseer, jobber or mukadam responsible for the adequate supply of labour in the department. The latter takes the place of the contractor, and exacts bribes from the new recruits. He also acts as a money-lender and thereby reaps a double harvest from the needy labourer. It would appear therefore that education and organization are the only means by which the Indian workers can escape from the clutches of intermediaries who, like harpies, are ever ready to prey on them". That is a very fine sentiment, but I should like to ask whether it is not the actual financial condition and needs of the people wanting employment which lends itself to this state of things. I will put it in another way. You say that this man is acting as a contractor and is also acting as money-lender. Could it be, as we have been told in other places, that this man gets labour by advancing money to the labourers, and thus gets complete control over the earnings of those labourers?—That sometimes happens, I understand.

B-2967. Only sometimes? We are told it is frequently the case. If that is so, how could education and organization cure that evil, arising as it does out of the immediate want of the man seeking employment?—I think, quite easily. It would be the normal way.

B-2968. Will you explain what you mean by education? Perhaps it will take a long time. What form of "organization" did you contemplate when you used that word?—Organization of unions.

B-2969. Do you mean a union of men who have not been in any employment till then?—Any union.

B-2970. Unions of people who have had no employment whatsoever?—No, I did not mean that at all.

B-2971. To my mind this is a very serious problem which this Commission has to investigate. Large number of people do not find sufficient means of livelihood through agriculture in their villages. They are anxious to engage themselves to do hard work elsewhere. They cannot do it because of these middlemen. Their want is so great that they cannot wait. They go and borrow money from these middlemen. Thereafter they are completely at their mercy.—I think unions or friendly societies could solve this problem.

B-2972. *The Chairman*: I suggested to you a labour officer engaging labour for a firm and responsible only to the head of the firm?—I have heard that that is working in one or two places.

Sir Victor Sassoon: Are we now dealing with labour employed in towns? I thought we were dealing with labour in up-country parts.

Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola: I am dealing with people driven by want to industrial towns.

Sir Victor Sassoon: Are you talking of them before they arrive and get employed in industrial towns?

Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola: They arrive and seek employment. But before they get employment they fall into the clutches of these middlemen. I do not refer to people who go out to the village to recruit.

The Chairman: That is undoubtedly one of the most important points? I think the sentence is perfectly clear.

B-2973. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola*: What has been done with this important question of unemployment after the following resolution was passed by the Legislative Assembly:

“ This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to appoint a Committee with a non-official majority to investigate into the problem of unemployment in general, and among the educated classes in particular, and devise suitable remedies, whether by a system of industrial and technical education, or by a revision of the existing system of education, or by offering encouragement to the starting of new industries, or by opening new avenues of employment, or by the establishment of employment bureaux, or by all these or any other means; and that the said Committee do make a report on the latter problem as early as possible.”

Why did not the Government accept the resolution and give effect to it?—It was because Government thought that no useful purpose would be served by appointing a committee. Moreover what was required was an All-India Committee; and if we took any such action we should be trenching on the domain of the provinces.

B-2974. Have the Government of India given any consideration to this problem?—Yes, they have.

B-2975. Have they examined the various suggestions contained in the resolution in order to find an effective remedy for this evil? Have they come to any definite or tentative conclusions in regard to each one of these suggestions?—I have said already that if we appointed an All-India Committee we should be trenching on provincial subjects.

B-2976. But has the Labour Department of the Government of India which admits the existence of the evil, examined the suggestions contained in the resolution; has it come to any definite or tentative conclusion on each one of those suggestions?—We have referred the matter to local Governments, who themselves have appointed committees.

B-2977. Only in one case?—No.

B-2978. Do I take it that the net result is that nothing is done?—It is best to ask local Governments. We sent the matter down to the local Governments as the matter lay within their province. Four Provincial Governments have appointed Committees, and if the Commission wants to know what has been done, it would be best to ask local Governments themselves.

B-2979. And the Government of India does not know whether anything has been done?—We know that some of the recommendations have been followed by local Governments. But as this is a matter more or less concerning the conduct of local Governments, I think it would be better to get an account of their proceedings from the local Governments themselves.

B-2979. *The Chairman:* Mr. Rouse, Has your department any reasons against direct employment of labour without the intermediary contractor? Has it ever been considered?—There is nothing against it in the codes. We can employ labour direct, but it is a matter of practice to give the work on contract. It is a very difficult matter and would require a large amount of experienced staff to employ labour direct. We tried direct labour in building the Western Hostel in Delhi, the reason being that we thought that the contractor's rates were extremely high. It was my predecessor who tried that. And from the point of view of expense the results were disastrous.

B-2980. Was this the reason: that apart from the contractors, there was a scarcity of men with experience in handling this kind of labour?—The contractors have men under them who are accustomed to do this work, but the Government have not.

B-2981. Is the Western Hostel the only experiment which has been made?—That is the only large one. Besides that we do occasionally employ direct labour on small works. We have a considerable amount of permanent labour engaged on maintenance.

B-2982. Is that direct?—Yes, that is direct.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Dr. RUTH YOUNG of the Countess of Dufferin's Fund.

B-2983. *The Chairman*: Dr. Young, you speak in connection with the Countess of Dufferin's Fund?—Yes.

B-2984. Exactly which office do you hold?—I am personal assistant to the Secretary.

B-2985. Will you in the first instance give us a little history of the fund and its purpose?—The Fund was founded by the Countess of Dufferin when Lord Dufferin was Viceroy. She wanted to see more medical aid given to women in India by medical women. At that time there were very few medical women in India. She raised a fund for that purpose, the income from which is still used in our office. After a few years there was a good deal of dissatisfaction in connection with the working of the Fund, because medical women thought that their status was not sufficiently good and high. After that some medical women wanted a service to be founded and run by the Central Government. But that was not conceded and the Government now gives a grant of Rs. 3½ lakhs to be administered by the Countess of Dufferin's Fund Council, instead of running it themselves. In addition, in our office there are two other funds which were founded by successive Viceroys' wives; one, the Lady Chelmsford League, founded by Lady Chelmsford to look after child welfare work, and the other founded by Lady Curzon for promoting the work of training indigenous midwives—*dais*—in India. The Office where I am working administers all these funds.

B-2986. *The Chairman*: Are all these All-India funds?—Yes, they are.

B-2987. Administered from what centre?—From Delhi and Simla.

B-2988. *Col. Russell*: In her memorandum, dealing with infant mortality, Dr. Scott says that "the figures for infant mortality in industrial areas compare unfavourably with those in other towns and in rural areas." Thereby implying that the death rate is higher among industrial workers than among the general population? Is it not a fact that infant mortality is very high throughout the whole of India? Have you any information to support the implication of Dr. Scott?—We can only go on the figures published in the annual reports.

B-2989. In the annual reports there is no differentiation made between infant mortality amongst industrial workers and among the general population?—I admit that. But the inference is that as infant mortality in industrial towns is very high, the cause is industry. However I am afraid I cannot make a definite statement about it. And that is the very reason we give for an enquiry into the question of infant mortality.

B-2990. Dr. Scott rather makes an implication that there is higher death rate amongst children of industrial workers than among the general population?—Yes.

B-3000. Have you any figures to support that view?—Only the figures that we get for urban areas as compared with the figures for rural areas.

B-3001. Dr. Scott says: "Investigation on this point is urgently required." What kind of investigation do you desire?—I would like to see investigation in selected places, both rural and urban, undertaken by medical women with people like nurses and health visitors working under them for a definite period of time. That would at any rate give us some facts to go on.

B-3002. You consider that such an investigation is "a *sine qua non* for the formation of proper child welfare schemes." Surely, it is already universally admitted that proper child welfare schemes are essential. Do you mean to suggest that until such an investigation is carried out, child welfare schemes should not be properly developed?—I do not suggest that. If I did, I would not be working where I am, I am at present working at the development of child welfare schemes. What is meant there is that until we know what are the real causes of infant mortality, we cannot tackle them in the proper way.

B-3003. With regard to unregistered births referred to in your memorandum do you think that sanitary inspectors would be able to investigate and register them?—Yes, I think they would, to a certain extent; but I think women workers would be able to do it more effectively in North India.

B-3004. How could health visitors check the causes of death?—I have guarded myself by saying, “to a certain extent”; because I quite admit that they would not be able to pronounce what the actual cause of death was. At any rate they would get a better idea than either the parent or the sweepress of the House who at present reports the death.

B-3005. In her memorandum Dr. Scott says that there are no women medical officers employed in the Public Health Department. Do you think that such women are available in India?—I do not think they are available in large numbers at present. I think, if the demand is made for their services, they would become available.

B-3006. Where would they come from?—I think they would come from both Great Britain and from India.

B-3007. Should they be wholly Indian?—Not necessarily.

B-3008. Do you not think that Indian women will be more kindly received among the women workers than English ladies?—It depends on the previous experience and the gifts of the European woman. The fact that we are working shows that that is possible.

B-3009. In what directions would you use their services in public health?—Their services could be used for developing child welfare work, controlling maternity services and if possible for helping women industrial workers.

B-3010. In her memorandum she says: “These suggestions, which could well form the basis of schemes at the present day, have hardly been acted upon and no first class medical women have been asked for, for this work.” What does Dr. Scott mean by “first class medical women”?—I think she means, women belonging to the cadre of the Women’s Medical Service.

B-3011. Are there any second class medical women?—No, we have only one cadre, no second cadre.

B-3012. I presume Dr. Scott suggests that some second class medical women are working in this field?—Medical women are working in some industrial areas in Bombay and Nagpur.

B-3013. But they are not first class?—They may have excellent qualifications, but they do not belong to the Women’s Medical Service.

B-3014. Dr. Scott suggests that crèches should be increased. Have you any experience in working crèches?—I am sorry, that is not the intention. I disapprove of crèches.

B-3015. The Commission has been more than once told that these crèches have proved unsatisfactory?—I wholly agree with that view. The intention of the paragraph in the memorandum is simply to show that some provision is made, not that we approve of the provision.

B-3016. *The Chairman*: In what respect do you consider a crèche undesirable?—It is undesirable, because it means getting labour cheap on the part of the employers.

B-3017. Would you prefer the exclusion of married women?—The married women with children.

B-3018. Assuming the continuance of married women with children in these works, do you think that the crèche is worse than taking the child into the actual factory?—Perhaps not. But I can assure you that I do not think that leaving children under a tree in the fresh air is any worse than taking them into a crèche.

B-3019. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: But you do not get fresh air under trees in Bombay?—No, I was thinking of a place like this.

B-3020. *Col. Russell*: But the babies should be looked after by some women who have got certain qualifications for looking after children?—I do not think many of them are very well run.

B-3021. I quite agree. But that is no reason why they should not be well run?—I do not believe in the principle of crèches. These women ought to be looking after their own children.

B-3022. It is stated in the memorandum that difficulty has been experienced in securing suitable medical women. Would not the same difficulty arise in the case of health visitors as in the case of medical women?—It arose in the case of health visitors, certainly.

B-3023. Can you tell us why?—The reason is this: there are very few women available to take up professional work of any kind. Of those that do take up and reach the matriculation stage, the majority prefer to enter the medical profession or the teaching profession; because they consider that these are more honourable occupations and also more profitable financially.

B-3024. Would you not anticipate the same difficulty with regard to recruitment of medical women?—No.

B-3025. I have been told that in the Punjab there has been difficulty both in recruiting medical women and recruiting public health visitors.—I think the number of medical women is increasing faster than the number of health visitors.

B-3026. In her memorandum Dr. Scott speaks of "a complete scheme of medical women with health visitors and midwives working under their control ..." and so on. Does she suggest that these medical women should form a separate unit independent of the Public Health Department or should they be working under the man at the head of the Medical cadre?—They would form part of the present Public Health Department. I do not think you can have two heads in the province.

B-3027. Can you explain what Dr. Scott means when she says in her memorandum that "the earning power of all professional women in India is greater than that of men, so that their work is relatively expensive"?—Because it is a fact. If you enquire into the salaries, you will find that the salary of a B.A., B.T. woman teacher is higher than that of a B.A., B.T. man teacher.

B-3028. What about medical women?—In the case of sub-assistant surgeons, on the whole their earnings are more than those of men.

B-3029. Even according to your argument you would find more difficulty in recruiting women sub-assistant surgeons for extension of public health work than recruiting men sub-assistant surgeons.—Yes.

B-3030. That is because they would be able to make a larger income out of private practice?—Yes, they are able to make more.

B-3031. *The Chairman*: In their case the demand exceeds the supply.—Yes, it is so in the case of medical women.

B-3032. *Col. Russell*: With regard to the sex ratio in industrial areas, the number of women per 1,000 males in Calcutta and Suburbs is 500, Bombay 524 and in Delhi 672. Do you agree with the importance attached to this question in the Government of India's memorandum?—Yes, I would.

B-3033. Have you any actual experience of the evils alleged to be associated with disparity in the numbers of the sexes in industrial areas?—I have no personal experience because I have not worked in Calcutta or Bombay.

B-3034. Dr. Scott says that if the sex ratio were made more level no one can doubt that both these factors would help to stabilize labour. Have you got anything more to say in support of that statement?—I think it is a statement supported by common-sense.

B-3035. Is there a larger amount of venereal disease amongst female industrial workers than among the general female population?—I cannot quote any figures to support that.

B-3036. What is your impression?—My impression is that it is greater

B-3037. There are no actual figures to support it?—No.

B-3038. Because these figures which are mentioned so often would be a direct proof of irregular family life?—Yes.

B-3039. But you still maintain that these evils do exist?—It is a general notion that the amount of venereal disease in places like Calcutta and Bombay is larger than in rural areas.

B-3040. And you would support the statement that that increase of venereal disease was due to the disparity in sex ratio?—Yes, I would.

B-3041. What importance do you attach to maternity benefit schemes? Are such schemes so important as to be dealt with by the Central Government or by the provinces and/or by the employers? Which would you prefer?—As a general principle one would prefer it to be done by legislation but I think it would be administratively very difficult for the Central Government to undertake legislation on this question.

B-3042. You prefer it to be done by the provinces?—I think that would be more feasible.

B-3043. This question has been raised before the Commission already. Do you think if maternity benefit schemes were introduced they would lead to the discharge by employers of women workers and their replacement by boys for instance?—I think that is a thing that could only be proved by working the schemes; I think it is a possible result.

B-3044. Do you think that would be a natural attitude taken up by the employers?—Yes, I do.

B-3045. Would it be of advantage to appoint women factory inspectors? By that I mean both medical and lay inspectors, especially as you say that women take very little advantage of the provisions made by mill and factory authorities for medical health?—Yes, it would.

B-3046. If you were increasing the staff of factory inspectors, would you appoint female inspectors?—Yes.

B-3047. Can you tell us anything of the conditions of women workers in unregulated workshops?—I know very little about it personally.

B-3048. Does the health level, that is the physique and general appearance, of the female industrial worker, in your experience, indicate that the average wage is sufficient to maintain the worker in health and efficiency?—That is a very complicated question because it is bound up with the question of family wage, not merely individual wage.

B-3049. Arising out of your answer, "Wise dieting is not necessarily more expensive than unwise dieting",—it should be possible to secure a balanced diet at a price not larger than is paid for an unbalanced diet?—I doubt it.

B-3050. You will be surprised to hear that that is a quotation from a paper read by Mr. McCarrison three days ago?—I bow to his authority.

B-3051. *Miss Power*: In 1921 the Government of India drew the attention of the local Governments to the desirability of appointing a medical woman as factory inspector. Does your Association think it wise that the functions of a factory inspector and those of a medical officer should be combined, or do they feel that the work of medical attendance and that of industrial inspection are entirely separate and require a different type of training?—I do not think they have made any pronouncement on this subject, but I myself feel that they require different training.

B-3052. You do not feel that the appointment of medical women to the factory inspection service disposes of the question of industrial inspection as regards women and children?—I should not think so. At any rate if they were to be used in that way they would need to have some special training.

B-3053. You said in answer to Col. Russell that if the demand were made, suitable women would be forthcoming for new branches of medical and social work. We are sometimes told, in both written and spoken evidence, that it is doubtful if women would be able to cope with such work as that of factory inspection. Is it your opinion that such women would be forthcoming if the

demand were made for suitable women for both types, that is, women industrial inspectors and women medical officers in the industrial field?—Yes, I think that they would be forthcoming; I do not say there would be a rush into these professions in a year or two years, but I think that there would be a steady increase in the number if the posts were opened.

B-3054. Would you suggest that if a demand was made for women in this work it should be an Indian Women service?—Do you mean a service of Indian women only?

B-3055. Yes—Not necessarily.

B-3056. You would have both European and Indian?—Yes.

B-3057. You were asked a question in connection with unregulated workshops. We have come up several times against the question of the child who is rejected by the certifying surgeon as medically unfit for factory labour. Under present conditions there is nothing to prevent that child from going into the worst types of industrial employment in unregulated workshops or on construction work and so on?—Yes.

B-3058. Has your Association any views as to the necessity for bringing such places under industrial regulation?—It has not any formulated views that have appeared in print, but it would certainly support the demand for regulating them.

B-3059. We are also told very frequently in both written and spoken evidence that women industrial workers are less ready to avail themselves of the medical facilities provided than in the case of men. Is it the experience of your Association that this is entirely a question as to whether these facilities are available to women through the medium of men or women doctors?—I think almost entirely.

B-3060. Do you think that were these facilities available through women doctors they would be used by the women as extensively as they are in the case of men?—At any rate they would be used as extensively as they are used by women in an ordinary town where there is a Women's hospital, and that I suppose is almost as much as men in an ordinary town.

B-3061. Col. Russell was asking you about the sex ratio. Has your Association had any views as to how far this disturbance is due to the recruitment of the industrial worker from agricultural sources and how far it is due to the conditions under which the worker when recruited is obliged to live, making it impossible for him to settle down into a stabilized industrial unit?—I should say certainly the latter because other things being equal there is no reason why women should not want to come if the housing conditions and so on were suitable.

B-3062. You think if the social conditions of the worker when he first comes to the town to seek industrial work were better, he would bring his family with him and settle down and become a permanent industrial unit?—They would certainly bring them in much larger proportion than they do at present.

B-3063. *Mrs. Chatterjee*: You say that medical women in India have repeatedly pressed for an inquiry into the causes of infantile mortality. What are the reasons which have delayed the holding of such an inquiry?—Lack of money. No grant has ever been made towards it. When the request was first made—I think it was in 1919—it was for quite a modest sum—a few thousand rupees—and it was rejected by the then Education Member who was reported to have said that it did not matter if a few more children died.

B-3064. Then I understand also that you are opposed to a woman who has a baby working. Do you know what the average wage of an unskilled labourer in industry is? Take for instance Delhi: Are you aware that the average wage of an unskilled labourer is As. 10?—Yes.

B-3065. What do you think is more essential, that the baby should be looked after or that they should be sufficiently fed?—I made the statement

that women should look after the babies as a matter of principle. I did not then enter into the question whether the man was getting a living wage or not, but I do feel that in industrial areas the fact that women go to work makes it possible for the employers to pay lower wages and the man has no chance of earning a wage which would support the whole family. It is not that I think women do not need to work; I know that they do need to work and I admit that it must ordinarily be more necessary for them to work than stay at home and look after the child; but as a general principle I think it is wrong.

B-3066. But taking things as they exist to-day, do you not think that crèches are necessary?—Yes, they may be but I always object to this sort of thing which is a kind of red herring making people think that children are being looked after very nicely and everything is very nice and indefinitely postponing the proper state of affairs.

B-3067. *The Chairman:* I think you have experience of Indian life, both in villages and in industrial areas?—When I first came to India I worked in a town in the Punjab having about 50,000 inhabitants and I visited villages from there in connection with medical work. Then I have been in Delhi since; I have visited industrial areas in connection with medical work.

B-3068. Then you have some experience of what is called the migratory labourer, that is to say, the labourer who preserves his attachment to his village and his land; he comes into the city to work for certain periods, returning at harvest time and so on?—I know about it, but I have not had much personal experience of it.

B-3069. Taking that system as it exists on the one hand and the other system of a permanently settled industrial labour living round the factory, do you consider that the Indian system has virtues which would commend its maintenance, or would you prefer to see the factory labourer separated from the land?—I do not feel I am quite in a position to answer. From the point of view of the capitalists I suppose they would prefer the labourer to be always there.

B-3070. But I am not looking at it from that point of view; I am looking at it from the point of view of the nation?—I do not feel I have a right to give an opinion.

B-3071. But supposing the custom persists you would think that anything that could be done to stabilize in the sense of helping and directing the flow of labour and making it acquire skill by repeated returns to the same place of work would be an addition to the national efficiency?—Yes, certainly.

B-3072. And that in itself would assist schemes of welfare work because the ebb and flow instead of being haphazard would at least have some guidance and some motive for stabilization?—Yes, I think that is the case.

B-3073. *Mr. Cliff:* I see that the Government of India when faced with the Draft Convention for sickness insurance made enquiries of local Governments and other bodies. Can you tell me whether they made an inquiry of your Association in respect of sickness insurance in 1927?—No; I am sure they did not.

B-3074. In 1919 the Draft Convention for maternity benefits was before them and they made similar enquiries?—Enquiries were made then.

B-3075. Did you put in a report then?—I do not know if we went to the length of a formal report, but there were conversations of which we have got files and reports in our office.

B-3076. I was just concerned to see whether the Government really enquire of Associations like yours in connection with sickness schemes, health and so on?—They certainly did about maternity benefit I know, but I am practically certain that they did not about sickness benefits.

B-3077. Have you had any close personal observation of the diet of women and children?—Yes, fairly close.

B-3078. Can you tell the Commission whether it is a satisfactory diet from a physiological point of view as our Medical Assessor puts it?—You mean the labour classes?

I am speaking at the moment of the industrial population?—No, I think it is very unsatisfactory on the whole.

B-3079. Is it insufficient?—It is probably not so much a case of insufficiency as of wrong balance as Col. Russell says.

Colonel Russell Now you admit what you did not admit before.

B-3080. *Mr. Cliff*: In your view it is not insufficiency but a wrong balance?—Yes. I do not mean to contradict Col. Russell, but if you correct the balance you do not necessarily get the same amount of things for the same price because a diet like milk is much more expensive than, say, rice.

B-3081. In your opinion is it necessary for women and children to have milk?—Yes, at any rate for children.

B-3082. I am told that on the wages they earn they cannot buy milk even if it were available?—No, they cannot.

B-3083. Then is their diet insufficient?—Children's diet certainly is.

