

C-1903/140

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE  
INDIAN BRANCH

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Report for January 1938.

N.B. Every section of this Report may be taken out separately.

<u>Contents.</u>	<u>Pages.</u>
<u>1. National Labour Legislation.</u>	
(a) The U.P. Trade Disputes Conciliation Bill, 1938.	1-2
(b) The U.P. Maternity Benefit Bill, 1938: Referred to Select Committee on 18-1-1938.	2
(c) The Cochin Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937.	3
(d) The Central Trade Union Regulations, 1938: Draft Notification of Government of India.	3-4
(e) Poisoning by Nitrous Fumes classed as Occupational Disease; U.P. Government Notification.	4
(f) The Bengal Shop Hours and Shop Assistants Bill, 1938; Non-Official Bill to regulate Conditions of Shop Assistants.	4-4
<u>2. Conditions of Labour.</u>	
(a) Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for Various Centres in India during October 1937.	7
(b) Minimum Wages for Vacuum Pan Sugar Factory Workers in U.P.: Government's Suggestion to Factory Managers.	7-8
(c) Minimum Demands of Press Workers of Patna.	8
(d) Demands of Cawnpore Shop Assistants: Shop Assistants' Conference, 12-1-1938.	8-9
(e) Grievances of Anamalai Plantation Workers: Labour Union's Memorandum to Minister for Labour.	9-10
(f) 8-Hour Day introduced in French India.	10
(g) Minimum Monthly Pay of Rs. 25/- for Municipal Employees: Recommendations of Standing Committee of Municipal Corporation, Bombay.	11
<u>3. Enforcement of Conventions.</u>	
Factory Administration in the N.W. Frontier Province, 1936.	12-13
<u>4. Industrial Organisation:</u>	
<u>Workers' Organisations.</u>	
(a) All India Railwaymen's Federation: First Zonal Conference held at Calcutta, 18-12-1937.	14-15
(b) Recognition of Registered Trade Unions in C.P.: Informal Conference under Government Auspices with Mill Managements.	15
(c) 4th Bengal Provincial Labour Conference, Kankinarah, 8 to 11-12-1937.	15-16
(d) 15th Half-Yearly Meeting between A.I.R.F. and the Railway Board, 26 and 27-1-1938.	16-18
<u>5. Economic Conditions.</u>	
<u>Economic Conditions in Assam Tea Plantations, 1936.</u>	19

6.	<u>Employment and Unemployment.</u>	
(a)	Unemployment in Bombay: Resolution in Legislative Council regarding the Appointment of Enquiry Committee accepted.	20
(b)	Dacca University establishes Employment Bureau.	20-21
(c)	Facilities for Indian Apprentices: Bombay Legislative Assembly Resolutions.	21
(d)	Reducing Unemployment in Bihar: Principal Measures taken by the Government.	21-22
(e)	New Scheme for Recruitment to Government Services: Qualifying Examination at Age 17: Government of India's Proposals.	22-24
(f)	Unemployment in Bombay: Resolution adopted by Legislative Assembly.	24
(g)	Resolution re: Unemployment Bureaus: Bombay Legislative Assembly rejects non-official Suggestion.	24
7.	<u>Public Health.</u>	
	Provincial Health Ministers' Conference, Madras, 29-12-1937.	25-26
8.	<u>Co-operation.</u>	
(a)	Co-operation in Baroda State, 1935-36.	27-28
(b)	Progress of Co-operation in the Punjab, 1935-36.	28-30
9.	<u>Women and Children.</u>	
	12th Session of All-India Women's Conference, Madras, 28 to 31-12-1937.	31-32
10.	<u>Education.</u>	
(a)	Reorganisation of Indian Education: Zakir Hussain Committee's Report.	33-34
(b)	Vocational Education in Bombay: Government appoints Advisory Committee.	35-36
(c)	Adult Education in Bombay Presidency: Bombay Government appoints Advisory Committee.	37-38
(d)	Educational Reform in Bihar: Government appoints Enquiry Committee.	38
11.	<u>Agriculture.</u>	
(a)	The Bombay Moneylenders Bill, 1938.	39
(b)	Extension of Punjab Relief of Indebtedness Act, 1934, to Delhi Province: Delhi Debt Conciliation Rules.	39-40
12.	<u>Maritime Affairs.</u>	
	1st Patna Divisional Nawak (River Workers) Conference, Dehri-on-Sone, 12-1-1938.	41
13.	<u>Migration.</u>	
(a)	Indians in Fiji in 1936: Report of Secretary for Indian Affairs, Fiji Government.	42-43
(b)	Labour Troubles in Mauritius: Statement by Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay.	43-44
(c)	Indian Workers in Burma: Government decides on appointment of Agent.	44