B-3084. The question is. Is the woman's diet insufficient?—I think the woman's diet is often insufficient too. I think milk is the lacking factor.

B-3085. Is the diet sufficiently varied to be appetizing?—It would not be appetizing to us.

B-3086. I mean to the Indian women and children. I have looked at it and wondered, and I am asking your opinion?—It can be quite appetizing if it is properly cooked. But if it is *roti*, that is, bread made of unleavened flour, with a little *dal* or perhaps not even that, I do not think it is very appetizing; but of course hunger makes them eat it.

B-3087. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Could you say whether the diet of the woman industrial worker in Delhi differs largely from that of the woman worker in rural districts?—I do not think that it differs a great deal, but in the rural districts the women have a chance of getting a certain amount of green stuff which is not easy to get in the towns.

B-3088. Would the women in the rural districts get better diet from the point of view of quantity than she would in Delhi?—No, I do not think she will get more in quantity, but probably she will get a better quality.

B-3089. It is really a question of difference in their diet. They differ in that in the rural districts they would get more green food?—They have more chance of getting green food because at certain times of the year they can eat unripe gram and sugarcane.

B-3090. *Mr. Clow*: And there is more chance of getting milk?—Yes, because they can keep cows, goats or buffaloes.

B-3091. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Would you say from your observation that the women in rural districts looked healthier than in industrial districts?—I think that requires investigation also.

B-3092. I am not asking you to say anything that you do not know yourself. From your personal experience you can speak because you have visited villages?—The women mill workers in Delhi, I do not think, are specially unhealthy, but I have never compared them scientifically with the women in villages.

B-3093. Without comparing them scientifically; what is your general impression? From looking at them would you say that the women here are better off than in the rural areas?—Not better off.

B-3094. About the same?—Yes.

B-3095. You would not say that those in the rural districts obviously looked a great deal healthier and of better physique than the women here?—I

think the Punjabee woman would be, but I do not think the ones near Delhi are I am trying to compare the woman industrial worker with the rural worker.

B-3096. *Mr. Cliff*: Would you compare the area of 50,000 inhabitants in the Punjab where you worked with the villages to which you went?—I think the Punjab women of the villages are better physically than the town-dwellers. But the country surrounding Delhi is very poverty stricken; it is a very poor area.

B-3097. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: It really comes to this: in the Punjab you find that women in the rural districts are better than in the district of 50,000 inhabitants in which you were working?—I think so.

B-3098. You would not consider that the women in the rural districts round Delhi were better off than the women engaged in industrial pursuits in Delhi?—No.

(The witness withdrew and the Commission adjourned.)

DELHI
THIRTEENTH MEETING
Thursday, 7th November, 1929.

PRESENT :

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

<p>The Rt. Hon. V.S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P.C.</p> <p>Sir VICTOR SASSOON, BART.</p> <p>Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt., K.C.S.I., C.I.E.</p> <p>Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.</p> <p>Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.</p>	<p>Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.</p> <p>Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A.</p> <p>Mr. JOHN CLIFF.</p> <p>Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.</p> <p>DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.</p> <p>MISS B. M. LE POER POWER.</p>
<p>Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. (<i>Medical Assessor</i>).</p> <p>Mrs. J. C. CHATTERJEE (<i>Lady Assessor</i>).</p> <p>Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S. }</p> <p>Mr. A. DIBDIN. } (<i>Joint Secretaries</i>.)</p>	

**Lt. GENERAL Sir EDWIN H. de V. ATKINSON, K.C.B., K.B.E.,
C.M.G., C.I.E., Master-General of the Ordnance in India.**

B-3099. *The Chairman*: Will you tell us, in the first place, the position you hold, how long you have held it and what Departments are under your control?—Previous to holding my present appointment I was 3 years Engineer-in-Chief of the Military Engineer Services. Before the war I was Principal of the Thomason Engineering College for 12 years. In that appointment I had a great deal to do with the training of Indians in the engineering line, and a great deal to do with labour in various ways. Six years ago there were three principal Staff Officers to the Commander-in-Chief: the Chief of the General Staff, the Quartermaster General and the Adjutant General. It was found that certain services, such as the ordnance, were inadequately represented to the Commander-in-Chief, and it was decided to create a fourth principal Staff Officer. He was called the Master General of Supply; he corresponds to the fourth principal Staff Officer in England who is called the Master General of Ordnance. My duties as Master General of Supply were to take over the purchase, manufacture and provision of everything for the Army from ghee to 6-ins. guns; that includes clothing, saddlery, harness and everything the army uses. For this purpose we have 9 Factories in India, as we have not got general manufacturers running in India in the same way, as you are well aware, as they have in the United Kingdom. We manufacture everything we possibly can in India. My principle has been that we will manufacture in our own factories nothing that can be got otherwise from Indian sources of supply, but these articles must of course, be up to our standard. Further, I made it one of my guiding principles that we should endeavour to foster Indian industries whenever we could, not only from the point of view of the Government of India or the good of India, but from the point of view of the Army, because in the event of war the less we have to bring overseas and the more we can get from indigenous supplies in this country, the more efficient and self-supporting will the Army in India be. After

holding my post for four years, I was given an extension of two years, and that extension is now coming to an end. In the meantime, two years ago, the home authorities began considering the re-allocation of duties between the various staff officers. I may tell you that as far as possible we try in India to follow the home organization, because in the event of having to fight side by side, it makes very much for efficiency if we are organized on the same lines. The home authorities finally decided to transfer the whole of the ordnance services as to retail supply, or what we call the Services of the Director of Ordnance, who is in charge of arsenals, from the Quartermaster General to the Master General of Ordnance at home. We undertook to follow the home organization as far as local conditions would allow, and last June the orders came out to make the change and so last June I took over the arsenals. The Quartermaster General up to that time had made what was called "provision"; that is to say, he calculated from the stocks he held in arsenals and from the wants of the troops, what quantities of various articles he required. I had to provide the goods at "Priced Vocabulary" rates, I handed them over to the Quartermaster General and he stored them in his arsenals and issued them to troops. I now carry out these duties.

In the factories which I have controlled for 6 years I have apprenticeship schemes, welfare schemes, labour bureaux, trade testing, co-operative stores, co-operative societies and so on. The arsenals have few of these schemes, but I would advocate introducing them by degrees when I think they will increase efficiency and welfare. You must also remember that in the factories I deal with a large number of skilled workmen. The arsenals deal chiefly with unskilled workmen; except in their repair shops which require skilled workmen.

B-3100. We have had submitted to us five statements, but we have no consolidated memorandum from you with regard to the points with which we are concerned, that is to say, industrial labour under your control. Would it be possible for you to give us a consolidated memorandum covering the whole of the work that is under your control so far as it is relevant to our enquiry?—Certainly, if you will tell me the lines on which you want information. I have seen some of the statements submitted; they are very detailed and technical, and the conditions vary in different places very much.

B-3101. *Sir Alexander Murray*: I think the General might expedite the delivery of these other statements to us and in addition give some remarks on the whole of them giving reasons for the differences.—The Calcutta statements were to be sent to you on some future date when you will be approaching Calcutta. The difficulty for me will be to consolidate all these statements in time. Two or three years ago I got out what I called a note on vocational training in the ordnance factories, which dealt with all my suggestions. It is not so much for workmen as for my different forms of apprenticeship and education. It shows how I was training Indians to hold the various posts of chargemen, foremen, assistant works manager and so on, and my proposals for sending people to England. It gives my own ideas of how it ought to be done.

B-3102. *The Chairman*: That would be useful. Have you anything similar which sums up your experience with regard to joint councils?—Joint councils have practically been started this year. I could give you our experience so far. It has taken some time to form the Whitley councils; but they are formed for my factories. We have a main Whitley council for all the factories and a subsidiary council for each factory. These latter refer their questions to the main council, not for decision, but for putting them forward in the manner they wish. I could give you the details as to how our Whitley councils are formed and what work they have done up to date.

B-3103. That also would be most interesting to us. I do not see that we have so far any statement of the total number of workmen employed under

your direction.—I do not think you have. I have no idea myself. It is very big. I could give you details.

B-3104. *The Chairman* : I suggest that it would be of great value to us to have a memorandum giving a consolidated view of all the factories and arsenals under your control as obviously you yourself have been taking great interest in the kind of questions with which we are concerned. Though some of your methods may be new and not have had long trial, they are none the less valuable to us as an indication of what you have thought possible in the direction of improved organization and improved consultation with the workers under your control.

Would you wish to say anything more at this stage?—Yes, I should. I have had a workmen's union in my cordite factory at Aruvankadu, 8 miles from Ootacamund on the Nilgiris. About three or four years ago they formed a workmen's council. There was no method of recognizing them at that time; they are recognized now. As a matter of fact I told them: "You cannot be recognized at present. I do not like your having a European agitator in your councils, but I shall be very pleased to see you all the same and I would be glad to meet you informally." I met them several times before they were recognized, and far from being annoying or detrimental they were of great help to me. They produced several good ideas which I got through for them and which I had not thought of. There were other minor details. For instance, the Assistant Medical Surgeon only looked after the workmen who were living within a mile of the factory. Some of them lived three or four miles away and they had some difficulty in getting medical assistance. I had to get Government to agree to an additional allowance to the Assistant Surgeon, because he would not go more than a mile on his present allowance. There were little things like that, but very useful.

Then I have a European Foremen's Association. My European foremen have practically all to come from England at present; because my work is of such a technical nature in the way of production of lethal weapons, ammunition and so on, that there are no Indians who could possibly have had a chance of being trained to occupy the position of foremen. As a really first class foreman makes all the difference they have practically all come out from home. I have experienced some difficulty in that direction. We have done a great deal for them. We have got them educational allowances for their children and other things. I have also an All-India Clerks' Association. I have been trying to help them with regard to their grievances, but the file has now reached its fourth year and is very voluminous. They have a genuine grievance, but it is very difficult to put it right owing to departmental delays and "All-India repercussions".

When you go to Calcutta, I hope you will go to Ishapur. There I have two factories, a rifle factory and a metal and steel factory. The rifle factory is my best factory as regards workmanship. You will see some of the best Indian skilled workers there. You will also see all that we have done with regard to housing accommodation and welfare schemes. In every factory we have our boy apprentices, who are as a rule children of our workmen. They work so many hours in the factory and so many hours in the school. We have a school for quite small children. We have an ordinary school for children and boy apprentices and a technical school to fill up the gap in between the time they can go into factories. We have night classes for the workmen. We have a Labour Bureau and a Co-operative Stores; we have a co-operative society which in addition to acting as a co-operative society, pays family allowances to men's families in the villages if they wish it to be done, so that there shall be no trouble over the post office and that sort of thing.

B-3105. *The Chairman* : How many men are there at Ishapur?—I should say about 5,000 in the two factories, the rifle factory and the metal factory. You will see everything on the spot.

B-3106. *Divan Chaman Lall*: Was the Cordite Workers' Association in the cordite factory at one time affiliated to the Trade Union Congress?—I think it was.

B-3107. Why did Government call upon them to disaffiliate from the Trade Union Congress?—I should like to do what they do in Parliament when such questions are put: I want notice of this question. My rough idea is that it was because they had outsiders in their Union. There is a rule with regard to these trade unions that they must all be Government employes.

B-3108. *Mr. Clow*: I do not think that that is a general rule in Government departments.—At any rate that has nothing to do with me if the union was not recognized. It disappears from my ken and goes to the Home Department.

B-3109. *Divan Chaman Lall*. You have kindly offered to furnish us some information. Would you kindly keep this in view also?—Yes, I will.

B-3110. *Sir Alexander Murray*: In that statement will you tell us what happened to the Kirkee union?—That actually happened before I took over; the arsenal was not under me at that time. I understand that on the introduction of trade tests, certain propagandists some of whom were Europeans, worked up this case, got the men to strike on this point and formed a union.

B-3111. They objected to trade tests?—Yes, just to make trouble. There was no real trouble among the men; they did not really want to strike and they all came back again. I had the same thing at Shajahanpur in the clothing factory. All my tailors were worked up, probably by the gangers, because I was introducing piece work rates and wished to get rid of gangers for the good of the workmen. I said; "If you will only try piece work rates you will find that it means a great deal more money." However they went on strike. About a section of them remained in. The gates were closed and they were told that if anybody liked to come back they could do so. In ten days they all came back, as the sections that remained at work were concrete examples of the advantages to be gained.

B-3112. *Mr. Ahmed*: Will the General kindly give us information with regard to the men engaged in the Royal Indian Marine at Fort William, Calcutta.—I have nothing to do with the Royal Indian Marine beyond repairing their guns.

B-3113. *The Chairman*: Is there anything else you wish to put before us?—In my factories, naturally I have to have the maximum number of people on daily wages. My work is such that I can only do what I get money for. Orders that come from the Army vary very much according to what is required. The result is that I have to keep on taking men and discharging them. I dislike that intensely especially as regards the skilled workers. I have to discharge the men, because I have no work for them to do. I do my best and my Labour Bureau keeps on record all their antecedents and the places where they live so that I can try and get my men back again. If I have to engage new men, it means that I have to train them. I have to waste materials, damage machines and all that sort of thing. So that one would like to keep and one does try to keep the nucleus as constant as possible. I found that a man who is only a daily worker and has served in my factories faithfully for say, 25 years, when he goes sick, under the rules gets nothing. He may serve me till he is an old man; and when he goes he gets nothing. The only thing that I can do for him is to give a bonus of so many months' pay out of the fine fund. I pointed out that that was an unsatisfactory state of affairs and that these men ought to be paid by the Government of India instead of from the fine fund. I have now succeeded in getting through a provident fund for daily paid men, but of course the men do not come into the benefits of the provident fund unless they have served for so many years continuously. So that all my really old and faithful men cannot get any advantage from the new Provident Fund. In addition to this provident fund I should also

have very much liked to have a system by which the men could have so many months' pay when they go, just as they have it on the Railways. Up to date I have succeeded in getting a provident fund in which Government pay 50 per cent. of what the men pay. If the man pays Rs. 10 Government pay only Rs. 5, whereas I understand on the Railways Government pays 75 or 100 per cent. and give also a bonus. I have given orders so that at present bonuses will be paid all right, though it is going to be paid from the fines fund. I am hoping that the thing will be put right some day.

B-3114. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: Did I understand you to mean that the provident fund would be made applicable to the daily rated staff?—Yes, they have got to serve for so many years before they could come into it.

B-3115. Will you also give us a note explaining why although the majority of the workers are daily rated and remain on the works for a continuous number of years, they are not put on a monthly basis, and why the privileges regarding leave are not given to the daily rated staff?—I put as many people as I can on monthly basis. I can tell you why they are not all on a monthly basis. Owing to the continuous change of the load on my factories, I cannot keep a complete continuous staff, because I may not have sufficient funds to pay them all. I have to keep them on daily wages so that I can discharge them if I am forced to do so. In many cases I give them a month's leave without pay. That does not sound very generous, but it just enables them to go on a holiday, when I tell them that probably in a month I will take them back again. I want to ask you to remember that my budget is in the Army budget, and as you know, the Army budget is very limited. At the present moment it is difficult to get the equipment of the Army into an efficient state, so that it is also difficult to get the chiefs of the Army who are trying to introduce modern mechanized units and so forth, into India, to recognize that welfare is of great importance. They naturally point out that there are many other people as well as my staff who want welfare measures. However we have got a great deal and I am thankful for what I have got. With regard to housing I considered that it was the duty of Government as the largest employers to set an example to the other employers in India. When I worked out what it would cost me to build workmen's lines for everybody—my general staff, my clerks, superior artisans and so on,—it came to quite a large sum (66 lakhs). It was no good asking for that large amount. But the Secretary of State accepted the principle, which is a good thing. I then asked for two lakhs a year and I have been getting that amount for six years. I am building my workmen's lines in positions like Ishapur. Where my factory is in a city like Cawnpore, there is not so much difficulty in housing the people and does not so much matter. Ishapur is surrounded by *bastis* and tanks of water. It is 23 miles from Calcutta. Some of the men have to come to the factory at 7 o'clock in the morning. They have to come by train from Calcutta. It is a very hard day, especially if they are going to do overtime in the evening. Naturally I have done my best to spend the money in those kinds of places. That has meant buying of land to start with and that was not easy. We have to drain the land of the water which is within a foot of the surface. These are the lines on which I have spent most of the money so far.

B-3116. *The Chairman*: In addition to Ishapur which other places would you wish us to visit?—Jubbulpore and Cawnpore. At Cawnpore there is the Harness and Saddlery Factory. I am beginning workmen's lines there, though they are not so necessary there as at Ishapur. Cawnpore is a huge town and the factory is quite close to it, but I think that probably workmen have great difficulty in finding houses, as there must be an enormous mass of workmen in Cawnpore with all the mills and factories.

B-3117. *Col. Russell*: Would you refer to have your lines outside the town of Cawnpore?—Yes, we have got our site and we are starting the work.

B-3118. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: How are they at Jubbulpore?—We have got a workman's village there; they are I think happy and contented. There

is a big gun carriage factory. Perhaps you might also visit the cordite factory at Aruvankadu in the Nilgiris.

B-3119. *Mr. Clow*: We are not going to visit Rawalpindi. The Colonel there has sent us a short memorandum in which he says: Efforts are being made to restore over-time and holidays as seasonally the arsenal is unproductive for 100 days yearly. Will you explain that to a layman?—Does that mean that the arsenal does not work for hundred days in the year?—I imagine probably it would be so. They probably have every holiday.

B-3120. Is not that an unsatisfactory system from your point of view as well as from the point of view of the men?—I think very unsatisfactory.

B-3121. You have to pay overhead charges all the time.—That is one of the things I can say to Diwan Chaman Lall who asked, why not put these people on monthly wages. The moment I put them on monthly rates of pay they want the factory closed on every holiday; if they are on daily rates of pay they want the factory open on every holiday.

B-3122. The officer in charge of the Allahabad Arsenal complains of the responsibility thrown on him by the Factories Act; the Factory Inspector comes round and orders him to do certain things; and then there are files of correspondence, and the Financial Advisers prevent him from carrying out what he is ordered to carry out?—I do not agree with that statement. My factories are much more mixed up with the Factories Act and the Inspectors, but we have no complaints to make.

B-3123. *Sir Alexander Murray*: I see an Arsenal suggesting that in fixing wages they ought to take into account the poverty line. Will you say on what basis you fix wages?—We fix wages according to the man's skill but based on a minimum living wage. He goes into the Labour Bureau, there he is tested with certain tests and according to the result of those tests he is credited with so many rupees a day. If he comes forward and passes a higher test, up he goes. It was the introduction of this system into the Arsenals that has caused the trouble. They have a number of workmen who are highly paid but whose skill was not up to standard of their pay, and when they are put to test, naturally their pay goes down. I will explain wage fixing in more detail in my memorandum.

B-3124. How do you get at the basis; do you pay a little more than the surrounding industries pay their labour?—I should think that we probably pay a little higher pay because if we do not, the railways or somebody else would pinch them. It is not very much more, it is really a fair rate of pay at which they are anxious to serve.

B-3125. The railways, for instance, in addition to giving pay, give provident fund, gratuity fund, clothing and other amenities that you do not give. Therefore I take it that as far as the money wage is concerned, which is chiefly what you pay, you have got to pay a comparatively higher rate in order to attract workers?—I cannot answer the question straight-away; I do not think we pay them very much higher rates of pay.

B-3126. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: If it is not going to be regular work, would you not have to pay more than the railways which give them steady work?—I suppose we would have to. I really cannot answer on the spot; it is a matter of detail.

B-3127. *Sir Alexander Murray*: I know about the apprenticeship scheme in Ishapur. How many years has a boy to serve as apprentice?—Five years.

B-3128. Will you tell us your experience whether the boys after working as apprentices for three or four years and having acquired a certain amount of skill leave to seek employment elsewhere as full-time workers, or do they stick on and get into your higher grades?—You will find that information in the note that I have promised to send. At Ishapur over and above the "boy apprentices", I have got two sorts of apprenticeships—one of a high standard and the other of a moderate standard; I think even in the moderate standard they are mostly B.A.'s. and B.Sc's.; they are a well-educated

lot of Bengali. After they complete their five years of apprenticeship, I say to them "Now you are not fit to be a chargeman you have got to go now and do a couple of years work in factories as an improver." Even though in the beginning they say that the railways or somebody else will take them they do not invariably leave us because they know they cannot be taken on the railways as chargeman. Thus they work for a couple of years more. I have now got a scheme for sending some boys out of those that we turn out to Europe as improvers—I think we turn out about 200 a year altogether—I want them to go into the workshops at home and work in competition with British workmen. Five of my apprentices from Jubbulpoie have gone there, of these five, four went at their own cost and one is a scholarship holder of the Central Provinces Government. Those men are all in firms at home, they are working as improvers and against British workmen, earning £5 to £7 a month, they are doing very well. These men when they come out have a chance of rising up to the post of a foreman.

B-3129 How long were these five boys in your workshop altogether before they went home?—Five years.

B-3130 How long did they work in factories at home before they were taken as regular workmen?—They were taken straightaway as workmen.

B-3131 Were they started on the same pay as they are getting now?—They started on a smaller pay and they have gone up. I know one of them is drawing £7. He could earn more but he wanted all-round experience so that when he finishes one job of work he takes up another job of work, naturally he did not go up but went down in pay when he got into a new job.

B-3132 I recollect from personal experience the instance of a boy who after serving as an apprentice for two or three years and acquiring a certain amount of knowledge preferred to go to a shop at Calcutta where he got more money rather than to stay on and complete his apprenticeship. What is the real inducement you give to the boys to stay for the full period of five years?—In the beginning he starts at a certain amount a day and gets more every year—I will give you detailed information in my note—and in his fifth year he will be drawing about a rupee a day (this refers to boy apprentices. The higher class apprentices in their 5th years can draw Rs 80 per mensem). From this we deduct a few annas which go to meet his railway expenses when he wants to go home on leave.

B-3133 If you pay him one rupee a day after five years of apprenticeship there is no wonder that he wants to go away?—But they are very young.

B-3134 You spoke of building houses for your workmen. At present when you shut down or dispense with a certain number of men owing to want of employment these men go back to their homes in the country round about wherever that happens to be. But if you build houses and the workmen bring their families what will happen to them if they are cut away from land and you shut down?—My building programme is a drop in the ocean. Out of a large number of workmen at Ishapur I have not got accommodation for more than a few hundreds. Everybody is after the houses and they are given only to those people who are likely to stay on.

B-3135. With regard to a statement that there is indebtedness pretty generally amongst workers, and a suggestion that the fact of their being indebted makes them unfit for positions of responsibility, can you draw a distinction between your particular type of service and the ordinary civil employment?—I should say that that is a very true statement, but it is not confined to us only, it exists throughout India. Most Indian workmen get into debt and there is no doubt that it is a most fatal thing if they do. That is the reason why I have started a co-operative society from which a man can borrow money. He subscribes so much a year and when he is in need of money, say, when he has to get one of his daughters married, he can borrow from the fund instead of going to the *bania*.

B-3136 *Sir Victor Sassoon* Who put up the capital?—They put it themselves.

B-3137 They got no help from outside?—No

B-3138 *Sir Alexander Munay* In your long experience, can you recall any instance where while promoting a man to a position of responsibility you took into account his indebtedness factors?—No, unless he was so heavily indebted that I would know about it

B-3139 *Mr Ahmed* Do you think that the wage of 8 as a day that you give to an unskilled boy is sufficient for him to live on?—No. Probably he is the son of one of the workmen there, he is not supposed to live on 8 as, he is only brought in there to be of help to his father, and to give him education and training.

B-3140 How old will the boy be?—I cannot say

B-3141 Below 12 years?—I do not know. Mostly they are the sons of workmen in factories, we have them as boy artisans. I have forgotten the factory rules, but I think they have to work for 4 hours in the factory daily and have got to put in ten hours per week in the school as well. These details will all appear in my memorandum

Sir Victor Sassoon These boys will be under 12 years?—Yes

B-3142 *Mr Ahmed* May be 7, 8 or 9 years?—I think a minimum age has been laid down

Mr Cliff It is 12

B-3143 *The Chairman* They are under the Factories Act?—Yes

B-3144 *Mr Cliff* In the memoranda from the Arsenal it is stated that a welfare scheme is under the consideration of the Army Headquarters. Do I take it that that really means that you are applying to the Arsenal what you have been putting into operation in your factories?—What they really refer to is the Provident Fund scheme which I got for my factories. The Arsenal will want it but they have not got it yet. Whether it will come in time will depend upon my successor. I should certainly be very anxious to introduce it but the question of finance stands in the way.

B-3145 *The Chairman* I gather from what you have told us that you introduced it in the factories and you found that it produced increased efficiency?—We have not yet introduced it. The discussion has been going on for the last four years, and I think the Secretary of State has agreed to give effect to it from the 1st April 1930. I had no money in my budget to pay for it this year. I do not think it is going to cost more than Rs 50,000 to start with.

(The witness withdrew)

Messrs. ABDUS SUBHAN and ABDUR RAHMAN, representatives of the workers in the Government of India Press, Delhi.

B-3146. *The Chairman* You come before us as representatives of the workers in the Government of India Press?—(Mr. Abdur Rahman) Yes.

B-3147. Will you tell us what your position is? Are you a worker in the press?—I am a piece-worker.

B-3148. On what machine?—I am a compositor.

B-3149. Mr. Abdus Subhan, you are a worker in the press?—Yes.

B-3150. Are you also a compositor?—I am an Assistant Section Holder.

B-3151. We have before us three papers. one is by the Press Union affiliated to the Calcutta Press Workers' Union. Are you members of that body?—Yes.

B-3152. And you appear in support of that memorandum?—Yes.

B-3153. We have also a paper submitted by Mr. Shanker Lall on behalf of the Section Holders of the Government of India Press, Delhi. And we have a paper submitted by the Secretary, Government Press, Delhi, Reading Branch, and signed by Mr. Shanker Lall and Mr. Joshi. Will you tell the Commission how long this Branch has been in existence?—(Mr. Abdur Rahman) for about two years.

B-3154. Can you tell us how many members it has?—About 300.

B-3155. Is it a registered union?—It is a branch of the union which is registered in Calcutta.

B-3156. Can you tell me how it was that this memorandum of yours reached us only yesterday? When was it prepared?—On the 5th of November.

B-3157. I see the name of one of our colleagues here, Mr. Joshi, as being its President?—Yes, he is the President of the Delhi Branch.

B-3158. *Sir Alexander Murray*: When was he appointed as President?—About two years ago.

B-3159. *The Chairman*: I rather gather that Mr. Joshi was not aware of this memorandum. Did Mr. Joshi attend the meeting at which this memorandum was drawn up?—No, he was not present.

B-3160. Therefore, his name is attached only because he became the President of the branch two years ago?—Yes.

B-3161. These three papers deal with a number of detailed questions, like claims for increased wages and conditions of service with which we are not dealing. We are enquiring into the general conditions of labour both in Government undertakings and elsewhere, so that, I think, we should confine ourselves to the points in your memoranda which deal with more general questions. From what you have told us, I understand that many of you have been brought to Delhi from Calcutta?—Yes, many of us have come from Calcutta.

B-3162. Were you also in Calcutta before you came here?—(Mr. Abdus Subhan) I came from Simla. (Mr. Abdur Rahman) I came from Calcutta.

B-3163. You complain that your conditions in Delhi are not as good as they were in Calcutta?—The piece-work rates are the same in both places, but the pay of salaried hands in Calcutta is higher than that in Delhi.

B-3164. Is the cost of living less in Delhi than in Calcutta?—It is about the same. During the malarial season the expenses go up because Delhi is very malarial as compared with Calcutta.

B-3165. I see that is included in your statement, but the general impression is that there is more malaria in Bengal than in Delhi and also the cost of living is higher there?—You can find out from the health officers whether it is not a fact that in Delhi there is more malaria than in Calcutta.

B-3166. You have stated that the recent alteration in the leave rules has been to the disadvantage of the workers?—That is so. They have made three kinds of rules, fundamental rules, industrial rules and supplementary rules, which have not been to our advantage owing to discrimination between salaried employees.

B-3167. In what respect are they to your disadvantage?—Under fundamental rules we were getting two months' leave after 11 months' service, but now under the industrial rules we get only one month; under the former we were entitled to medical leave with full pay but under the latter rules we are entitled only to half pay; under the new rules for the temporary staff we get only 16 days leave while under the fundamental rules we were getting more leave.

B-3168. Do you claim that the rules are special to Delhi or they have been introduced in Government Presses everywhere?—All Government Presses, Delhi, Simla, Aligarh and Calcutta.

B-3169. *The Chairman*: We understand that during five months of the year, when the Legislative Assembly is sitting, there is a great deal of overtime at Delhi?—Yes, we have to put in an excessive amount of overtime during those five months.

B-3170. Is it anticipated when the Press is moved to its new premises in New Delhi that that overtime will continue, or will it diminish?—The overtime will still continue; it is because of the urgency of the work.

B-3171. Is not the overtime during the five months compensated for by short time during the remaining seven months of the year?—No, it is not compensated for. We have to work not less than normal hours, that is, 6 hours on Saturdays and 9½ hours on the remaining days of the week.

B-3172. There is no holiday to make up for the pressure of work during the five months?—No.

B-3173. I suppose this overtime is to your advantage in the matter of pay, but your complaint is that it is too much strain on your health?—That is so. We have to work from 12 to 13 hours sometimes. In Winter when we leave the Press very late we are liable to exposure and get pneumonia and various other diseases.

B-3174. Then the remedy for that would be a larger number of machines and men which would diminish the overtime during the busy five months; but that would also mean that you would have shorter hours or fewer days of work during the remaining seven months?—If the total wages that are paid to us are reduced we would not like it: we would like to have a living wage so that we can make two ends meet. If the working time is reduced we will get less and our children will starve.

B-3175. In your statement you say something about the difficulty of obtaining proper medical attention for yourselves and your families?—Yes; there is that man Mr. Durand, sitting over there; he was asked to produce a medical certificate, and because he had not the means of doing so he was dismissed from service. He had put in about 14 years' service.

B-3176. You tell us that those who come from outside Delhi have to maintain double establishments?—That is so.

B-3177. When the new Press quarters are built at New Delhi will those men still propose to keep their wives and children in Calcutta or Simla?—What we mean is this: we bring our wives and children with us, but the other members of the family, *e.g.*, the brothers and sisters have to remain behind, and we have to go to our homes occasionally for marriage and other ceremonies.

B-3178. But you do regard yourselves as being settled in Delhi?—That is so, but we cannot leave our homes, our brothers and sisters or parents entirely; nor can we ask them to come here and live with us.

B-3179. That hardly amounts to maintaining two establishments?—That is so; we do not spend any money on maintaining an establishment there.

All we say is that twice or thrice every year we have to go there and that means expense to us. Moreover, whoever has got his own house there cannot give that up.

B-3180. Then you say: "We may kindly be provided with quarters bearing sufficient accommodation so that we may not have to undergo hardship and difficulty to reside with our families"?—The accommodation provided at the present time is such that we cannot keep our families with us. It is impossible for us to live in those rooms. Although they are permanent quarters they are not convenient.

B-3181. You say the Government affords no special facilities for the education of the children of the Press employees, and has not established any school for their free education. I take it that they send their children to the ordinary primary schools?—The city is about three miles away; and we cannot send our children so far as that.

B-3182. Do you mean to say the nearest school is three miles away?—There is a middle school there; but if after the middle course we want to send our children for higher education we cannot afford to do so as all those schools are located in the city.

B-3183. What you really ask for is facilities for higher education for the children of press employees?—Yes, after the primary school course, for secondary education.

B-3184. Do your own children go to school?—(Abdur Rahman) I send them to the primary school near our place. (Abdus Subhan) I have a daughter; she does not go to school.

B-3185. Do they have to pay fees in primary schools?—Yes, they have to pay fees. The school belongs to the Notified Area Committee.

B-3186. I thought that in Delhi they had adopted the system of compulsory free primary education?—Only in certain wards of the Municipality. Primary education is free in the Municipal area but not in the Notified Area.

B-3187. *Mr. Olow*: When did you come from Calcutta?—In 1912.

B-3188. Have you ever been to Calcutta since 1912?—No. Those whose home is in Calcutta they go to Calcutta. Our home is in Allahabad.

B-3189. How did you happen to go to Calcutta?—In search of a job.

B-3190. How did you get the job?—I put in an application and I got it.

B-3191. Did you give any *bakshish* to any boy?—No.

B-3192. You find Delhi is more convenient than Calcutta?—It is just about the same.

B-3193. Is it not a fact that when the new rules were introduced all salaried permanent employees were allowed to retain the benefit of the Fundamental Rules?—Not those who had been confirmed before the introduction of the new rules.

B-3194. As far as piece-workers are concerned, when the change was made the result was an increase in the amount of the leave admissible to all the older men. Piece-workers with 10 years' service who formerly got 16 days' leave, received, after the new rules were introduced, an increase in the amount of leave?—Yes.

B-3195. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: I take it that you would prefer to have no overtime for the whole 12 months?—We are not willing to do overtime, provided our wages are not reduced.

B-3196. In other words, you want more pay for the same amount of work?—That is so.

B-3197. Supposing the Government say: "We cannot offer to pay more;" would you prefer to continue with overtime or would you prefer to have no overtime and so earn less?—We cannot carry on now as it is; if you stop our overtime remuneration we will not be able to carry on.

B-3198. So I take it that if there is to be no more pay for the work turned out you would prefer to continue to do overtime?—If we do not agree to that our children will starve.

B-3199. Are the wages that are paid in the Government Press higher or lower than those paid in private presses in Delhi?—The private presses cannot compete with the Government Press.

B-3200. The private presses do not give as good wages?—No.

B-3201. Do private presses have as long overtime as Government presses?—They work only for 8 hours, with an interval.

B-3202. With no overtime?—No.

B-3203. Therefore if you find that you cannot manage on your pay without overtime, the position of a man in a private press must be much worse?—Their condition is worse than ours.

B-3204. Do the Government Press employees get leave on full pay or on half pay?—Up to one month on full pay, rest on half pay, according to their leave account.

B-3205. Do private presses get any leave on full pay?—The private presses are a contractor's business, while the Government Press is a Royal Press.

B-3206. Therefore you consider that the cost of the work should be more in a Royal Press than in a private Press?—If you compare the two you will find that the Government Press work is done more expeditiously than work done by any private press, and further it is confidential and secret work.

B-3207. In regard to the quarters, is it your present quarters or the quarters that you are going to get that are considered to be inconvenient?—The quarters that we are going to get.

B-3208. What do you mean by "they are not convenient"?—There should be more rooms and a courtyard.

B-3209. Therefore the new quarters are inferior to the present quarters?—Yes.

B-3210. Have you put this point before the authorities?—Yes, we have sent in petitions.

B-3211. Was that before the lines were actually built?—No, we gave them details and said that this was the type we wanted.

B-3212. Was there a big difference in cost?—No.

B-3213. *Mr. Ahmed:* On account of the transfer of the Capital from Calcutta to Delhi, the men originally employed in Calcutta have suffered great loss since 1912?—They have neither lost nor gained.

B-3214. Is it not inconvenient for these people to live here?—Yes.

B-3215. You asked for warm colthing, because the winter here is 10 to 20 degrees cooler than in Calcutta?—Yes.

B-3216. With regard to medical assistance in case of malaria or typhoid do you expect any help from Government?—Yes, we do.

B-3217. Do you also want facilities for the education of your children?—Yes, we expect assistance from Government.

B-3218. Some of you were originally appointed in Calcutta and transferred here later on. Do you want free passage to and from Calcutta once a year during festivals and so on?—Yes, not only for Calcutta but also for other places from which many of us have come.

B-3219. We found also some of you submitted applications before the Commission with regard to wrongful dismissal on the part of Government officials who did not give any explanation of their decision for dismissing you. Do you know the names of those people who were dismissed?—Yes we can give the names of those we remember at the moment. There is one instance of this man, Shivdhar, standing there, who was asked some questions by Mrs. Chatterjee and from that very day he is being threatened with dismissal by the management.

B-3220. *The Chairman*: Not dismissed?—No, not actually dismissed. It was because some questions were put to him by Mrs. Chatterjee and he gave replies. From that very day he is being bullied by the management and threatened with dismissal.

B-3221. By whom?—Both the Manager and the Assistant Manager, and we also are afraid that we might be victimised.

B-3222. What is the name of the Manager?—Mr. T. Carter.

B-3223. And of the Assistant Manager?—Mr. Saroda Chandra Chunder.

The Chairman: We have listened to the statement from their side; we do not, of course, necessarily accept it but it will be my duty as Chairman of the Commission to make proper enquiries.

The witness: The man is here now and you can ask him yourself if you like.

The Chairman: We have the statement; what I wish to hear is the statement of the other side. Any one who is called to appear before us may be quite sure that no such action will be taken against him.

The witness: We are afraid because a similar thing has happened to one of us. I was actually dismissed and then taken back. We have got to think of our children.

Mr. Clow: It was not for that reason, I can tell you.

The Chairman: That is, of course, my reason for not accepting an *ex parte* statement. I am accustomed to find there are generally two sides to a question.

B-3224. *Mr. Cliff*: With regard to these works committees, how often did they meet during the current year?—Once a month.

B-3225. The officer of the place says that the works committee has been functioning satisfactorily. Has there been an application put before the works committee asking for reduction of hours of work, by the people on the works committee?—No, we did not put in any application because such questions are not allowed to be discussed.

B-3226. With regard to the new lines that are built for the workpeople, were representations in respect of them put before the works committee?—We put it up once before the works committee.

B-3227. There are three different memoranda submitted to the Commission. Are the complaints stated in them being put before the works committee?—There are certain rules which govern the working of the works committee. Under that we can bring only some matters before the works committee.

B-3228. Can you bring the question of increased rates of pay?—No, not generally.

B-3229. Such questions like leave or payment for sickness and so on?—No, we cannot. These are all referred to the Department.

The Chairman: These are rules governing other places.

B-3230. *Mr. Cliff*: Is the works committee elected by the workpeople?—Yes, that is elected from among the workpeople.

B-3231. What concessions have been obtained as a result of representations made at the works committee?—No concessions have been obtained.

B-3232. Are you both members of the works committee?—I am still on the works committee whereas my friend here has ceased to be one.

B-3233. May I ask the gentleman who has left whether he agrees with the controller that the works committees are working satisfactorily?—No, we do not agree at all. We tell them what we want and they do what they like.

B-3234. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Have they never granted anything that the works committee recommended?—They grant such minor requests like putting up a light in one place for instance.

B-3235. *Mr. Cliff*: Are there any general standard rates in the presses in the city?—They have standard rates in the *Hindustan Times* Press and the Chronicle Press.

B-3236. Are the men engaged on any maximum and minimum rates?—There is no piece rate; they are all salaried.

B-3237. Do they commence with minimum rates and go up to the maximum rates? Are they incremental?—Yes, it is the same system in all presses.

B-3238. Taking two grades, say compositor and foreman, what is the commencing rate for a compositor in the Government Press and for a compositor in private presses?—In the Government Press he starts on Rs. 40; in private presses he begins with Rs. 35 to 40 and sometimes really more.

B-3239. What is the maximum rate in both cases?—We cannot compare both.

B-3240. The piece work is the trouble. Now take a reader. In a private press he gets Rs. 300. What does he get in the Government Press?—The head reader gets Rs. 300 in the Government Press. That is the maximum.

B-3241. Take the Controller's memorandum. There are four grades of readers and I shall take the middle grade which starts from Rs. 160 and goes up to Rs. 200 by annual increments of Rs. 10. How does that compare with the rates obtaining in private presses?—It is practically the same in the private presses also. It depends on the seniority and efficiency of the man.

B-3242. Take warehousemen. There are men getting different rates, Rs. 16, Rs. 18, and Rs. 25. How does that compare with the rates in private presses?—In private presses also, similar rates are paid.

B-3243. Do all the employees in the Delhi Press, from the lowest paid to the highest paid, get payment for sickness?—The monthly rated staff and the salaried hands get one month's leave with pay for every 11 months' service. Those who are governed by industrial rules get half a month every 11 months.

Mr. Clow: I do not think that is the correct position. If you refer to the Controller's memorandum, you will find that they get one month for every 11 months and another half a month with medical certificate.

B-3244. *The Chairman*: From what we have heard it appears that there is not much difference in rates between the Government Press and the private presses in Delhi.—There is a difference in this way. While in private presses lino. operators and mono. operators get about Rs. 200, here in the Government Press they stick at Rs. 100.

Diwan Chaman Lall: In my experience the average for lino. operators is about Rs. 145.

B-3245. *The Chairman*: Do men from the Government Press leave to join private presses?—Sometimes they do. One Charan Dass, mono. operator from the Government Press, Simla, left it and joined a private press.

The Chairman: So that I do not think these men would favour nationalization.

B-3246. *Mr. Clow*: Was that man permanent or temporary?—He was temporary, but one permanent man by name Dhiren Chatterji went from the Delhi Press to join a private press at Calcutta.

The Chairman: I should take it as it happens elsewhere that private service is less stereotyped than Government service.

B-3247. *Mr. Cliff*: I want to follow that question about sick leave. Do the temporary people get any leave and if so, how much?—Under the supplementary rules they get 16 days' casual leave.

B-3248. In the document submitted by the Press Union they deal with the reduction of staff which took place in 1922 and ask that those who have been reinstated should not be regarded as having had a break in service. Have any representations been made in respect of them?—We made several representations on several occasions in the matter.

B-3249. Are any members of the staff who were reduced in 1922 still unemployed?—There are a number of them who have not been taken back.

B-3250. Can you give me any idea when the last man was reinstated?—Within two days after the reduction a few hands were taken back and some after one month.

B-3251. What is the maximum fine imposed on workpeople?—The maximum is Rs. 5; it depends upon the whim of the man fining.

B-3252. But the maximum is Rs. 5?—Yes.

B-3253. For what class of offence is a man fined Rs. 5?—It depends on the whim of the Manager; it may be for a trivial offence or a serious offence.

B-3254. There are no rules on the matter?—There are no rules.

B-3255. *Mr. Clow*: Do you remember the accident in Delhi Press when two men were killed and three were injured?—Yes, we remember that.

B-3256. Rs. 1,500 was given to Sarash Chandra Bose?—I think he was given Rs. 1,575.

B-3257. What did he do with the money?—He took the money and went to Calcutta.

B-3258. Harchandrasingh who is here got Rs. 1,750. What did he do with the money?—He has opened a little shop.

B-3259. The third was Muhammad Yakub. Is he here?—He is still working in the press.

B-3260. He got Rs. 800; what did he do with it?—He had some debt which he cleared off and spent a portion on wedding.

B-3261. *The Chairman*: Have you anything more to say?—As regards the hours of work, instead of 9½ hours work we should have only 8 hours, including over-time, with interval. With regard to gazetted holidays, we get only 16 days, including the six days communal holidays, while in the Calcutta Press they are given 42 days and in Aligarh 40 days. Instead of pension, we want the system of provident fund to be introduced in the press.

B-3262. Why do you prefer provident fund to the pension?—The real reason is this: because of the hard work and the low physique men die probably within six months after becoming eligible for pension and then the pension stops. But if we got the provident fund we could, after retirement, hand it over to our heirs.

(The witnesses withdrew, and the Commission adjourned.)

AJMER

SIXTEENTH MEETING

Tuesday, 12th November, 1929.

PRESENT:

The Rt. Hon. J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).The Rt. Hon. V. S. SRINIVASA
SASTRI, P.C.

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, BART.

Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt.,
K.C.S.I., C.I.E.Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt.,
C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Sir ERNEST JACKSON, Kt., C.I.E., Agent,
B., B. & C. I. Railway Company,
Limited.

Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C.

Mr. GOVIND PRASAD.

Mrs. TARA MARTIN (*Lady Assessor*).Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S. } (*Joint Secretaries*)

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,
I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).} (*Assistant
Commissioners.*)**Mr. W. H. ABEL, Inspector of Factories, Punjab, Delhi, North-West Frontier Province and Ajmer.**

Witness: May I be allowed to make two corrections to my memorandum before you start. On page 3, the whole paragraph (43) under "Safety" relates to all factories including Railways, so that the word "Railways" is really superfluous. Secondly, on page 7, paragraph (139) where it is stated that "the number of factories in this province at present is 40 and the staff is adequate", the word "adequate" should be corrected to read "inadequate".

B-3263. *The Chairman:* You told us on a previous occasion of a fear that legislation, particularly factory legislation and workmen's compensation legislation, had a tendency to drive industries out of British India into Indian States, where there is no such legislation. Is that particularly the case in regard to Ajmer?—It is particularly the case in this district.

B-3264. Have you any actual instances here?—I have no absolute information beyond what I can collect from the factory owners themselves, but in the case of Beawar, an industrial town about 40 miles from Ajmer, which is surrounded by Indian States, I find that ten or twelve years ago the cotton ginning industry was so very flourishing that possibly two or three hundred carts of raw cotton came in daily for ginning; to-day there are probably not more than 20, and the industry has practically gone. This, factory owners tell me, is due to the fact that factory legislation is applicable to these factories within British India—that is, the hours of work and other regulations, whereas they are not applied to Indian States; they also tell me that in addition to that, a tax is put on the raw cotton going out of a State into British India, so that the tendency is rather for factories to be built within the States than in British India.

B-3265. Not the actual moving of existing factories, but a tendency towards an increase in the number of factories outside British India?—Yes.

B-3266. Is there any move at all with a view to improving the conditions there?—Not that I know of.

B-3267. The second question arises from what you have stated under the heading "Health" in your memorandum. You tell us: "Health of workers in all factories appears to be generally good, but in the absence of statistics it is not possible to say what percentage stay away from work owing to sickness." Do you think that employers might be called upon to keep better registers which would separate sick leave from other kinds of leave?—It would be helpful, but I doubt if you would get really useful figures. The worker, particularly the unskilled worker, turns up for his work when he feels disposed to work and the fact of his being absent would not show the employer whether he was really sick or merely absent on leave.

B-3268. But you see that many of the projects which have been under discussion depend on the accuracy of the sickness return. You would get something like useful statistics taken in well recognized factories, but I do not think you would in seasonal factories?—No, I do not think in seasonal factories. In the bigger mills and railway workshops it is not difficult to tell whether a man is ill because there the doctor has to certify him before he is put on sick leave. In the seasonal factories it is very unusual to report to the mill at all unless a man is actually found to be ill in the factory itself.

B-3269. You think in the more organized industries it would be possible to separate sickness and leave?—Yes.

B-3270. Would that require legislation?—It would, to enforce it.

B-3271. But you do not see any difficulty in carrying it out in perennial factories?—There would be no great difficulty.

B-3272. The third question relates to what you speak of "efficiency" in your memorandum. You tell us there that in your opinion health is one of the chief factors governing the efficiency of the workers and that unless the labouring classes are well fed by an increase in their wages, it is not possible to effect any improvement in this behalf. Do you think any increase in wages under present conditions would be spent on increased food and thus tend to produce more efficiency?—To some extent it would.

B-3273. We have been told that it is not so much the quantity as the kind of food which is deficient?—Exactly. The illiterate and the unskilled worker frequently buys a much cheaper class of food than is good for him, not necessarily because he has not the money to buy better food—that is no doubt one of the factors—but because he is so much in debt to the bania; and also the unskilled worker spends a great deal of money which he cannot afford on holidays and festivals and thus becomes indebted to his bania, and as a result he has to live on bad food which is not good for his health.

B-3274. He has to take what the bania gives him?—Yes; he is very much in the hands of the bania.

B-3275. Would an increase of wages benefit him if there is sufficient spread of education?—Not at this moment, but it would be an improvement in that direction.

B-3276. He would have more money to spend on food even though he were in the hands of the bania?—He would have a little over; not a lot. At present he has very little indeed.

B-3277. *Mr. Clow*: In the memorandum which he has sent to us the Commissioner has suggested that the minima for workmen's compensation are too low, and that the compensation for more poorly paid worker should be increased. Do you agree with that view?—No, I do not think I do.

B-3278. He gives us a case where a factory worker lost the use of one hand and was given only Rs. 126. That appears to be due to the fact that his pay was Rs. 12 a month. Is that the common scale of pay here? It is a very low scale of pay. What sort of a man would he be?—It is an unusual

case. He might be a cotton opener, but he would be working on a pay of Rs. 18 to 25 a month.

B-3279. Is Rs. 12 a month a regular pay?—I do not think a workman who would be in a position to lose a hand through machinery would be engaged on a pay of Rs. 12 a month.

B-3280. What are the hours of work in cotton ginning factories?—60 hours a week, that is, 10 hours' a day for a six-day week.

B-3281. Do they get any exemption for an exceptional pressure of work?—Not for the last four or five years. After the Act was amended in 1922 we gave exemptions; but they have been gradually decreased, and during the last three years no exemption has been given.

B-3282. Do you know anything about the hours of work in the States?—I only know that they are very much longer. I have no authority to go there, and I cannot definitely say for how many hours a workman would be employed. In Gwalior where there is a big mill the hours are definitely from 70 to 72 per week. It is a spinning mill.

B-3283. I suppose in cotton ginning mills the length of the hours practically determines the production?—Exactly.

B-3284. In referring to the factory inspection staff in your memorandum, the Civil Surgeon is omitted?—That is so.

B-3285. His inspection is confined to the medical side only?—Yes.

B-3286. *Miss Power*. Mr. Abel, you have told us a certain amount about the welfare work undertaken by factories. Do you suggest that it would be a good thing if the Factories Act here could operate as regards welfare very much on the lines of what is done in England, where we have Statutory orders covering the welfare work to be undertaken in a particular industry?—I think it would be the only way of getting any real welfare work done; if there was a law it would be applicable not only to the employer, but also to all others who took any steps in that direction, and it would be the best way of getting welfare work done.

B-3287. Do you think that is the best method?—I must say it would be a very important and a very useful thing.

B-3288. You mention as one of the causes of the increase in the number of accidents, that "underpaid and unskilled workers are put on jobs of which they have no experience." Do you suggest that it would be a good thing to adopt some safety measures on the lines of what is done among illiterate workers in part of America. There they have a very successful method of propaganda entirely by means of posters?—The average unskilled worker that is put on such job as cotton opening would not be able to understand posters. We have posters now very similar to those in America, showing the kind of clothes a worker must wear, the way he should tackle a machine, and so on, and when possible we go round and make a demonstration; but the trouble is that the average worker will again do things almost exactly the same way as he did before. He is not sufficiently educated to appreciate the instructions that are given to him.

B-3289. I take it that it is a question of time?—It is a question of time.

B-3290. I was told in Lahore that the system of training uneducated *dais* by means of picture posters has been very successful. Do you suggest the same thing for the more complicated machinery in the factories?—It would be helpful, but it would be necessary to launch a very vigorous propaganda. The worker would need to have a very full description; and you would have to do it continually day after day and do it very clearly, otherwise the worker would not take notice until you came round again.

B-3291. We have a paper circulated to us by the Government in regard to industrial labour in this Province. It shows that roughly half of the industrial establishments and three-fifths of the employed workers in the Province are covered by the Factory Act. Would you be in favour of extending the Act to cover the remaining half of the places of employment and two-fifths of employed persons?—It is a job which would be perfectly

possible to begin if you have the right quality and quantity of inspection. It is not quite an impossible job if we were to get the inspecting staff. But it is unfortunately somewhat difficult to undertake the inspection and controlling of these smaller factories which are situated in bazaars, it is more difficult than with the bigger ones

B-3292. If you are going to increase your number of factories by 50 per cent. including all the at present unregistered factories, you would then need to double your staff?—I certainly think all these small factories should be brought under the operation of the Factories Act; it would be a very good thing, but we would want a very big staff to administer the Act in such cases.

B-3293 How much would it mean?—We would need to double the present staff.

B-3294. The present staff is unable to deal with it?—That is true.

B-3295. Are you likely to get additional staff?—There is at present little likelihood of persuading Government to give us the staff, and it would take a long time to secure sufficient staff. It would be an ideal to work up to and it is very necessary.

B-3296 Would three trained men be able to do it?—Yes.

B-3297. You do not think that is an excessive number?—I do not; Government might.

B-3298 *Mr. Clow*: Suppose you were given a full-time Inspector for Delhi and Ajmer, would that be adequate?—No.

B-3299. *Mrs. Martin*: In your memorandum you say "The present regulations with regard to the employment of women in factories are quite suitable". Is it in the regulation that women can be put to work side by side with men?—There is no regulation against it.

B-3300. But they work side by side?—They do in many factories where possibly no room can be set aside in which women can do their work apart from men and in which there is no machinery so as to enable them to have their children with them if they wanted. But there is no actual regulation against women working in a room along with men, and I do not think women object. I have never found such objection.

B-3301. They do not object?—Ordinarily they do not.

B-3302. You do not think it is necessary to make it possible to put women separately from men?—In many cases it would be impossible because they work machines on which men are also employed.

B-3303. *Mr. Cliff*: With regard to the adequacy of factory inspection you told Miss Power that for the whole area which you cover, three full-time inspectors would be sufficient. Is that so?—Inspection is a work that you can expand enormously; you can make work for 30 men if you want to. But, firstly, we would never get that quantity of inspectors, and secondly, we have not taken up all the work that an inspector could find under the present law. Three, at this moment, would be very much better and would be very useful; if we could get more we would certainly find ample work for them.

B-3304. Assuming that the Factories Act was extended to the places not now covered, would three inspectors be, in your opinion, adequate to cover the whole area?—It depends to what extent you would apply the Act. If it were to cover all the unregulated factories employing 10 persons, whether power was used or not, then certainly three inspectors would not be sufficient.

B-3305. How many would be sufficient in that event?—Unless one investigated the number of factories which would come under the Act, it is impossible to say. But presuming that there would be twice as many factories brought within the purview of the Act if it were extended to both the types of factories, it would mean that we should then have three times as many factories as we have at present, and under the new regulation they would require far more attention than under the old one so that we would

need more than six or seven inspectors for carrying on the inspection work as we are having now.

B-3306. In answer to Mr. Clow you said that one inspector is not adequate for Delhi and Ajmer. Did that relate to the present scope of the Act?—Yes.

B-3307. Your answer with regard to three inspectors for the whole of your area was also related to the present scope of the Act?—Yes.

B-3308. Mr. Clow asked you a question about compensation. I believe you answered that, in your opinion, compensation paid in accordance with the present rate of pay was adequate. Just take these two cases that were given by Mr. Gibson, the Commissioner. I will take them separately. The case given is of an employee who was receiving wages at the rate of Rs. 12 per month. As a result of an accident he had four fingers amputated and he received Rs. 126. Will you apply the present scales to this particular case and tell me whether they are adequate?—I cannot imagine a man working on a machine on a pay of Rs. 12; I do not think that is correct. It is possible it may have been the pay that was allotted to him in the register. If he were earning his proper pay and he was paid according to the schedule, his compensation in that case would be somewhere near Rs. 200 or 300 which would enable him to buy cattle, goats or take some interest in land which would provide him with a living.

B-3309. But this is a case registered by the Commissioner; it may be that the accident did not occur through machinery?—In that case I certainly say that the compensation is not sufficient. I was going on the schedule of compensation as compared with the wages which I find reported to me at the end of the year by employers.

B-3310. Then he quotes what might happen: a workman drawing Rs. 10 if he loses any other finger than the index finger, he is, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, entitled to receive compensation amounting to Rs. 21?—Yes, that is true.

B-3311. Is that, in your opinion, adequate?—There again I say I do not know of any person who is working on that pay per month.

B-3312. With regard to housing, you say in your memorandum, "The bulk of the labouring classes in Beawar and Ajmer employed in the cotton ginning and pressing factories live in quarters provided by the private landlords". Is it also true that the bulk of the labouring classes that are employed on the railways live under private landlords?—Yes.

B-3313. Has it ever been a part of your duty to inspect the housing condition?—No, never; houses outside the factory premises are not my concern officially.

B-3314. Have you ever seen them unofficially?—I have.

B-3315. How would you describe them?—Undesirable. I think they might be improved.

B-3316. Is that the strongest word?—Possibly not. In many cases certainly they should be improved very much.

B-3317. Again you say, "Medical facilities for the workers and their families are provided in the case of bigger mills and factories". I take it you also include the railways to which you later on make a reference?—Yes.

B-3318. Is it practicable for an ordinary workman living three miles away from the hospital to avail himself of the facilities?—No, certainly not; I am alluding to the worker within the factory. When he is a mill employee and during the course of his work he falls ill, he receives medical treatment.

B-3319. Suppose a workman meets with an accident in railway workshop; he is treated, but he is not detained in the hospital and goes home. Is any provision made for visits at his home?—I am afraid I do not know; that would be outside my province.

B-3320. Your observations here do not go further than the facilities provided in the mills or factories?—No; I have no authority and also no time to go beyond that.

B-3321. *Mr. Ahmed*: In your memorandum you say, "Two of the textile mills in Mewar and the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Workshops, Ajmer, have, however, made a provision on a restricted scale for the accommodation of their operatives at a reasonable rent". What do you mean by this?—I am referring to the housing accommodation provided within the workshop premises or close to them for such people as chowkidars, gatekeepers and other employees who must essentially remain on their job. Those houses, to my mind, are fairly good. I take it you are alluding specially to the railways. In this case they are provided by the railway authorities.

B-3322. Has no provision been made for accommodation of the labourers?—Only in the case of those I have mentioned, within the factory premises; I am not sure what arrangements they have made outside the factory premises.

B-3323. You say, "The housing conditions of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Workshops, Ajmer, in so far as the accommodation is provided are on the whole satisfactory in relation to drainage, water supply and sanitation". Do you mean to say that provision has been made for quarters to the permanent staff like managers, clerks and others?—No. I am alluding to those houses and dwellings which are provided for the staff which must remain on their job most of the time. That is in the case of probably less than 5 per cent. of the entire railway workshop staff.

B-3324. You have already said that the efficiency of the workers will be increased if they are given higher wages?—Yes.

B-3325. And indebtedness to the bania is their real grievance?—Yes.

B-3326. Do you not think that if payments are made weekly, it would relieve their indebtedness to the bania?—I do not think it would.

B-3327. If you pay them four times a month they can pay their debts earlier?—They can but it does not follow that they would. I doubt very much if it would be an advantage to the monthly worker to get his pay weekly.

B-3328. Why not?—He usually gets his food in bulk for the month. He is always indebted, whether you pay him by the week or by the month. I do not think he would really be better off by merely getting a small amount of money at the end of the week instead of a good amount at the end of the month. It is the habit of the worker, on pay day, to want the rest of the day as a holiday, and he would not want to forego that holiday if payments are made weekly. The result would be that he would get three extra holidays in a month.

B-3329. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: We have been told by the representatives of the railway workers that outside the railways the usual rate of pay to the lowest class is Re. 1 to Rs. 1-4-0 in the industries at Ajmer and in the agricultural districts Re. 1 per day. I have here the evidence of the General Manager of the Court of Wards who states that in industries the wages are from 6 annas to 10 annas and in agriculture 4 annas to 6 annas. Which of these statements is, in your opinion, correct?—I should say the latter one; my experience shows that the latter is more correct.

B-3330. You do not consider that in industries outside the railways the usual rate of pay for coolies is from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-4-0?—I am sure it is not.

B-3331. What do you think would be the rate of pay in industries outside the railways?—It would be nearer to 8 or 9 annas—that is for the unskilled work. I collect statistics regarding that at the end of the year, and covering the entire area it works out at about 11 annas for a man and 5 or 5½ annas for a woman; that includes the railways, and it is generally recognized that the railways pay slightly more if anything.

B-3332. That is recognized?—I have always presumed so.

B-3333. In this district?—Yes, slightly more.

B-3334. Have you any experience of the rates paid in the agricultural districts surrounding Ajmer?—No, I am afraid I have not.

(The witness withdrew.)

Rai Sahib CHANDRIKA PRASAD.

B-3335. *The Chairman:* Rai Sahib, the questions that I shall put to you on your present memorandum will really deal with the questions which you have been good enough to discuss. I may take it that the sum of your claim is as stated in your memorandum where you say: "It shows the necessity for Indianisation of Railway services from the top instead of from the bottom as has been done to some extent so far." Now there are one or two other interesting points in your memorandum. You claim that vocational schools are altogether inadequate?—Exactly.

B-3336. And that they ought to be greatly increased to give the opportunity of training Indians for the higher posts in the railway service?—Yes, both for higher and subordinate posts.

B-3337. Dealing with the question of workmen's compensation you say: "The Workmen's Compensation Act has in some cases curtailed the allowances of full pay to railway workmen for absence due to injury caused by accidents in the performance of their duties." By that do you mean that the provisions of the Act are less liberal than what was being given in some cases by the Company before the Act was passed?—Exactly. The previous practice was to allow full pay for the period of sickness under medical certificate. Now the Act limits it to something like 10 days or so. But I am glad to notice that the Railway Board is allowing the former practice still to continue.

B-3338. I was going to deal with that question. My recollection is that we were informed by the Railway Board that where their own rules were more favourable than the Act, they would allow their own rules to operate?—Yes, I find that is so from the Railway Board's memorandum.

B-3339. That is satisfactory?—Yes.

B-3340. In your memorandum you tell us the purpose of these unions of railway employees. We were told here in Ajmer yesterday that a new union has been recently established?—Yes.

B-3341. Is that union reconized by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation?—It is not at present affiliated, as far as I know, to the All-India Federation.

B-3342. Has it applied to be affiliated to it?—I am not certain; I have nothing to do with this union.

B-3343. Therefore you do not speak to-day in the capacity of a representative of the men engaged on your Railway?—I am speaking in my personal capacity, because the All-India Railwaymen's Federation has not yet decided the question whether they should co-operate with this Commission.

The Chairman: I understand.

B-3344. We had under consideration here, and have had under consideration elsewhere, the question of the relation of staff committees or works' committees to trade unions. Are you aware that in England it has been found possible to work the staff committees or works' committees, by whatever name they may be called, with the perfect goodwill of the trade unions?—I am not aware of that, but here I know the staff committees are proteges of the Railway officials, while the railway men's unions are independent bodies who represent the views and wishes of railway employees. That is the position in India.

B-3345. That is an early stage of organization. There is nothing to prevent the staff committees or works' committees being worked with the assistance and approval of the trade unions? That does not come within your experience?—No, it does not. I have no experience in regard to that.

B-3346. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola:* In your memorandum, you give a statement showing the maximum and minimum wages per month of different classes of labour in different countries, and you say that it was worked

out for the Acworth Committee in 1920. Have you any statistics to show what the present position is?—I have not got the statistics since then; but I think these figures are very recent; they were only collected after the war.

B-3347. Is your position the same as it was then? Has there been no real variation in the proportions shown in the statement during the last nine years?—I do not think there is any material difference now. The statement holds good to-day very materially so far as India is concerned.

B-3348. Then you go on to say: "True remedy lies in laying down a scale of salaries for the staff of the Indian Railways on the same scale as is in force on the Japanese State Railways, thus bringing down the high salaries of the higher officials, and raising the salaries and wages of the low-paid staff and work people, without serious rise in the operative ratio." Can you tell us what you mean by a system prevailing in Japanese State railways?—I mean that the maximum salary of a Railway official in Japan is about Rs. 1,000 a month. Here in India the maximum salary of an Agent goes up to Rs. 4,500: I have given it in the statement as only Rs. 3,500. I consider that the salaries of higher officials on Indian railways are very much higher than the salaries paid in Japan. Japan being an Asiatic country has very much the same conditions as we have in India, and that is an ideal for us to follow.

B-3349. That is to say you would work up to that level in future?—No, I will work up to it now.

B-3350. Do you think it is a matter of practical politics to suddenly introduce that system, and would sufficiently qualified men with technical knowledge be available in India on the salaries you advocate?—I do not mean to drive out the present officials; I would keep them on their present salaries, but I would have a new scale for all those that will come into the service henceforward on the basis of Japan.

B-3351. Does Japan train its own railway officials?—Yes, certainly: they have a very nice college there for the training of railway officials.

B-3352. Then your scheme, in essence, is that steps should be taken to provide educational facilities to supply the demand for higher officials employed on the Railways?—Exactly; all higher officials should be trained in India. We have available in India a sufficient quantity of educated material which could be trained.

B-3353. Further in your memorandum you say: "The arbitrary powers exercised by the Supervising Officer or subordinate, without impartial check, often leads to favouritism, racial discrimination or corrupt practices, which affect the efficiency of staff and lead to waste of public money." What kind of impartial check would you advocate?—At another place I have suggested that we want Indians in the higher places. At present the European mind is biased against the Indians, more or less.

B-3354. The point is this. You say there should be impartial check. What kind of check would you exercise to prevent what you call "favouritism, racial discrimination and corrupt practices"?—I would have a Railway officer of a Department that is not concerned in the matter: for instance, I would have an officer of the Audit or Accounts, or even of the Agents Department—an impartial officer to check these things. I have been proposing a Staff Committee of three instead of leaving these matters in the hands of a single individual. Let all establishment matters, that is, matters relating to staff, their appointment, promotion, and so on, be settled by a Committee of three.

B-3355. How would you constitute that Committee of three?—I would take one officer from the executive staff of the Department concerned say, from the Carriage and Wagon or the Loco. workshops, or the Engineers' Branch, or the Traffic Branch; I would take another officer from the Audit and Accounts Department; and the third member would be a representative of the Railwaymen's union.

B-3356. You think that under that system racial discrimination, favouritism and corrupt practices would disappear?—Yes.

B-3357. You do not think that by multiplying the authority of employment there will be much more nepotism?—No, I think a Committee of three will not be influenced by any undue consideration.

B-3358. That is your opinion. You do not think there is a danger of larger favouritism resulting from your scheme?—Single individuals have exercised autocratic powers; these will be toned down by a Committee of three. That is my opinion.

B-3359. By larger distribution of favouritism?—That is not my opinion.

B-3360. I do not say it is your opinion: there is a likelihood of it?—I do not see any likelihood of it. I see an improvement.

B-3361. *Mr. Clow*: In your memorandum you say: "No facilities are allowed by the Railway administrations for insurance against accidents." What do you mean by that?—What I mean is that there ought to be some institution by which the lives or bodies of railwaymen should be insured against accidents; there is nothing done by the railways to insure their lives; they ought to encourage the railwaymen to form an institution or fund by which lives of men could be insured.

B-3362. Do not the compensation rules provide something of that kind?—That is not enough.

B-3363. You mean the men should be compelled to subscribe?—No, the railway ought to do it.

B-3364. The railway provides compensation?—Compensation they give on death or injury. But I say an institution should be formed beforehand from which the men should get money. At present the B., B. and C. I. Railwaymen's Union at Parel (Bombay) does something in that direction; it provides grants within its limited means in the case of accidents, sickness or unemployment.

B-3365. *Mr. Sastr*: In the nature of an insurance scheme?—They give an allowance when a man is injured or is sick.

B-3366. *Mr. Clow*: But you are talking of accidents and not of sickness?—I should say the same principle should apply in the case of accidents too; when a man is disabled they ought to do something; some institution ought to be established.

B-3367. But they do something at present?—That is not enough. They pay a lump sum which is spent in a few years; then the man is left without any means.

B-3368. Then would it not be preferable to give a pension instead of a lump sum?—Certainly that would be preferable.

B-3369. Is that what you mean by your statement?—Yes. In England you have National insurance.

B-3370. That is health insurance?—Yes, but in accidents, instead of giving a lump sum I would prefer a pension.

B-3371. You do not want the workman to pay a premium?—No, he is not able to pay it.

B-3372. You say, "Effect has not been given by the Government of India to the Washington and Geneva Conventions . . . the hours of attendance should not exceed 144 hours for clerical staff.....". How did you reach that figure?—144 hours a month or 36 hours a week. That is the demand of the railwaymen put through the All-India Railwaymen's Federation; they passed a resolution to that effect. Under the present P. W. D. Code no man should work for more than 6 hours a day.

B-3373. You think that the clerical staff should work for much shorter hours than the other staff?—Yes, because it is brain work; in the Indian climate they cannot work continuously for more than 6 hours.

B-3374. Is the climate felt more in the open air or inside the room? The workmen work for 12-14 hours?—I still work for 12 to 14 hours.

B-3375. With your hand?—With my hand and with my brain.

B-3376. That is more akin to clerical work?—I do out-door work also.

B-3377. Only about two months ago there was no union here, is not that so?—The union has been more or less here for the last seven years.

B-3378. What do you mean by more or less?—By more or less I mean, very many obstacles were thrown by the railway officials in the way of the formation of a union. The Trade Union Congress gave a grant specially to organize a railwaymen's union at Ajmer but all our efforts failed because of the attitude of the railway officials.

B-3379. But has the formation of unions elsewhere been dependent on the attitude of the employers?—But Ajmer is an autocratic province and the men are at the sweet will of the authorities; they are afraid of them. Do you see a single Indian railwayman here? They are afraid to come before my friend Sir Ernest Jackson; they would not come here—I am speaking plainly—the poor people have not the courage to come.

B-3380. You are an ex-President of the Trade Union Congress?—Yes.

B-3381. It does not seem that much progress has been made with trade unionism in the long time that you are here, Rai Sahib?—A prophet is never honoured in his own country.

B-3382. *Mr. Joshi*: You stated that some men here were also discharged because the officials thought the men were organizers of railway employees union or leaders of strikes. Can you give us any definite information on this?—I might give you the instance of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway—I am speaking here for All-India and not for the B., B. and C. I. Railway only. On the Bengal-Nagpur Railway a number of men were victimized simply because they were leaders or workers of railway unions. This came to my personal notice in my capacity as President of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation.

The Chairman: We can hardly deal with that here.

B-3383. *Mr. Joshi*: In your memorandum you say, "Employment in the railways is generally permanent in cases of men on monthly pay as well as those paid on the daily rates of wages . . ." Why are these people kept on daily rates of wages although their employment is permanent?—I cannot offer any explanation because this has been the system for many years; but I think it is wrong. The men claim to be brought on monthly pay, and I am glad to say that the Railway Board have given us an assurance that they will be brought on monthly pay.

B-3384. You also say, "The practice of raising debits against the station staff for errors in booking or collecting charges from the public leads to corrupt practices". Can you explain this?—Suppose a consignment is booked, say, from Ajmer to Bombay, Bombay is responsible to recover the correct charges. Either through over-sight or through the complex nature of the goods tariff, if the goods clerk at Bombay fails to realise the correct freight, the audit department will raise a debit against him, without regard to his pay—it may be for Rs. 100 or it may be for Rs. 500. He is called upon to realise it from the party concerned; if he fails, the debit stands against him and is recovered from his pay. This, I maintain, leads to corruption. When you levy such heavy debits on a poor man where is he to bring the money from?

B-3385. Are the officers in the railways made to pay any debits for their mistakes?—Certainly not, officers go scot free always.

B-3386. I will ask you a question on a subject on which we had had some information, but I think it is necessary to ask that question. Will you explain how in practice racial discrimination is maintained inspite of the fact that the railway authorities state that they have done away with it in theory?—It will be in your recollection, Mr. Joshi, that Mr. Samarth put certain questions in the Legislative Assembly, and the Railway

Board assured the assembly that racial distinctions would be abolished. That was something like 10 years ago. But what do we find to-day? The railway memorandum submitted by the B., B. and C. I. Railway Co. clearly shows instances of racial discrimination.

B-3387. Will you explain the methods by which, in practice, this is maintained?—For instance, the different scales that have been laid down—A, B, C, D and E. There are two scales which are extremely low where no European or Anglo-Indian would come to work.

B-3388. Are the Europeans employed on the lowest scales for guards or drivers?—No, they are employed only in the upper grades. So long as you keep these low grades you are maintaining racial distinction.

B-3389. You state that Anglo-Indians and Europeans are not recruited on the lower grades but are directly recruited on the higher grades?—Yes, and they keep ahead of Indians.

B-3390. Is there any method by which Europeans and Anglo-Indians get ahead of Indians?—By rapid promotion too; they are favoured always.

B-3391. *Miss Power*: In your memorandum you suggest that a minimum of Rs. 35 per month with varying allowances for towns and big cities be paid for unskilled employees. I take it you mean that figure as a minimum for railway employees in the more rural areas?—Yes.

B-3392. Further on you say, "The rates of wages in the surrounding agricultural areas should not be considered in fixing the wages and salaries of railway employees? What I want to arrive at is on what basis you fixed Rs. 35 as the minimum?—It is considered to be the lowest with which a man could maintain himself and his family.

B-3393. Even in the more rural areas?—Rs. 35 is the minimum; that has been decided by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation.

B-3394. What difference in the method of living is there between a railway employee in the more rural areas and an agricultural worker?—In the villages an agricultural worker gets fine vegetable and many articles free of charge either from his neighbour or from his own produce. Here a labourer has to pay for every bit he requires for his consumption; there he has his own cottage where he lives, here he has to pay house rent; so the difference is very great in rural areas and in towns.

B-3395. I was not referring to the labourer in towns but to the railway employee in the more rural areas. You suggest a minimum of Rs. 35 with allowances for towns and cities?—Yes; Rs. 35 is the minimum for an unskilled labourer and a higher amount for others.

B-3396. *Colonel Gidney*: I believe you are an advocate of levelling up of wages of the subordinate staff?—Certainly; I do not mean to cut down any salaries of subordinate staff.

You are also an advocate of levelling down the salaries of officials?—Yes.

B-3397. I believe you were present when I asked the Railway Board in their evidence, for figures, to establish a comparison between the total salaries of subordinates as compared with officials in various railways. If it is found that there is a great discrepancy in favour of the officials, would you advocate levelling down the salaries of officials?—Yes.

B-3398. You just now complained of a great distinction between the Anglo-Indians and Indians. You would not complain if the Indian is levelled up to the Anglo-Indian standard of wages?—No.

B-3399. Do you think the railways would function if this were done?—Why not?

B-3400. Why is it that no Indian witness from the railway workshops has appeared before this Commission?—They have not the courage; they are afraid of their superiors.

B-3401. Do you think they would be victimized?—Yes.

B-3402. Have you any real reason to think so?—I have already cited one instance on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. Here a few months ago the

men were thinking of organizing a union and one of the officials called the leaders and told them not to join or form any union.

B-3403. I have no reason to doubt your statement, on the other hand I may have reason to support it. The Commission is out here to examine the grievances of the railwaymen and if there is such a thing as victimization of any witnesses the Commission would not be in a position to examine those witnesses and they would be placed at a very great disadvantage?—They cannot come forward; they have not the courage.

B-3404. I think you were at Delhi when I asked a question of the Railway Board as to how long it takes for a fireman to become a loco foreman or a ticket collector to become a station superintendent?—Yes, I heard the question as well as the answer.

B-3405. It was said that the average service necessary for this promotion was between 20 and 25 years. Will you agree with me if I say that the reason why Anglo-Indians and Europeans occupy a large number of such superior posts to-day is because they have been continuously in service and at a time when the educated Indian did not seek Railway employment?—Indians have been more continuously in service. Look at the percentage; over 97 per cent. are Indians.

B-3406. I am not talking of the percentage, I am talking of these appointments and the length of service necessary to attain such ranks?—I put in 37½ years' service.

B-3407. Will you agree with me that till a few years ago the educated Indian did not seek employment on the railways?—Why? He has always been after railway service.

B-3408. Will you agree with me that 15 years ago the Indian was not keen on working on railways?—No, certainly not; I joined the railway in 1877.

B-3409. I am not taking you as an example; you are an exception. I am taking the class as a whole?—I am speaking of the Indians generally.

B-3410. Is it a fact that 15 to 20 years ago drivers and guards did not know how to sign their names?—Yes, because you did not take any educated men; you promoted *khalasis* to the rank of a driver.

B-3411. You made a statement about the appointments committee; I think there was a lot in what you said; it impressed me very much. My friend Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola suggested to you that there would be more nepotism if you had such a committee?—If I were to be on that committee I would serve honestly.

B-3412. *Colonel Gidney*: Do you think that much of the trouble on railways is really due to the ignorance amongst the staff of leave rules, over-time claims, service bonds and other privileges to which they are entitled?—Yes

B-3413. Would you advocate the issue to all employees of a condensed pamphlet of these rules?—The B., B. and C. I. Railway have done that; they were good enough to send me a copy of it.

B-3414. I do not know whether it is the general practice on all the railways?—I think that is very necessary.

B-3415. Mr. Clow asked you a few questions about compensation. Do you think that if the B., B. and C. I. Railway accepts the system of insuring the lives of their employees that I recommended to the Railway Board and which they agreed to consider, that is, that every employee of the railway be allowed to insure his life and pay the premiums from his accumulated Provident Fund, it would help the Indian employee?—I should think so.

B-3416. You talked just now of long hours of duty. A general statement is one thing; can you substantiate what you said to the Commission by giving concrete cases of men doing 15, 18 or 20 hours duty a day?—I never said 18 hours; I said 12 hours.

B-3417. Well, let it be 12 hours?—Here is a statement which shows that the station staff do 12 hours work.

B-3418. Can you give it to the Commission?—I will show it. It gives the hours from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Assistant booking clerks, head booking clerks and so forth work 12 hours during the day; I am speaking of Ajmer station which has pretty good work during the day.

B-3419. *The Chairman*: Without any interval for meals?—It is what they call intermittent work; but still the men have to remain longer hours; they cannot leave the station where they are kept for 12 hours. But there is an admission in the Railway Board's memorandum that some of the staff have only 8 hours rest in 24 hours.

B-3420. *Colonel Gidney*: In your memorandum you say that you favour a time scale promotion. Do you mean by that that a ticket collector can, by increments, automatically rise up to the post of station superintendent?—Yes, automatically as they have done in the postal department.

B-3421. I know a time scale promotion exists in the postal and telegraphs departments, also in various other Government departments but do you think this is practicable in the railway department?—Why not? What is practicable in the postal and telegraphs departments is equally practicable in the railway department.

B-3422. What will be the greatest benefit if such a system were introduced? Do you think it would remedy the present hardship of blockage of 80 per cent. of the staff in the upper grades?—If there is blockage in the postal department there may be blockage here as well.

B-3423. I know such a blockage does exist in the telegraph department and that is their chief complaint?—I cannot foresee; I have made no calculation.

B-3424. You have just given the history of Unions on the B., B. and C. I. Railway. Is it your experience, in your long and distinguished service in various grades that the railway official on this Railway looks askance on railway unions or any such bodies, and look upon such bodies, from a hostile point of view?—Yes.

B-3425. Is it your experience that the officials put their hostility into practice?—Yes.

B-3426. Could you give instances in which this has happened?—Yes.

B-3427. And therefore you think this is the chief reason why unions have not succeeded on this railway?—Exactly.

B-3428. Do you think this is a correct attitude?—No, that is not a correct attitude.

B-3429. Do you think that if the railway administration had frequent consultations with unions and other organized bodies of workmen as associations, etc., in matters concerning their own interests, there would be less mistrust, unrest and more satisfaction?—Certainly; but you should abolish these sham staff committees.

B-3430. What would you put in in their place?—The Railwaymen's unions. If the railway officials will favourably receive these railwaymen's unions, I assure you that railwaymen will be very reasonable.

B-3431. Would you accept a grievances committee; I mean a separate department to be created in the Railway in which the men would have a big representation and a big voice?—Certainly, if there are representatives of the railwaymen's union.

B-3432. *Mr. Gregory*: In your memorandum you say ".....except in the case of train running staff some of these are discharged for three or four months of the rainy season which is treated as the slack season on some of the railways". Do you include the B., B. and C. I. Railway in that?—I do.

B-3433. Can you let us know what you refer to in your statement?—In the rainy season when traffic is slack some of the men are given leave for three months—what is called compulsory leave during the slack season.

B-3434. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : Without pay?—Yes, certainly.

B-3435. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : For how long?—Four months will be the longest period; it is during the slack season when there is little traffic; that has been the practice

B-3436. *Mr. Gregory* : You have used the expression “ compulsory leave ”. Which class of staff do you refer to?—I am referring to the running staff, drivers and guards.

B-3437. In reply to the Chairman you said that you considered the provision of vocational institutions inadequate. Having seen the policy in the Railway Board memorandum, do you still adhere to that?—Certainly. Shall I give a full account of my views on that?

Mr. Gregory : No thank you.

B-3438. *Sir Ernest Jackson* : You speak of the want of special schools and liberal grants-in-aid to the children of Railway workers. When you wrote that were you aware that the policy both of grants-in-aid and of the education of children has been under the consideration of the Government of India for about 18 months, and that a revised policy under these two heads is about to be issued and in fact has been agreed to, I understand, by the Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly?—I had no means of knowing that, but since then I have seen something in the Railway Board memorandum.

B-3439. You also state that Rs. 35 should be the minimum pay for all rural districts?—Yes.

B-3440. But you also suggest that in addition to that minimum pay it will be necessary to give the employees an additional allowance?—For cities like Bombay; that is what I mean.

B-3441. Whatever the minimum pay may be which may be decided upon, whether it is Rs. 20, or Rs. 35 or Rs. 50? You are doubtless aware that the conditions throughout India vary considerably, and that what may be an adequate pay in one province or district may be quite inadequate, or, on the other hand, too much in another district?—I do not think there is such a marked difference in the minimum living conditions. Knowing India as I do from Madras to Kashmir I think Rs. 35 is absolutely necessary for a man to keep in good health, whether he is a coolie or whatever he is, Rs. 35 is the minimum to give him food, clothing, house accommodation, medical aid, education of children, and provision for sickness, old age, etc.

B-3442. Quite apart from the question of the amount of minimum wages, do you not think that if the minimum were fixed, further complications would immediately arise as to the amount of the additional allowances to be given according to the city or the Province in which that employee is stationed?—I am suggesting at another place staff and wages boards. If you have wages boards in different localities they will settle all these questions

B-3443. You think there will be no further clamour for additional allowances to meet the extra cost in some particular place or district?—If you adopt the same machinery as they have in England under the English Railways Act, 1921, Part IV, which I think are known as Whitley Committees or Whitley Councils, there should be no difficulty whatever.

B-3444. In your memorandum you speak of the abuse of the fines fund; you state that it is mostly used for the benefit and enjoyment of Anglo-Indians and Europeans. At another place you recommend that unclaimed wages should be used for the benefit of the workmen in just the same way as the fines fund. Is not that a contradiction?—I do not mean that the fines funds should continue to be abused; it should be properly used in consultation with the Railwaymen's unions' representative; that is what I mean. The fines fund should not be used, as at present it is used in the absolute power of the Agent.

B-3445. Colonel Gidney suggested, and you agreed with him, that as far as unions are concerned it would be of immense benefit to the staff if the

Agents and officials met the unions and discussed things with them to try to come to cordial arrangements. Are you aware that in Bombay very great efforts have been made to that end? Are you also aware that so much were we and the Bombay union coming together to discuss these that it was too much for the union, and their Secretary who was meeting us was immediately discharged on the report, as I understand, that he was a spy of the Agent?—I was President of the B., B. and C. I. Railway Union at Parel up to about March or April last, and as far as I know I had no invitation from the authorities to consult with them. I do not know what they are doing now because the union is not under my direction.

B-3446. You have stated that the fines fund is abused. From whom mainly is it collected?—From the Railway staff.

B-3447. From the lowest staff?—Yes.

B-3448. Do they get much benefit from it?—The lowest staff get the least benefit from it.

B-3449. In your memorandum you say that Indians claim equal pay for equal work?—Yes.

B-3450. Will you kindly explain that?—What I have been maintaining is that everybody should get the value of his work; that is to say, if I do the same work as another man is doing, I should not get more pay than that man. Equal pay for equal work is a saying which is very fully understood.

B-3451. What is the particular application of it here? Do you think Indians are not paid equally for their work?—Certainly not.

B-3452. And others are paid disproportionately for the work they are doing?—They are paid unduly high wages as compared with the Indians. The Indians do not get a living wage while others may be getting a living wage. So far as subordinates are concerned, I do not think any subordinate is getting more than he actually earns.

B-3453. With regard to education do you think the Railway Company has taken sufficient care of the children of the Indian labourers?—No, they take very little interest or care of the children of Indians.

B-3454. Are there any night schools for teaching labourers?—While I was in the service I started one, but that was abolished directly, I left Ajmer.

B-3455. Do you think the wages that are being paid to the Indian labourers here are sufficient and living wages?—Certainly not; any wage below Rs. 35 is not a living wage.

B-3456. You have travelled on the Continent?—Yes.

B-3457. You must have seen how the skilled and unskilled labourers lived there?—Yes.

B-3458. Do you think they live there in such a lordly way as some of the so-called skilled labourers and unskilled labourers here who belong to the European and Anglo-Indian classes?—They do not live in that lordly way in England; they live like workmen.

B-3459. Do you know anything about the working of the staff committees?—I do not know anything about their working, but I know they are trying to get in the way of railway employees' unions.

B-3460. To what would you ascribe the indebtedness of the labourers here?—Low wages. What Mr. Kabeer-ud-din Ahmed called "eternal indebtedness" is due to these low wages; the men cannot get out of it though you may form a thousand credit societies.

B-3461. You live very near the Railway hospital?—Yes.

B-3462. Do you think that sufficient attention is paid to the labourers and other persons who attend the hospital?—People go to private practitioners.

B-3463. Why?—For treatment because they do not get proper treatment at the hospital.

B-3464. In its memorandum the Railway Board says that in Ajmer and in Bombay there is sufficient accommodation for the artisan class, and that it is not necessary to provide any housing accommodation or land for them. Do you think there is sufficient housing accommodation in Ajmer?—No; the Indians have been totally neglected in the matter of housing accommodation in Ajmer.

B-3465. But do they get sufficient accommodation anywhere; in the city, and other places?—I would not live in the city for a day under such conditions; the accommodation is not at all healthy. One of the Members of the Commission has remarked about tuberculosis; that disease is extending in Ajmer on account of insufficient air.

B-3466. I think you have seen that portion of Nagra where many people live?—Yes.

B-3467. What sort of huts are there?—In 1908 as Municipal Commissioner of Ajmer I went round and I found men who once got on the ground never rose.

B-3468. *The Chairman*: Did the Municipality do anything to cure that?—It was not within their province.

B-3469. *Sir Ernest Jackson*: You have been on the Municipality?—I was on the Municipality.

B-3470. Do the Railway assist the municipality in any way in cleaning the streets?—They pay only for the work the Municipality does for them.

B-3471. The majority of the inhabitants of Ajmer are Railway people?—Half the population of Ajmer is connected with railway employees.

B-3472. *Colonel Russell*: You say that the medical aid provided by the Railway administration is neither adequate nor acceptable. Will you let us know in which direction medical aid is neither adequate nor acceptable?—There is no provision for the families of Indian railways employees. That is one inadequacy. The other is that the men themselves have to go to private practitioners.

B-3473. Is that the only reason?—That is the reason, and that is sufficient reason, the men cannot get treatment and so they go elsewhere.

B-3474. You say they cannot get treatment at the Railway hospitals?—They do not get proper treatment. The men complain, of course I would not like to repeat their complaint, but they bitterly complain.

B-3475. Of what?—They complain that they are not attended to; they are being driven away.

B-3476. The registers show there is an attendance of about 600 per day?—There may be, but this is what I hear from the men; I never go there myself.

B-3477. *Mr. Cliff*: Have you any knowledge of the Agent of this Railway proceeding in a general way to establish a minimum wage?—No.

B-3478. Therefore if the Railway Board suggested that he was, they would not be speaking the truth?—I cannot say, he may have made proposals, but not to my knowledge.

B-3479. Do you agree with the Agent of this Railway that there were two trade unions formed in 1920?—Yes.

B-3480. Do you agree with the Agent of this Railway that neither of these unions was recognized till 1926?—I had experience of that. They refused repeatedly. The men wanted the union to be recognized, but the Agent refused to recognize it until 1926.

B-3481. And do you agree that they were not recognized till that date?—Yes.

B-3482. Can you tell me whether in the formation of these staff committees the trade unions were ever consulted?—No.

B-3483 Can you tell me the reason why guards on mail and passenger trains work shorter hours than the drivers?—No, I cannot give you information on that point.

B-3484. Is it within your knowledge that the drivers of mail and passenger trains work 70 hours a week?—I cannot say.

B-3485. There were some questions on the minimum wage. Would you be prepared for the purpose of establishing minimum living rates of wages to agree to a series of wages boards being set up in order to determine these wages rates?—Certainly; local boards in each local centre.

B-3486 I understand you are prepared to speak to us on behalf of the trade union to set up similar committees to what are in existence in England?—Exactly.

B-3487. Is it your view that the representatives of the Railway trade unions and the Railway workpeople themselves are competent to put their own business before such bodies?—Some of them are if the railway restrictions are withdrawn. If the men are allowed to form their unions freely, I should say a number of educated men will join the unions and guide the unions on very sound lines.

B-3488. And you believe they will be capable of transacting their own business?—Certainly.

B-3489. Will you kindly tell us the kind of restriction you refer to?—I might in a general way say that the Presidential addresses at the Indian Railway Conference Association from 1920 had been generally against the formation of unions by railwaymen.

B-3490. Reference has been made to grades of labour enumerated A, B, C, D and E. Might a man on the E grade be doing exactly the same work as a man on the D grade?—Exactly.

B-3491. Might he be doing the same work as a man on the C grade?—Yes, very nearly the same work.

B-3492. Did the two separate unions of this railway represent the same class of labour that is employed here in Ajmer?—No. The B., B. & C. I. Railway Employees' Union represents the workshops staff at Parel. The B., B. & C. I. Ry. Men's Association represents the running and station staff and some other staff also of which I am not aware.

B-3493. So that one of the unions represents the men working in a similar shop to the one at Ajmer?—Yes. This Ajmer union should have been a branch of the Bombay union but for the obstacles thrown in their way.

B-3494. You are in favour of paying wages weekly?—Yes.

B-3495. What is your reason?—The wages are low, although the railway authorities will not admit, but charge the men with extravagance. Weekly payment of wages will enable the men to pay the shop-keepers more quickly and clear off their liabilities.

B-3496. If wages were paid weekly, in your opinion there would be less indebtedness, because the workers would be able to clear their liabilities to the shop-keepers more quickly?—Yes, that is so.

B-3497. Do any of the railway men who are paid wages monthly go to the banias for advances?—A good many go. But then there is also the co-operative stores which gives credit to members of the society.

B-3498. Is that a co-operative society which sells food and clothing?—I do not know if they sell clothing. They sell food grains on credit during the month.

B-3499. Is the credit given free or have they to pay interest?—No, that is free to the members of the Society.

B-3500. Instead of paying weekly, they pay monthly?—Yes.

B-3501. Some of the workers go to the banias. Have you any experience of that?—I have not myself gone to a bania, but I know from others who have gone that the bania charges more for his goods because he gives credit. Buying with cash is always cheaper than buying on credit.

B-3502. So that the bania charges more for your food?—Certainly.

B-3503. *Mr. Ahmed*: What do you think is a living wage for a labourer with a wife and two children?—Rs. 35 is the minimum to cover the cost of food, clothing, housing, medical aid and education for children, and a little saving against the rainy day.

B-3504. But some people told us here yesterday that they got only 9 to 11 annas. Is that a sufficient wage?—No, that is not.

B-3505. So you are in favour of increasing that?—Yes.

B-3506. The employers generally say that workshop labour is paid more than agricultural labour in the villages, and make out a case for not increasing their wages. Do you not think that agricultural labourers in the villages get some facilities from the headmen of the village, and that living is much cheaper in a village than in a town?—Yes.

B-3507. To live in Ajmer it costs as much as living in Bombay or Calcutta?—Yes. I am an agriculturist myself and I engage men. Besides paying them their wages I give them many other things such as food, clothing and surplus produce if any.

Is that the case with other agriculturists here also?—Yes.

B-3508. So that you cannot compare factory labour with agricultural labour?—No.

B-3509. *The Chairman*: Do these happy people get Rs. 35 a month?—Without Rs. 35 they get all the necessaries of life to keep them normally healthy and strong besides keeping them out of debt.

B-3510. That is equivalent to Rs. 35 a month?—Yes.

B-3511. *Mr. Ahmed*: Do you not give your labourers half a seer of milk free every day and sweets and things of that sort on festive occasions?—Yes.

B-3512. Have you ever heard of an Agent of the Railway or an officer of the Railway giving feasts to the labourers on any occasion?—No, never.

B-3513. Do they pay wages to the workmen if they do not go to the workshops on account of illness?—No, they do not.

B-3514. They give some holidays such as the Puja holidays and so on. Do they pay them their wages for those holidays?—For some holidays such as King's birthday altogether 15 for the whole year, they pay. For the rest they do not.

B-3515. With regard to housing do you not think that these workers should be given adequate accommodation in the towns?—Yes, preferably in the suburbs.

B-3516. With regard to construction of wagons, are not all the necessary materials available here in India except probably wheels and axles?—Yes, even they can be cast in the foundries. Ajmer has taken a lead in the matter; they have been manufacturing rolling stock such as engines since 1897.

B-3517. Are you in favour of manufacturing them here instead of importing them from foreign countries at enormous cost?—Yes. I am for the manufacture of these articles not only here, but throughout India.

B-3518. The Railways are not running their business on a commercial basis if under the circumstances they get their requirements from foreign countries?—No.

B-3519. What is the reason for it?—Only a disinclination to deprive European countries of this work. On the other hand if the work were done in India there would be less unemployment, and more technical skill and experience would be accumulated in the country. That would indirectly benefit agriculture also.

B-3520. *Sir Alexander Murray*: You say that Rs. 35 is the minimum living wage?—Yes.

B-3521. For how many days' work in the month?—26 days, with the usual allowance for leave.

B-3522. How many days' leave would you have? We have had evidence from the workers yesterday that they should have 30 days' privilege leave?—Yes, that is allowed under the Government leave rules.

B-3523. In addition they suggest 10 days' casual leave?—Yes.

B-3524. There are 52 Sundays in a year?—Sundays are universal holidays.

B-3525. They have many other holidays such as Bakrid, New Year's Day and so on which come to 26 a year. You will give these public holidays also?—Yes. What does the total come to?

B-3526. The total comes to 118 holidays including privilege leave, casual leave, Sundays and Gazetted holidays. That leaves 247 working days in a year of 365 days, or eight months in a year. Do you approve of a man working only eight months a year?—The Government have done it and I would not alter the Government code. I think whatever Government have done is right.

B-3527. I am very glad to hear you say a good word about Government. Do you think it a reasonable proposition that an ordinary menial labourer should be required to work only for 8 months a year?—Yes. Every man is an equal servant. The menial labourer is also a man like everybody else.

B-3528. I am sorry I said that. Do you think that an ordinary working man on the railway should work only eight months a year?—If the higher officials do only eight months a year, why should not the poor men also have the same privilege. Every man must have the same privileges. As an employer myself I treat my workmen just like myself.

B-3529. I am glad to hear that from you. But do you think it reasonable that they should get 12 months' pay at Rs. 35 a month and work only for 8 months a year?—How much per day would that work out to?—Holidays must not be counted at all; they are intended for rest and recuperation, just the same as you have.

B-3530. What do you think is a reasonable pay for a working day?—You will have to divide Rs. 35 by 30 to get that. That is a simple question in arithmetic.

B-3531. You divide Rs. 35 by the number of days in a month. I want you to divide the total of Rs. 35 per month for 12 months by 247 days, because he is only working for so many days?—Non-working days go towards the rest of the worker. He deserved the same rest as others.

B-3532. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : I was most interested in that remark of yours. But do you actually give 118 holidays in the year to your workmen?—My workers have very easy work.

B-3533. But have they 118 holidays a year?—They get as many as they require. I do not deduct from their monthly pay anything for absence through sickness.

B-3534. But would the number of holidays go up to 118?—It may even exceed that. I give them easy work to do. I do not exact the pound of flesh.

B-3535. Besides so many concessions your agriculturists get an equivalent of Rs. 35 a month. You also say that they get 118 holidays in the year and even more, for rest. Do you maintain that this is not peculiar to you and that this is usual among employers of agricultural labour round about the country here?—The economic conditions in India are very bad. There is unemployment and poverty. So much so, the poor workers are driven to accept whatever you give. That does not mean that the low wages they get are the prevailing wages everywhere or that they are sufficient for their living.

B-3536. I want you to be quite clear on this. This living wage of Rs. 35 a month the equivalent of which you give your agricultural workers, is this

not only what you are giving and therefore exceptional, but the usual rate in this part of the country?—The majority of agriculturists do their work themselves; only a few like myself employ labour.

B-3537. Would you say that those who are working for themselves are getting an equivalent of the standard of living of a railway man getting Rs. 35 a month?—Yes, otherwise they would not live; they would not continue their agricultural pursuits.

B-3538. Do you admit that the agriculturists form the large majority of the population in India?—Yes.

B-3539. In that case the large majority of the population of this country is living on an equivalent of Rs. 35 a month?—Certainly they have the same comforts.

B-3540. In your memorandum you have stated that the condition of agriculturists in India is more miserable than that of an average factory worker?—How do you reconcile the two?—They should adopt methods of co-operation such as are in vogue in Denmark. You would find them advocated in my book, "Agricultural Co-operation in Denmark" which I wrote after visiting that country two summers. If our agriculturists suffer here now, it is because they do not adopt those methods.

B-3541. So that what you maintain is not that the agriculturists are at present actually earning Rs. 35 a month, but that is what they might earn if they followed the methods of co-operation of the Danes?—It is difficult for me to answer that. A rural survey will have to be made in order to understand the real situation. I can only speak for the agricultural labourers whom I employ.

B-3542. Would you say, not only for yourself but also generally for the people round about Ajmer,—I am not asking you to go to Madras or to Kashmir to let us have these details—that the agricultural labourer whether working for himself or working for a good employer like you, gets the equivalent of Rs. 35 a month?—If that were so, that would have a great deal of influence on our work?—I must draw a line between agricultural labourers and railway employees. Take a pointsman. If he puts a train on the wrong line he is liable to be criminally prosecuted and sent to jail. The agricultural labourer has no such liability.

B-3543. Would you put a money value on that?—Why not? The man takes such risk.

(The witness withdrew.)

**Miss J. E. COPELAND, M.A., Church of Scotland Mission House,
Ajmer, accompanied by Mr. Kanhaiyalal Gargiya.**

B-3544. *Miss Power*: In your memorandum you say: "There should be some organized system of recruiting labour. The need is specially urgent in the matter of getting boys into suitable employment when they leave school and in the matter of securing a better system of apprenticeship and training, either within the area or beyond."

You are dealing here with the comparatively small percentage of literate children, or rather boys?—Yes.

B-3545. How do they now find employment?—This does not refer to railway employment only, but to all kinds of employment. It seems to me that there is a wastage when boys leave school and do not immediately get into suitable employment. If there were some means by which the boys might learn the type of work most suitable to their capabilities, if they could learn what might be required of them for their vocation in life, they might stay a little longer at school or be drafted into vocational training classes. In this way the wastage might be avoided.

B-3546. But what is open to these literate boys now except the railways?—There are various forms of work in which they could be engaged: printing presses, carpenters' shops in the city and several other kinds of skilled work. There are various factories where employment can be had. The only thing is that they should know the conditions of work in each place, the amount of education that is required, the terms of apprenticeship and so on, so that they may be drafted into some suitable occupation immediately on leaving school and the present waste avoided, with profit to the boys and to industries generally.

B-3547. Are there in fact many false starts? Does a boy drift from one occupation to another before he finds a suitable one for himself?—My experience is that a boy generally wastes a couple of years after leaving school. He works casually, sometimes here and sometimes there before he gets into a suitable occupation. It does not seem to me as if most of the boys go on a steady march towards some higher post.

B-3548. Would you like some sort of vocational guidance?—Something similar to what the After-care Committees do at home.

B-3549. Who should start such committees? Would you have them done by Government or by voluntary organizations?—The After-care Committee for boys might be a voluntary one, run very definitely in connection with schools to begin with. That would open the field for investigation into what is necessary. People like headmasters and teachers would know that an enquiry along these lines into the boys' capabilities might be made and help given to them to get into suitable occupations.

B-3550. Has that sort of thing ever been attempted anywhere?—I am not aware of anything in this district.

B-3551. Not even by missionary societies or other such bodies?—In practice Missionary societies help those boys who are known to them. My proposal was about boys who were not in touch with the missionaries or with people who knew about the conditions of labour who could give them any help. We are able to give for example in our mission some help to the boys we know.

B-3552. In your memorandum you say:

"There is considerable unemployment. The B., B. & C. I. Rly. which is the largest employer of labour in the area, is reducing its staff of workmen." I expect you probably heard this morning that that statement was challenged?—Yes.

B-3553. What is your experience with regard to unemployment?—I do not put this down as the only reason for unemployment. That is merely one reason which strikes the eye of an ordinary observer, that men are

seeking work and that work is not available in the largest concern in the district.

B-3554. What sort of men are seeking work?—Some are of the coolie class, some are semi-skilled labourers. There are also some fitters and carpenters, etc., etc.

B-3555. Where do they come from?—Ajmer.

B-3556. They are residents of the town?—Mostly.

B-3557. You say there is a shortage of houses for working people in Ajmer. The Railway authorities say that they do not provide accommodation for workers of the grade of artisans as there is ample to be obtained in the town. What is your experience?—My experience is that the housing accommodation is neither sufficient nor healthy. Ajmer city is very crowded and the sanitary conditions are not good. It would be a great benefit if houses could be provided on the outskirts.

B-3558. Do you mean municipal houses, or houses supplied by the Railway?—Either.

B-3559. Are there houses available beyond the means of those seeking them?—I daresay there are.

B-3560. You say that the working conditions are on the whole satisfactory in the bigger concerns. I take it you mean by that those places which come under the Factory Act?—Yes.

B-3561. Speaking of work done in the home, you say that the conditions are not good because of the low rates of pay, bad sanitary arrangements and the small size and bad ventilation of most of the workers houses?—I would like this Commission to make some enquiry into these home industries. Either the work is brought to the women's homes or else they go and get it and bring it back.

B-3562. Have you any idea as to what a woman earns on that kind of work?—About six annas a day if they work for about 10 hours.

B-3563. You refer to crèches at particular mills. Is your complaint there that the crèche is simply a space allocated for the children, without any convenience or supervision, and that therefore very little use is made of it?—Yes. There are two sheds available but no one is in charge. There is no furnishing, and no other arrangements are provided.

B-3564. How much are these sheds used in practice as the result of there being no supervision?—As a matter of fact the children just play around the yard. They do not go into the building provided for them. If there was some one in charge, who could look after the children, give them treatment, such as a daily bath, and so on, it would not only benefit the children, but it would be an object lesson to the mothers. So far as I know the mill authorities would be quite willing to undertake such a responsibility.

B-3565. How many women are employed in the three mills to which you refer?—About 150, but very many more are employed in the ginning factories during the season.

B-3566. You say that the mills contribute to the schools in the city but that these schools are not attended by the workers' children who are almost entirely illiterate. Is that because the children are themselves at work?—No. The reason is that the parents are not alive to the necessity of sending their children to school.

B-3567. You say the working hours in the mills should be reduced from 10 to 9 or 8 per day. Is it your contention that if the hours were reduced to, say, 8 per day, the same volume of output would be achieved?—I do not think that that result would be achieved immediately, but my feeling is that if the women (and I only refer here to women) worked only 8 hours per day,

there would then be time for them to attend to their other interests. Welfare work could be done amongst them. If they work ten hours a day, for part of the year at any rate, they have no time to look after any other interest. I think it is in the interests of better work that the working woman should be made more intelligent, her outlook broadened and her standard of living raised. I do not see how we are going to raise her standard of living unless she has some time in which to give attention to matters of hygiene, better living, and so on. I think if the women only worked 8 hours a day, thus giving time for some uplift work to be done amongst them, it would result in more concentrated effort.

B-3568. If there were a shorter legal working day for women than for men, do you not think that might have the effect of penalising the employment of women?—It would probably have that effect.

B-3569. If there is any lowering of the hours of work, do you not think it should apply both to men and to women?—Yes, I think it should.

B-3570. *Colonel Russell* : Can you give us any idea of the death rate and infant mortality rate in Ajmer?—I have not the figures.

B-3571. I understand you are associated to some extent at least with the Mission hospital here. You will no doubt be able to give us some information as regards the incidence of various diseases here. Is it your experience that tuberculosis exists to a high degree in Ajmer?—Yes. In a recent classification of cities, Ajmer was put down as a C. 3 city, as far as tuberculosis was concerned. That means the highest death rate from tuberculosis.

B-3572. Has that anything to do with the question of the shortage of houses and overcrowding?—Yes. One factor is the overcrowding of houses. There are other factors also.

B-3573. You say the conditions are not good because of the low rates of pay. Can you give the Commission some family budgets of the lowest grade of worker? Yes. I have one or two budgets here which have been given to me by coolies and workmen. Here is one earning one rupee a day, of eight hours. He may, by doing overtime, earn Rs. $1/2$ or Rs. $1/4$. He spends on food alone Rs. $22/12$; on house rent Rs. $4/4$. His monthly earnings average Rs. 26.

B-3574. How does he make his both ends meet?—He is in debt, but he ekes out his earnings by doing odd jobs out of work hours and on holidays.

B-3575. Does the wife add to the income?—Not in this case. Here is another budget of a workman earning 12 annas a day; average monthly earnings Rs. 19 or 20. He pays Rs. $18/4$ for food alone—husband, wife and child. He pays Rs. 3 for rent, making a total of Rs. $21/4$, and his average earnings are Rs. 20. He also works overtime. Here is another one. The man earns Rs. 15, and his food bill only comes to Rs. $12/15$, but I think his food items miss out certain vital and necessary things, for instance, ghee.

B-3576. What about vegetables?—Vegetables are very scant.

B-3577. The previous witness, I think, said that the minimum wage ought to be Rs. 35. What is your opinion on that figure?—Personally I think that is perhaps rather high; I think the average food necessary is about Rs. 6 per adult.

B-3578. That would be Rs. 12 for a man and his wife?—Yes.

B-3579. And supposing there were three children varying in ages from 10 to 2 years?—You could count them as two adults.

B-3580. That would be Rs. 24 on food alone. What about clothing?—I think that could be done—of course we are speaking of the minimum—within Rs. 2 per month.

B-3581. Then he would get medical treatment free, I suppose?—Yes.

B-3582. Do you add anything else to that budget?—Probably he has to pay rent.

B-3583. How much?—On an average Rs. 3.

B-3584. Anything else?—There would be some incidental expenses; he will probably have to contribute to his community life in some way, like church collections, etc.

B-3585. That comes to over Rs. 30?—Yes.

B-3586. *Miss Power* : What do you say would be the living minimum wage for a family of five in Ajmer?—I think about Rs. 30 would be a very good sum. A great many people manage on less. I have a budget, for example, of a man who has his wife and four children; he has kept out of debt on Rs. 15, but, of course, as I said, that omits certain necessary items from his diet.

B-3587. When you say he can manage on Rs. 30 it presupposes that his wife is not working?—Yes, taking the family income as Rs. 30.

B-3588. *Colonel Russell* : Would you tell us who compiled these budgets?—I collected them.

B-3589. From the individuals themselves?—Yes.

B-3590. You are satisfied that these figures are reasonably correct?—Yes, because I have a basis for comparison. You take the budget for food, for example, in our hospitals or schools as a criterion. Of course, you can do things very much more cheaply in large quantities but still that gives you a basis for comparison.

B-3591. What would be the average monthly cost for a pupil in your school? I think you have girls there upto 15 years of age?—Yes, up to 18. The average is Rs. 5-4-0 per head.

B-3592. You can feed them on that?—Yes.

B-3593. Does that include articles like ghee and vegetables which would give them vitamins that are so necessary for a good diet?—Yes; and meat twice a week.

B-3594. With regard to the question of welfare work, you would like to have additional trained midwives to look after the wives of workers and children of men and women workers?—That only refers to the Beawar Mills, Yes.

B-3595. Are trained midwives available?—Yes; I think they would be available.

B-3596. You could get a sufficient number of recruits for that class of work?—Yes, they would be available.

B-3597. In your memorandum you say "Apart from this (that is, a Christmas tree and sports day I take it) no definite welfare work is being done among the Railway Indian employees."

On what lines do you think such definite welfare work should be done?—I would like to see either a welfare worker appointed by the Railway, or facilities granted in the way of a house, and perhaps a hall, which would become a community centre for the lowest paid Indian workmen. If the Railway could not appoint an officer, perhaps the Y. M. C. A. might be approached to send a man, if they could be guaranteed suitable accommodation.

B-3598. You think it might be possible for the Railway to appoint a welfare officer of its own?—I think that would be best, if they could see their way to do it.

B-3599. Should that welfare officer be a male or a female?—In Ajmer certainly a man, because there are not many women workers here, and none in the Railway.

B-3600. You say "This attempt at welfare should be resumed". Why was it stopped?—It was stopped, because that particular social worker went home.

B-3601. It was dependent on a voluntary worker?—Yes—this particular effort to which I refer here.

B-3602. You refer to the question of crèches. You approve of the principles of having crèches for the accommodation of children of women workers?—Yes, because I think they are a valuable means of training a woman how to look after her children, and of training the children in good habits.

B-3603. Have you any experience of the working of crèches in India?—No, not for any lengthy period.

B-3604. Would you be surprised to know that in several instances we have learnt that they have been failures?—I know there are difficulties, especially if the crèches are outside the mill premises. In the case of the particular mills mentioned, I think if the existing sheds were improved, and if it were made possible for the children to be near their mothers who could go and see them at any time they wanted to, some of the difficulties might be met. My idea is that a well-qualified woman should be in charge of every crèche.

B-3605. *The Chairman* : Have the employers been asked to provide these crèches?—The matter has been brought to their attention, and is at present engaging their attention.

B-3606. It is not that they decline to provide them?—Not at all; I think they will favourably consider the matter.

B-3607. *Colonel Russell* : Again you say "Beawar separate latrine and bathing arrangements should be provided." Does it imply that there are no separate latrines or bathing arrangements?—There are separate latrines in one sense, but the compound is so big that it seems to me that the women's arrangement might be put in one corner and the men's in another. I was told that women did not use the bathing arrangements, which were excellent, and I thought that if the authorities provided them in another corner they would probably be utilized.

B-3608. Certain complaints have been made to the Royal Commission that the medical treatment and advice given to the workers in Ajmer is inadequate. Do you consider that there are any grounds for any complaints or have you heard of such complaints?—My experience would lead me to suppose that there were no grounds.

B-3609. Would you prefer to say anything more?—So far as I know, they get very good treatment in this hospital. I have visited the railway hospital where the patients are really very happy and contented and my own experience would lead me to suppose that there were no grounds for complaint.

B-3610. You are closely connected with the mission hospital. Is any large proportion of their patients drawn from railway workers communities?—I have not gone into the lists of patients to know that: but in the case of *parda* women certainly, because there is no *parda* ward in the railway hospital. A great many *parda* women come to the mission hospital, but I do not know whether they belong to the railway workers communities.

B-3611. But do you think it would be a reasonable demand if the workers should ask for *parda* wards in the railway hospital?—It would be quite reasonable. The railway hospital is in one part of the city while the mission hospital is in another, and if the railway hospital provides *parda* wards it will meet the needs of those who are nearer to that end.

B-3612. *Mrs. Martin* : You said that medical facilities are provided for females in the railway hospital. Can you tell us how many women go there as in-patients?—I have no idea.

B-3613. How many Indian women nurses or midwives are there?—I do not know the number of staff.

B-3614. Do you know what provision is made in the hospital for women in-patients?—We learnt this morning that two wards have been set apart for Indian women.

B-3615. Is there any Indian woman doctor who attends on them?—I think the sister looks after them.

B-3616. Is there a lady doctor?—No.

Are there Indian nurses?—There are Anglo-Indian nurses.

B-3617. It does not matter whether there are Indian nurses or Anglo-Indian nurses, but are the nurses in sufficient number?—I think so, as far as my knowledge goes.

(The witness withdrew.)

CORRIGENDA.

VOLUME II.

Punjab, Delhi and Aimer-Merwara.

PART II.

Oral Evidence.

Page 3. After the question and answer No. B—25, *add* :—

“ B—25 (a). Therefore, if there is work for 400 only, and there are 600 in the mine, you would prefer to get very small earnings with the whole 600 employed, rather than bigger earnings with only 400 employed ?—Before 1921, the work outside the mine, even in the workshop, was all being done by the miners, and there was sufficient employment for all, as all the work was given out on contract.”

After the question and answer No. B—27, *add* :—

“ B—27 (a). You miners are prepared, if that facility is given to you by Government, to do the work of loading the railway trucks and get those wages ?—We are quite prepared to do it.

“ B—27 (b). Have you asked the Government officers to allow you to do the work and get the wages instead of convicts doing the work ?—Yes, petitions have been handed in.

“ B—27 (c). But the Government officers did not listen ?—Tenders were called for, a contractor came forward, the work was given to that contractor and then these convicts were called in.”

Page 4. After the question and answer No. B—56, *add* :—

“ B—56 (a). Am I to understand that no contribution is made by Government towards the upkeep of the mosque ?—No, we do not get anything.

“ B—56 (b). Have you got a mosque ?—There are about 14 mosques.”

Page 5. After the question and answer No. B—59, *add* :—

“ B—59 (a). You have said that there are some cases of accidents. Do you know a man called Hasla Alla, son of Abbas, who lost his arm as the result of an accident while working in the mine ?—Yes, I know him. (The injured man came forward.)

“ B—59 (b). You have said that pure drinking water is not supplied ; would you like the Government to supply you with pure water where you are working ?—Yes.”

After the question and answer No. B—66, *add* :—

“ B—66 (a). I understand it is said by Government officials that there are no industrial disputes here ; would you accept that statement or do you say there is a dispute among you but it does not reach the ears of the Government ?—We do have disputes about industry but they never reach the higher officials.”

Page 6. After Chairman's remark “As a Royal Commission . . . before this Commission,” *add* :—

“ A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LAMBARDARS (interpreted).

“ B—85 (a). *The Chairman* : You are a lambardar ?—My father is a lambardar, and I am acting for my father.

“ B—85 (b). And working in the mines ?—Yes.

“ B—85 (c). Do you speak for all the lambardars ?—Yes. I have not been sent by the lambardars, but the Manager has sent me.

“ B—85 (d). Do you wish to say anything to the Commission ?—I want to say that we want to get a living wage. We are not getting sufficient. We also object to the deed which is taken from us about our houses, and also to the taxes we have to pay.

(The witness withdrew).”

Page 8. After the question and answer No. B—103, *add* :—

“ B—103 (a). I understand you are a representative of the Government, and therefore in some matters you may have to refer to Government for authority ?—Yes.

" B—103 (b). So that in that sense you are a servant of the Government, and your own power is to some extent limited?—Yes.

" B—103 (c). You have not had representations from the employees that they wish to have an elected committee to represent their grievances to you?—None whatever."

After the question and answer No. B—106, *add* :—

" B—106 (l). As a Commission we recognise that it is impossible for us— it is not the purpose for which we were appointed—to hear individual troubles either here or elsewhere, but it is our desire to see that there should be a regular channel through which these grievances can be represented, and, in such as you think require it, obtain a remedy. You would of course represent to the Government authority, who take the decision, any such cases as require Government orders?—I have certain powers which are rather limited in some directions; but some things I decide for myself and other things, chiefly connected with finance, I have to report for orders."

Page 18. After the question and answer No. B—230, *add* :—

" B—230 (a). Since you are preparing statistics for the Tariff Board, may I ask you to prepare figures taking the date from which the duty was put up?—(*Mr Pitt*) : The duty was raised in 1923 and the output immediately dropped from about 30 lakhs to 18 lakhs of maunds or some such figure. The consumption is 12 lbs. per head per year.

" *The Chairman* : I do not think we should be able to go into that taxation question

" *Drwan Chaman Lall* : I am merely suggesting that we might be able to put an end to the unemployment here by lowering the duty on salt and so increasing the consumption."

Page 22. After the question and answer No. B—293, *add* :—

" B—293 (a). I may take it that you view it that the petition is unfair?—It was put in by men who are not representative; they are rather prominent agitators, I understand, but they are not representative men.

" B—293 (b). What is an agitator?—I am using that expression at the moment in the sense of malcontents who endeavour to create dissatisfaction with existing conditions among the mass of their comrades. I also connote in it in thinking of these men, rather vocal and noisy persons always very anxious to be heard and people who might colloquially be described as sea lawyers.

" *The Chairman* : We must keep ourselves to facts rather than to opinions.

" B—293 (c). *Mr. Cliff* : Was the explanation to which you have just referred given after the change was put into operation or before?—After it was put into operation.

" B—293 (d). Not before?—It was calculated before. I think the men were consulted."

Page 27. After the question and answer No. B—385, *add* :—

" B—385 (a). Would you prefer to work in the open air or in a mine?—I would prefer to work in the open air, except that in the hot weather the mine might be cooler.

" B—385 (b). With regard to labour questions you have a free hand subject to sanction where finance is involved?—Yes."

After question and answer No. B—388, *add* :—

" B—388 (a). According to the Indian Central Jails Committee's report you are not allowed to utilise the services of prisoners?—I have not seen that report.

" B—388 (b). Will you take it from me?—I am prepared to take it from you.

" B—388 (c). Will you therefore report to the Central Government that you are discontinuing the practice of utilising the services of people in jail and that you will in future utilise the services of the people who are unemployed here?—I should be delighted to do so; I would much rather that our people should do it, but our people will not do it and the jail people will.

" B—388 (d). I suppose you are speaking with a due sense of responsibility when you say that it was explained to the lambardars and the gangmen that the old system would be discontinued and the new system of measurement would be introduced?—Yes.

" B—388 (e). That was elaborately explained, but in spite of that these people found that they were great losers under the present system of payment?—I do not agree with that. It was explained to them that the old system was unsatisfactory and that a new system was going to be introduced. A rate was fixed per tub. When it

had been introduced and had been working for a while, they wanted to see if they could get a higher rate. Calculations were then made from which it was found that they stood to lose by having any further inquiry into this, because if a further inquiry were made Government would probably order the rates to be reduced. Since then I have heard no complaints against the new system.

" B—388 (f). If that is so, how is it that these workers now realise that the old system was better than the new system ?—(*Mr. Hoyle*) : They do not realise that at all.

" B—388 (g). Did you explain these things to your workers, to your lambardars and gangmen ?—Is there any entry in your books of account, or is there any record ?—(*Mr. Pitt*) : Yes, I think we have that on the file.

" B—388 (h). Will you bring it to-morrow ?—Yes."

Page 28. After question and answer No. B—394, *add* :—

" B—394 (a). I think you agreed that the method of employing workers through contractors is not a good method, while direct employment is a good method. That being so, will you now discontinue the employment of contractors ?—As a matter of fact, I do not remember saying anything about that, but I will certainly consider it. I cannot see any objection to direct labour. But I must think over it."

Page 31. After the question and answer No. B—433, *add* :—

" B—433 (a). This does not appear to bear out the evidence that has been given to us as to the cost of living dropping and so causing wages to go down.

" *The Chairman* : Under " Rural wages," you refer to these Tables VI and VII, and then you tell us : " As regards prices, reference may be made to two publications of the Board of Economic Enquiry No 7 :—Sixty years of Punjab Food Prices and Eighty years of Punjab Food Prices." Could you get us a copy of these publications ?—Yes. I understand those prices end in the year 1920.

" B—433 (b). *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Perhaps this point can be gone into again if you can find out the reason why these two statements do not agree ?—Yes.

" B—433 (c). It has been stated that there was a drop in wages, and that was possibly due to a fall in the cost of living ?—That was only with reference to the first three years.

" B—433 (d). There has been such a big rise from 1923 to 1926, a small set back in 1927 and 1928, and a rise again in 1929.

" *The Chairman* : Am I to understand that these reports to which you refer of the Board of Economic Enquiry stop at the year 1920 ?—I think so.

" B—433 (e). Perhaps you would supply us with a copy of each of them. Then we will see whether they are really relevant to our work ?—The Board of Economic Enquiry is not an official body ; the reports are not published by the Punjab Government and I cannot say whether there are any in stock, but I will make enquiries and let you know."

Page 38. After the question and answer No. B—512, *add* :—

" B—512 (a). Do I take it that each provincial government is left free in regard to the rules which it has to frame under the Indian Factories Act ?—Yes, there are different sets of rules.

" B—512 (b). That it is not specified in the central legislation. I suppose that is what the Director means ?—But this is referring to the International Draft Convention and the regular series of articles in that.

" B—512 (c). Is there any difficulty in accepting the general proposition and then making your rules thereunder to suit your own local conditions ? It is a pure question of administration ?—Questions of administration are difficult.

After the question and answer No. B—513, *add* :—

" B—513 (a). In regard to a question put to you by Mr. Joshi in connection with the policy of your Government *qua* labour matters, you have detailed a series of very severe hardships that are entailed upon the workers in seasonal factories. All these things in your opinion require a remedy ?—They require that the Government officers should as far as possible do their best to enforce the provisions of the Factory Act."

Page 39. After the question and answer No. B—525, *add* :—

" B—525 (a). Did he enquire from the police on the spot ?—I was not there ; I could not say.

" B—525 (b) Is it a fact that many of the prominent workers in the labour movement in the Punjab have their names in the police registers and are shadowed about ?—I know nothing about it

" B—525 (c) Would you get the information for us ?—No, it does not concern me

" B—525 (d) We are discussing the policy of the Government ?—I am only concerned in the matter of such labour questions that come up before me as secretary to the Member for Revenue I know nothing about any orders having been issued about any labour leader It is another sphere of Government

" B—525 (e) May I take it that you do not know of the opening of the correspondence of these labour leaders ?—Nothing at all I do not know what leaders you refer to

" B—525 (f) People who are prominent in the labour movement in the Punjab ?—I have no knowledge at all "

Page 40 After the question and answer No B—536, *add* —

" B—536 (a) Can you tell me why there is no record kept ?—I do not think that the labour on our running canals is really a big bill

" B—536 (b) Is that the reason why no record is kept ?—What sort of record are you referring to

" B—536 (c) I am referring to your own statement that statistics of labour employment on open canals are not maintained I listened to you commending the Railway companies for the work which they are doing and it is work of this character Can you tell me why the Government are not willing to do themselves the kind of work which they commend for other employers ?

' B—536 (d) *The Chairman* It is clear, Mr Cliff, that it has not been done Will not any improvement be a matter for us ?—I think the Chief Engineers may be asked, if necessary '

Page 51 After " Lt -Col C A Gill Punjab," *add* —

' B—632 (a) *The Chairman* You are the Director of Public Health in the Punjab ?—Yes

' B—632 (b) Will you tell us how long you have held that office ?—For about four years

' B—632 (c) And previous to that ?—I have been engaged in public health work in this Province since 1906

At end of Chairman's remark " There are many things many questions to ask ' *add* —

' because you have put so much into your memorandum "

Page 52 After the question and answer No B—637, *add* —

" B—637 (a) You mention in your memorandum that there is a considerable amount of respiratory disease and then you refer to the prevalence of pulmonary tuberculosis Is there any evidence of a higher rate of pulmonary tuberculosis among industrial workers as compared with the villages ?—I am afraid there are no separate statistics '

After the question and answer No B—649, *add* —

' B—649 (a) I take it that you have read some of the reports of the Industrial Health Research Board in England ?—I cannot say that I have

Page 57 After question and answer No B—710, *add* —

' B—710 (a) The health of the children of criminal tribes kept in settlements is very poor, do they require additional care ?—The health of the whole of these communities is not satisfactory "

After question and answer No B—716, *add* —

" B—716 (a) Is it your experience that in the ginning factories the women are acquainted with the medical relief that is already available for them in the towns ?—I cannot say at all, I do not know '

Page 58 At end of question and answer No 727, *add* —

they have been brought up for generations on a vegetable diet They have not been forced down to this diet, this is the traditional diet of many of the working classes in India "

Page 59 After the question and answer No B—740, *add* —

“ B—740 (a) Have you ever visited any slum ?—Many times.’

Page 60 After the question and answer No B—749, *add* —

“ B—749 (a) How long have you held the post ?—I have been in the Department for about 2½ years, and I have been acting Registrar since the end of February ”

After the question and answer No B—751, *add* —

“ B—751 (a) That is a business run on co operative lines ?—Yes ”

Page 61 After question and answer No B—773 *add* —

‘ B—773 (a) If a telegraph worker wants a loan from the credit society, the authorities co operate in seeing that the loan is guaranteed, that is to say, the amount is deducted from the man’s monthly wages ?—I cannot be certain of that I have not inspected that society myself yet ’

After the question and answer No B—781, *add* —

‘ B—781 (a) In order to run the society is it not a fact that a number of the officers are actually gazetted officers in the railway ?—I cannot say in detail, because I have not inspected that society myself I also do not know exactly to whom the society is open and shut If a society is open to officers, there is no reason why an officer should not be the secretary as well as an ordinary member ”

Page 65 After the question and answer No B—828, *add* —

“ B—828 (a) *The Chairman* We have the fact that in England, with a reduction from 10 hours to 8 hours in a spinner’s day, the reduction in output apart from changes of speed improved machinery and speed of spindle, is much the same, proportionate to the reduction in hours That is in well-managed spinning, where there are no abnormal breakages, where the mixing is good, and where the machinery is good ?—My point is, how many mills in this country are well managed ? ”

Page 66 After the question and answer No B—833, *add* —

“ B—833 (a) Are the profits large or small ?—I do not know ’

Page 67 After the question and answer No B—855, *add* —

‘ B—855 (a) Would there not be a temptation, province by province, to see how much you could get out of the pool as against the other provinces under a divided government of that kind ?—I am afraid I cannot say that ’

Page 68 After the question and answer No 864, *add* —

“ B—864 (a) You do not know whether the wages were increased or not ?—I do not know ’

Page 69 After the question and answer No B—878, *add* —

“ B—878 (a) If they can now produce in 10 hours what they used to produce in 12 hours, the efficiency has improved ?—That is very slight

‘ *The Chairman* That may be due to machinery ”

After the question and answer No B—885, *add* —

“ B—885 (a) Dr Rawley, have you ever made any enquiry as to how many industrial workers have lands to cultivate when they return home ?—(*Dr Rawley*) I am afraid I have not made that enquiry, so that I cannot give you a definite answer

After the question and answer No B—888, *add* —

“ B—888 (a) You speak of scientific experiments which have been made Where were they made ?—Experiments have been made in different parts of India, they have been made in the Sholapur mills and also by me here in Lahore

“ B—888 (b) Can you give us a statement as to the exact experiments made and the results ?—Yes, I will do so ”

Page 69 After the question and answer No B—892, *add* —

“ B—892 (a) Is a judicial officer bound to obey such an order ?—You see according to the Government servants’ rules I must obey my Government In the first place I am a Government servant and then in the second place I am a judicial officer

“ *The Chairman* . We must look into that point ourselves ”

Page 70 After the question and answer No B—903 add —

‘ B—903 (a) Of even one woman factory inspector?—Yes

‘ B—903 (b) You said the bulk of your factories here were ginning factories?—
Yes

‘ B—903 (c) And that 70 per cent of the employees in ginning factories are women and children. Do you still adhere to your views that it would not be justifiable to have even one woman factory inspector?—It is more a question of policy than of administration

‘ B—903 (d) Expense or policy?—Government would probably save expense

Page 73 After the question and answer No B—943 add —

‘ B—943 (a) *The Chairman* With regard to the inclusion of those factories which do not use motive power but employ a certain number of workers say 250, I understand you to say that you feared that the effect of the extension of the Act would result in splitting them up into small groups for the purpose of evasion?—
Yes

Page 74. After the question and answer No B—951 add —

‘ B—951 (a) *Mr Joshi* Do not you think it advisable to bring under the Act printing presses which employ more than ten persons though they do not use power?—I think that is an ideal to which we must work up

Page 74 After the question and answer No B—956, add —

‘ B—956 (a) Have you any knowledge of what these women get? In other parts of India they get a percentage of the workers' earnings?—I know that is how they work but I have no idea what the percentage would be ’

After the question and answer No B—957 add —

‘ B—957 (a) Have you inspected the coolie quarters near the station of which women often complain?—I have been round those quarters, but strictly speaking those are not within my province. I am only concerned with quarters that are within the factory precincts ’

The Chairman I think we must only question you on what is within your duty ’

Page 75 After the question and answer No B—967 add —

‘ B—967 (a) Do you know anything about the practice of personation in regard to certifying the ages of children. I am told that sometimes an elder brother is sent before the surgeon and a certificate is received in the name of the younger brother?—No I have no proof of that, but I have on many occasions found children who in my opinion were well under-age, in which case I send them again to the certifying surgeon. But a certificate to me is proof that the child is that age and I cannot dispute it ’

Page 76 At the beginning of question No B—971, for the words ‘ *Mr Taylor* Dr Rawlley can ’ substitute —

‘ *Mr Taylor* Dr Rawlley, you say in your memorandum—‘ In industrial establishments not coming under the Indian Factories Act the normal hours of work, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement, are from sunrise to sunset—12 hours in summer and 10 hours in winter with an interval of one hour or thereabouts at midday for meals ’ Then you proceed to talk about holidays, and further down you say

In this connection a reference may be made to the conditions prevailing in the carpet factories at Amritsar. Proceeding further you say, ‘ The practice of working overtime in such workshops especially when there is a rush of work, is very common and a labourer usually puts in 12 to 14 hours of work. Overtime dues are paid for hours worked over and above the stipulated hours of work ’ Can ”

Page 77 After the question and answer No B—976, add .—

‘ B—976 (a) In answer to a question put by Sir Alexander Murray on Saturday, Mr Abel volunteered the information that if 10 hours are the stipulated hours of work, a labourer usually only puts in about 8 hours?—That is so in the factories.

‘ B—976 (b) He further volunteered the information to the Chairman that an average Indian labourer only works when he is made to?—There is no compulsion at all

‘ B—976 (c). I take it that the implication in the statements made by you in your memorandum is not such as is made out to be?—The implication is that

although there are no stipulated hours of work still sometimes when the contractor wants to finish the work early, he makes his men work for more than the normal number of hours—by 'normal' I mean in those factories or establishments where the Factory Act applies "

Page 78 After the question and answer No B—992, *add* —

' B—992 (a) May I take it that we have now arrived at the stage when we may say that the implications as regards conditions which are contained in this memorandum are not quite so bad as they appear to be ?—No, I would not say that. As I have already said, the fact that complaints are not received does not warrant the conclusion that everything is all right in the industry. I can assure you that there is a good deal of room for improvement.

" B—992 (b) *Dr Hitesh* Dr Rawley, as Registrar of Trade Unions in the Punjab, do you think that the Labour Bureaux established by the North Western Railway will be resorted to by the timid and illiterate workmen ?—I am afraid I do not know much about that, it is not in my jurisdiction "

After the question and answer No B—994, *add* —

" B—994 (a) Do you think they expect much support from the Government even though they do not get themselves registered under the Trade Unions Act ?—I am afraid I am not an employer in that sense, I cannot answer that question.

" B—994 (b) Do you agree with Mr Watts who has stated in his memorandum that trade unionism in India is detrimental to industry ?—I cannot answer for what Mr Watts has said.

' *The Chairman* I do not think we can ask one witness to comment on what another witness has said.

" B—994 (c) *Dr Hitesh* As Registrar of trade unions in the Punjab I should like to ascertain his personal opinion in the matter ?—Certainly trade unionism will be beneficial to industry.

' B—994 (d) You have stated that you have received instructions from the Government not to register trade unions formed by Government servants. Have you received similar instructions with regard to quasi-Government employees' unions ?—I think the Chairman said that he would deal with that question himself.

" B—994 (e) I am referring to quasi-Government employees ?—I do not know what you mean by that.

' B—994 (f) I mean, for instance, employees of municipalities, patwaris, etc ?—They are not quasi-Government bodies they are public bodies "

After the question and answer No B—995, *add* —

" B—995 (a) Would you not recommend the adoption of a cheaper, better and safer medical treatment, other than allopathic, for the workmen ?—I am afraid I cannot say. I am not a medical man. I cannot say whether allopathy or homoeopathy is better.

' B—995 (b) *Mr Ghani*, In your memorandum you state that ' the fall in the wages of other industrial labourers is undoubtedly due to the fall in the cost of living since the last wages census ' When was the last wages census taken ?—1927.

' B—995 (c) Who takes this wages census ?—I think the figures come from the Director of Land Records.

" B—995 (d) Do you subscribe to whatever is written in this wages census ?—Do you think they are accurate ?—They are as accurate as it is humanly possible to have them under the present circumstances.

' " B—995 (e) Do you know the methods by which the census is taken ?—I am afraid I do not deal with that Department "

Page 78 After the question and answer No B—996, *add* —

" B—996 (a) Could you help the Commission by suggesting the sort of machinery which will be most suitable ?—I am afraid that question will probably take another year to investigate in detail. It is impossible for me to suggest any legislative machinery at this stage, I must go into the question in greater detail "

Page 79 After the question and answer No B—997, *add* —

" B—997 (a) In reply to Mr Joshi, you said that a certain circular had been issued by the Government of India prohibiting the registration of trade unions of Government servants, and you also admitted then that you were a judge under the Indian Trade Unions Act. May I ask you if it is not misconduct on the part of a judge to receive instructions and to act upon them ?—I think it has not been finally

decided whether as Registrar of Trade Unions I act in any capacity as a judge or as an executive officer. All I can tell you is that if a Government servant disobeys Government orders, he is fined or dismissed.

" *The Chairman* I do not think we can press the witness to say more.

' B—997 (b) *Mr Gham* Under the Trade Unions Act does an appeal lie to the District Judge from your order?—Yes "

After the question and answer No B—1000, *add* —

" B—1000 (a) Do you consider that it is the duty of the Punjab Government to take steps in that direction?—I am afraid it is impossible for me to say. Mr Wilson could have answered that question on behalf of the Punjab Government."

After the question and answer No B—1004 *add* —

" B—1004 (a) *Col Russell* In your memorandum you refer to some mortality statistics. Have you any definite statistics to support your statement?—It is mere conjecture, based upon the figures issued by the Public Health Department.

" B—1004 (b) Have you any statistics to prove the statement you make in that paragraph about physique?—That is based on my personal observation. I have mentioned in the very beginning that there is no statistical information available.

" B—1004 (c) That is only your impression?—That is right."

Page 80 After the question and answer No B—1022, *add* —

" B—1022 (a) *The Chairman* My point was that if you have made proposals it would interest us very much to see those proposals?—Yes, I will let you have a copy of them."

After the question and answer No B—1023, *add* —

" B—1023 (a) *Diwan Chaman Lall* Di Rawley, Mr Taylor asked you a question with regard to compulsion of workers in the carpet factories. Is there such a thing as the compulsion of hunger?—(*Dr Rawley*) There is undoubtedly the compulsion of hunger."

Page 81 After the question and answer No B—1025, *add* —

" B—1025 (a) Will you tell me approximately how long it would take a child of 10 to put in 1 100 stitches?—I am afraid I cannot tell you, I have not watched them actually working.

" B—1025 (b) Would it be a couple of hours, roughly?—I cannot commit myself to that.

" B—1025 (c) You were asked as to the possible dispersal of these factories if regulations were made. Do you think a parent working a child in the home would make the conditions less onerous than an employer working that child in a factory, supposing there was dispersal?—I should suggest that it depends entirely upon the temperament of the parent.

" B—1025 (d) But generally would it not be natural for a parent to treat his child better than an employer outside would treat the children?—That is true."

After the question and answer No B—1035, *add* —

' B—1035 (a) Its findings, therefore, cannot be taken as covering the whole subject?—Its findings so far as the illiterate people are concerned.

" B—1035 (b) That is what I am referring to at the present moment.

" *The Chairman* Mr Chaman Lall, I am not quite clear what that enquiry was. Was it an enquiry generally into the incidence of unemployment?

" *Diwan Chaman Lall* The terms of reference were to investigate and report on the extent of the existence of unemployment among the educated and uneducated classes of the community in the Punjab, the causes of unemployment, and the possible remedies of unemployment.

" B—1035 (c) Figures were given in regard to the number of industrial workers in the Punjab and the figure of 51,613 was given?—Yes.

" B—1035 (d) Those are industrial workers covered by the Factories Act?—(*Mr Abel*) Yes."

After the question and answer No B—1037, *add* ;—

' B—1037 (a). But the fact remains that, including the transport workers, domestic workers, and those employed in industry, with their dependants, something like half the population of the Punjab is living on industry?—The Census is undoubtedly correct.

' B—1037 (b). *The Chairman* Is domestic service defined as industry ?
' *Drwan Chaman Lall* : No, it is not (*Dr Rawlley*) Neither is transport "

Page 82 After the question and answer No B—1050, *add* —

" B—1050 (a) One of your economists here, Mr Brij Narain, has made the statement in a book recently published that the wages of the average worker to-day are not better than the wages of that particular class of workers 329 years ago ?—I have not seen it

" *The Chairman* I gather Mr Chaman Lall's point is that we should all have been much happier if there had been no such thing as what is called modern civilisation

' *Drwan Chaman Lall* I mean that modern civilisation has not helped the worker

" B—1050 (b) Have you any figures of mortality with regard to the congestion in housing ?—No "

Page 91 After the question and answer No B—1164, *add* —

" B—1164 (a) When they advance Rs 500 for how many months would it last ?—It is according to the deductions Sometimes they have it deducted and sometimes they do not, sometimes though they are not willing to have anything deducted from their wages "

Page 94 After the question and answer No B—1209 *add* —

" B—1209 (a) Do you know that there was a criminal law in existence sometime in India which provided that if the artisan did not work in terms of the contract, within the time provided for, he should be compelled to work ?—I have never heard of that law

" B—1209 (b) That being so the ignorant masses among the workers are afraid that since they take an advance of money they can be brought before a court, and that is the reason why they do not run away ?—This is news to me, I do not know that "

After the question and answer No B—1212 *add* —

" B—1212 (a) Do you know that the Government of India and the Provincial Government have taken steps to look after the factories, there are certain inspectors since 1924, and the Legislature is controlling the factories since 1924, do you know that ?—Yes, because we have got a factory which is under the Factory Law

" B—1212 (b) Here, since 1924, you have got certain inspectors ?—Yes

" B—1212 (c) Inspecting your factories ?—Not the carpet factories, because they are not under the Factory Law But we have had inspectors visiting our mills

" B—1212 (d) The carpet factories have never been under the Factories Law but investigation has been authorised by the Government of India ?—There has been investigation, but the carpet factories have not been under the Factory Law "

After the question and answer No B—1213, *add* —

" B—1213 (a) Do you know other factories here besides your four factories ?—I am afraid I have never taken any interest in any factory but our own factories I have had no time to do so "

Page 98 After the question and answer No B—1277, *add* —

" B—1277 (a). When he engages these boys is it not a fact that the boys themselves have no lien on the wages they are paid ?—(*Mr Davies*) They have in the advances they take from the master weaver

" B—1277 (b) It is the grandfather or the parent who is taking the advance ?—(*Mr Stevens*) It is the person who is responsible for the boy

" B—1277 (c) Let us take this position, that the advance is paid out to the parent or the grandparent. The boy himself has no lien on any wages which might accrue to him in the course of the month Then would I be correct in saying that this is more or less slave labour that is being employed in these factories ?—I do not see it in that light at all I am making a contract to buy a carpet I do not see why I should be taxed with employing slave labour I have not asked him to weave it himself ; I know he cannot I do not see where the question of slave labour comes in

" *The Chairman* Mr Chaman Lall, do not press that.

" B—1277 (d) *Drwan Chaman Lall*. When Mr. Sastri was examining you, you said that you yourself when you were young were slapped ?—Sometimes, yes

" B—1277 (e) Were you ever sold by your parents into a factory like this as these children are being sold ?—I do not see that these children have been sold by their parents, I do not accept that I am afraid we do not see it in the same light I do not admit that these children are sold by their parents

" B—1277 (f) How would you be describing their position ?—They are simply working

B—1277 (g) Are they free labourers who have joined up and are working in your factory of their own accord ?

The Chairman Mr Chaman Lall that is really a matter for us to have our opinion about

" *Dewan Chaman Lall* Then I will leave it

" *The Chairman* . Would it not be fair to call it a mediaeval apprenticeship "

Page 99 In question and answer No B—1291 after the words " we have made," occurring in the third line, *add* as a new question and answer —

Dewan Chaman Lall Can you tell us the amount of profits you have made up to 18 months ago ?—I am not prepared to do so in public.

' *The Chairman* I do not think we can press that point Mr Chaman Lall because the contrary argument would not hold that where a company was making a loss they would be entitled to take it out of their workers I do not think it is an argument which would hold '

Witness — *As from line 3 in reply to question No B—1291, viz* " I do not think willing to state '

After the question and answer No B—1291 *add* —

B—1291 (a) *Dewan Chaman Lall* There is no point in my pressing that matter since you are not prepared to give us the facts ?—Our company is a private company and I do not see how that would further your ends

The Chairman The question of the conditions under which people work is really not governed by the amount of money that the company makes

Dewan Chaman Lall My only point is that the witness has said that if the Factories Act was applied it would put an end to the industry "

Page 102 After the question and answer No B—1326, *add* —

' B—1326 (a) Do you think that it has affected the cost at all ?—I could not say exactly, but cost of labour has gone up since I left Persia in 1922 "

Page 114 After the question and answer No B—1491, *add* —

' B—1491 (a) In order to give effect to the Factories Act is it not necessary that you should have more staff and a full-time factory inspector ?—Yes, that is absolutely necessary "

After the question and answer No B—1494, *add* .—

" B—1494 (a) With reference to a question put by Mr Birla regarding the acquisition of land at reasonable prices for building houses for workers, you are aware that there is a provision in the Land Acquisition Act by which an employer can easily acquire land at a reasonable price ?

' *Mr Birla* Not necessarily at a reasonable price.

' *Sir Alexander Murray* It must be for a public purpose.

" B—1494 (b) *Mr Ahmed* Are you aware that the employers can take the help of the law courts to acquire land for this purpose ?—I have not heard of it, but I accept your word for it '

Page 130 After the question and answer No B—1735, *add* —

" B—1735 (a) *Col Russell* In paragraph 57 of your memorandum you say that ' the effect of the 60 hours' restriction appears to be salutary both in the case of the industry and the industrial operative ' The effect of daily limit is equally salutary ' Can you make your replies to the Assistant Commissioner coincide with these statements ?—I do not see where it does not coincide.

" B—1735 (b). *The Chairman* . When the weekly and daily restrictions were first proposed, did your Chamber support them ?—I cannot say.

' B—1735 (c). But anyhow since they have come into operation you have found them to be satisfactory ?—Yes."

Page 131 After the question and answer No B—1746 *add* —

“ B—1746 (a) Supposing there were unemployment, would you still be averse to unemployment exchanges?—That is a hypothetical question, we say there is no unemployment, and therefore it is not necessary to have employment bureaux ”

After the question and answer No B—1752, *add* —

“ B—1752 (a) *The Chairman* And the cost has not been estimated?—(*Mr Taylor*) The cost has not been estimated and the machinery to be set up for the purpose would be enormous ’

Page 162 After the question and answer No B—2184, *add* —

“ B—2184 (a) Do you know that there is a Convention fixing the hours of work of seamen? No I think no Convention has been passed which fixes the hours of work of seamen. Such a Convention was considered by the Labour Conference of 1920 at Geneva but it was not accepted by the Conference

B—2184 (b) Have you not heard anything about such a Convention lately?—Yes the question is under consideration at the 13th Conference of the International Labour Office which is now sitting ’

After the question and answer No B—2189, *add* —

“ B—2189 (a) You have made no provision?—No, we have not

“ B—2189 (b) Neither is there any co-operative credit society provided for Indian seamen?—That is a provincial subject, too. There are co-operative credit societies in the villages, and it is quite possible that the seaman or his family are members of these societies

“ B—2189 (c) There is no co-operative society near Calcutta?—I cannot say, I have no information ”

After the question and answer No B—2192, *add* —

“ B—2192 (a) How much it costs?—I cannot say

“ B—2192 (b) You have given the average salary of an Indian seaman. How does it compare with what other seamen receive in other countries?—I have no idea

“ B—2192 (c) I put it to you that the seamen in other countries get four to eight times more than an Indian seaman?—I cannot answer that

“ B—2192 (d) Can you give me an idea of what Chinese and Japanese seamen receive?—No

“ B—2192 (e) I put it to you that it is three or four times greater?—I have no information ”

Page 163 After the question and answer No B—2217, *add* —

“ B—2217 (a) I am not talking of differentiation with regard to wages. I am speaking about hours of work. I want to know what were your instructions to your delegates about hours of work. Were you in favour of the regulation of hours, or were you against it?—We adopted the same attitude as was adopted in 1920

“ B—2217 (b) What was your exact attitude as regards the reduction of hours?—If you want the exact attitude I shall have to refer to the papers

“ B—2217 (c) *Mr Ahmed* Is it not a fact that when Indian seamen who go ashore at New York for a while they try to be left behind and they do not return in time before the departure of the ship, they find employment as seamen elsewhere at eight to twenty times more than they were getting from their ships, and that they come back to India very rich men after some time?—I cannot say ’

Page 190 After the question and answer No B—2592, *add* —

“ B—2592 (a) *Mr Ahmed* Would you like to increase the number of co-operative societies?—I do not think I can give you a reply to a question like that

“ B—2592 (b) Would your Department like to do so?—We have taken steps in the ordinary way to encourage the development of co-operative societies, but it is primarily the concern of the local Governments

“ B—2592 (c) *Mr Clow* : It is solely their concern, is not it?—Yes, it is solely their concern as a transferred subject

“ B—2592 (d). *Mr. Ahmed* : Is not labour a subject of the Central Government?—No

“ B—2592 (e). There is a Member in charge of it, whose duty it is to control, direct and supervise?—Yes, but it is primarily the concern of the provincial Government. As I have explained, so far as co-operative credit societies are concerned, it is a provincial transferred subject, and they are not under the superintendence, direction and control of the Government of India.

" B—2595 (f) Are you prepared to introduce a Bill or support a non-official member in introducing a Bill in the Legislative Assembly with a view to employers in factories, tea plantations and so on starting co operative societies ?—I do not think we could do that within our constitution

" B—2595 (g) Why ?—Because it is a provincial transferred subject

" B—2595 (h) But is it not also an all India subject ?—No I am very sorry but we have to confine ourselves to working within the limits of the constitution as it is laid down, we cannot go beyond that whatever may be our private views on any particular subject It is a provincial transferred subject and we must leave it to provincial governments and provincial legislatures

B—2595 (i) If you wrote to the provincial Governments would they object to your taking such steps ?—I think they would take very severe objection if we tried to interfere in their administration of provincial transferred subjects

" B—2595 (j) What do you mean by 'interference' ? Are direction and supervision interference ?—Certainly

' B—2595 (k) Then you are in the habit of interfering ?—We have no power of superintendence, direction and control in provincial transferred subjects '

Page 214 After the question and answer No B—2935 *add* —

" B—2935 (a) So these statements, I take it, are based on *ex parte* evidence ?—That is an inference You can make it yourself

B—2935 (b) You do not subscribe to these allegations made against the working classes ?—I am not here to subscribe to those allegations

' B—2935 (c) These are quotations from these various committees

" *The Chairman* But not on the authority of this Department

' B—2935 (d) *Diwan Chaman Lall* I wanted to know why it was incumbent on this Department to bring these matters before us if they did not believe in the allegations that were made ?—They are the findings of very important committees, it was only right and proper that they should be brought to the notice of this Commission

Page 215 After the remark by Chairman ending 'conciliation or arbitration,' *add* —

" B—2945 (a) *Diwan Chaman Lall* Could you give me some reasons for the justification of the Government in insisting upon Sections 15 and 16 of the Trade Disputes Act being incorporated in that Act

" *The Chairman* That surely is a matter dealt with in the debates The only thing that concerns us is whether or not we are to recommend any change in the law

' B—2945 (b) *Diwan Chaman Lall* It is possible that the Government of India might have changed their views (*The Witness*) No

" B—2945 (c) Are the Government of India still of the same opinion ?—So far as I know they are of the same opinion

" B—2945 (d) Has any necessity arisen since the passing of that Act ?—Not that I am aware of '

Page 248 After the question and answer No B—3323, *add* —

' B—3323 (a) Yesterday myself and my friend Mr Cliff had the opportunity of visiting certain quarters outside the workshop where the workers live We were told that people who got ill during work had to go home and they did not get any assistance When they want to come back to work, to be put on the same work that they were doing before they are required to produce a medical certificate that they were ill otherwise the railway authorities would not take them in the loco workshop Is that correct ?—It is possible, I am afraid I have no knowledge

" B—3323 (b) Unless they take a certificate from a recognised railway medical man they cannot get employment ?—I should imagine that to be correct, but I have no knowledge

' B—3323 (c) Have you seen the hospital which we inspected yesterday morning ?—I have visited it

" B—3323 (d) There are only 24 beds for the Indian workers ?—I did not count them

" B—3323 (e) And 12 for European and Anglo-Indians ?—Possibly

' B—3323 (f) This is not sufficient accommodation in the hospital for workers considering their number is very large ?

" *The Chairman* That does not come under the Factories Act."

Page 253 At the end of question and answer No B—3390, *add* —

“ I might give you one instance which has come to my mind just now , we came to know of this instance in December last at Jharia Although the Railway Board have been assuring us that racial discrimination has been abolished and so forth, the Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway issued a circular to the heads of his departments that Europeans and Anglo-Indians have established a claim and they should be continued to be engaged without any educational tests

“ *The Chairman* I really think I must stop this, because it is a matter we discussed at Delhi, Mr Joshi, it would only be going over the ground again , we cannot possibly pursue that here

“ *Mr Joshi* The difficulty arises on account of the fact that definite statements are made, and unless we collect proof now from various witnesses how is that point to be met ?

“ *The Chairman* We cannot raise those points where we cannot have the other side of the question, and it will be impossible if we keep going over and over again the ground we have already dealt with I should certainly think that in the case of a particular railway we must take the headquarters of the railway ”

Add at end of the volume after page 268 —

“ The following evidence, heard on the 4th November, 1929, during the visit to building works on the site of the new Government Press, New Delhi was placed on record The evidence was taken and recorded before the following members —

Mr A G Clow,
Mr Kabeer-ud-Din Ahmed,
Mr N M Joshi,
Diwan Chaman Lall,
Mr J Cliff,
Miss B M Le Poer Power
and Mr A Dibdin, Joint Secretary

Naraina Sais, Woman Labourer of Paharganj, Delhi

- B—3618 *Mr Clow* What pay do you get ?—Seven annas a day
B—3619 Do all the women here get seven annas daily ?—Yes
B—3620 What do the men labourers get ?—Some get eight annas and some nine annas
B—3621 Does your husband work ?—Yes he is a stone breaker on the roads
B—3622 How much does he get ?—Rs 15 a month
B—3623 Do your children work ?—I have only a small infant girl.
B—3624 Where do you come from ?—Jaipur State
B—3625 How long have you worked in Delhi ?—One or two years
B—3626 Where did you work before ?—In Jaipur
B—3627 What did you do ?—I used to mill flour in people’s houses for two or three annas a day
B—3628 What do you do here ?—I mix mortar and carry bricks
B—3629 *Mr Cliff* Where do you stay ?—In a mud hut in Paharganj
B—3630 What rent do you pay ?—four annas a month
B—3631 Who built the hut ?—We built it ourselves
B—3632 Are you paid daily ?—No, monthly
B—3633 Do you get advances ?—I get two or three rupees each month
B—3634 Do you get only one advance ?—I get advances as I require them for food and they are deducted at the end of the month
B—3635 *Mr Chaman Lall* How much did you take last month ?—Rs 4 was advanced to me
B—3636 How many days a month do you work ?—About 20 or 21
B—3637 When do you come in the morning ?—At seven
B—3638 When do you leave ?—By the time we are checked up, it is lighting-up time
B—3639 *Mr Cliff* Do you work the same hours at both seasons ?—Practically the same , but in the hot weather we get a recess for the midday meal
B—3640 Is there no recess in winter ?—No , but we take it as we can
B—3641 In summer, how long is the interval ?—Half an hour
B—3642. *Miss Power* Are you in debt ?—Yes I owe Rs 500
B—3643. You or your husband ?—My husband took it and I also contribute to redeem it.

- B—3644. What interest do you pay ?—1 anna a rupee per month.
 B—3645. But that would make the interest more than you are getting ?—We pay the bania what we can, and borrow more when necessary.
 B—3646. How was the debt incurred ?—It was incurred for our living expenses.
 B—3647. *Mr. Clow* : Not for a wedding ?—My husband took some for a wedding, but I don't know how much.
 B—3648. What clothes do you get each year ?—I get clothes twice a year, a skirt, a blouse, a shawl, a pair of shoes.
 B—3649. What do they cost ?—A shawl costs Rs.3, a blouse Rs.3 8 annas, a skirt length Rs.7 and Rs. 1 for making it, and shoes cost Rs.3 or Rs.4.
 B—3650. Do you wear out two pairs of shoes a year ?—No ; I get shoes once a year.
 B—3651. What did your present pair cost ?—Rs.2.
 B—3652. *Miss Power* : Do you have two meals daily ?—No, three—in the morning, at midday and after we return.
 B—3653. Of what do they consist ?—In the morning I make barley bread and have $\frac{1}{2}$ an anna's worth of pulse and this does for the morning meal and for midday. The evening meal is the same, and if we have money, we get vegetables.
 B—3654. Do you use ghee or oil ?—No ; I can't afford that.
 B—3655. Is the half anna of pulse sufficient for the three meals ?—No ; if we have money, we get more in the evening.
 B—3656. How much barley do you use ?—One rupee's worth lasts for 7 or 8 days.
 B—3657. *Mr. Chaman Lall* : Is that for your husband and you, too ?—Yes ; for both.
 B—3658. What do you spend on wood ?—1 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas a day.
 B—3659. What do you spend on salt ?— $\frac{1}{4}$ anna every four days.
 B—3660. And on spices ?— $\frac{1}{4}$ anna on red pepper.
 B—3661. How do you use it ?—When we can get vegetables we mix the pepper with them ; otherwise we mix it with the pulse.
 B—3662. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you buy soap ?—No.
 B—3663. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do you get a light at night ?—Yes ; we use kerosene oil.

Bodha, Khatik, Builders' Labourer.

- B—3664. *Mr. Clow* : How old are you ?—Ten years.
 B—3665. What work do you do ?—I break up brickbats.
 B—3666. What pay do you get ?—One to one and a-half annas a day.
 B—3667. How long have you been working ?—One to one and a half years.
 B—3668. Where do you come from ?—Jaipur.
 B—3669. *Miss Power* : When do you come in the morning ?—I come at 7 in the morning with my father.
 B—3670. When do you go back ?—At 6.30 at night.
 B—3671. Do you work all the time ?—Yes.
 B—3672. *Mr. Cliff* : Are you employed under a contractor ?—Yes.

Reora, Chamar, Builders' Labourer.

- B—3673. *Mr. Clow* : How old are you ?—11 years.
 B—3674. *Mr. Chaman Lall* : How much do you get ?—2 to 3 annas a day.
 B—3675. How long do you work ?—From 7 to 6.30.
 B—3676. Do you work all day ?—Yes.
 B—3677. *Mr. Cliff* : What kind of work do you do ?—I break up brickbats.
 B—3678. *Mr. Chaman Lall* : Do you come from Jaipur ?—No ; from Alwar State.
 B—3679. What did you have for your breakfast this morning ?—I had only barley bread.
 B—3680. You had no pulse ?—No.
 B—3681. Do you always eat this ?—Yes.
 B—3682. Do you ever get pulse in the evening ?—When we can afford it.
 B—3683. Do you get a meal in the middle of the day ?—No ; when I go back I get another meal which is barley bread with dal or spinach.
 B—3684. Do you get ghee or oil ?—No.
 B—3685. Do you get sugar cane ?—Sometimes, if I have money for it."