91

National Labour Legislation.

The U.P. Trade Disputes Conciliation Bill, 1938.

The Government of the United Provinces will be introducing in the forthcoming session of the U.P. Legislative Assembly the U.P. Trade Disputes Conciliation Bill, 1938, to make provision for the prevention and settlement of trade disputes by conciliation. (The text of the Bill is published at pages 5-12 of the U.P. Gazette Extraordinary dated 12-1-1938). The following is a summary of the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill:

In view of the important place of labour in organised industry and the desirability of dealing with labour problems and difficulties in a systematic manner, the U.P. Government consider that steps should be taken to set up some regular machinery for looking after the interests of labour and promoting close contact between employers and employees. They consider that the best system to adopt for this purpose is to appoint a Labour Officer. He will in the first instance try to get at the root of troubles by detecting abuses and bringing them to the notice of employers; he will look after the interests of the employees and act as a welfare officer in the broadest sense of the term. If he is satisfied that they have grievances, it will be his business to represent them and try to get them redressed; if possible he will negotiate a settlement. He is, of course, not intended to replace the efforts of workmen themselves; it is probable that as a result of his activities, representational organisation will be fostered and growth of healthy trade unions accelerated. In short, the functions of the Labour Officer will be to promote harmonious relations between employers and employees, create mutual understanding and goodwill and prevent disputes.

In addition, it is also proposed that Government should have the power to appoint a suitable person as Conciliator when a dispute arises which cannot be settled by the Labour Officer. He will bring the parties together, suggest possible lines of compromise and induce them to arrive at an amicable settlement. Even if his efforts are unsuccessful, he should, as pointed out by the Royal Commission on Labour in India, "be in a position to give wise advice to Government as to the stage at which it could bring its influence to bear either privately or by the appointment of a Statutory Board or Court."

The best means of establishing this system appears to be by means of an Act of the Legislature describing the duties of the Labour Officer, and of the Conciliator, and the methods by which the employers and the workmen could approach ~~for~~ them for conciliation when disputes may arise. Accordingly the present Bill provides for the appointment of a Labour Officer and Conciliators if necessary, in order to prevent and settle trade disputes by conciliation. (Extracted from pages 5-12- of the U.P. Gazette Extraordinary dated 12-1-1938).

Bill Introduced in U.P. Assembly.- Dr. K.V. Katju, Member for Industries, introduced the Bill in the U.P. Legislative Assembly on 22-1-1938 and moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. Sir Maharaj Singh, while agreeing with the general principle of the Bill, moved an amendment to the effect that the Bill be circulated. Dr. Katju, on behalf of the Government, accepted the amendment. Opinions on the Bill are to be submitted by 21-2-1938.

(The Leader, 25-1-1938).

The U.P. Maternity Benefit Bill, 1938:  
Referred to Select Committee on 18-1-1938.

The Government of the United Provinces introduced the U.P. Maternity Benefit Bill, 1938, on 18-1-1938 in the U.P. Assembly; it was referred to a Select Committee the same day. The text of the Bill is published at pages 13-17 of the United Provinces Gazette Extraordinary dated 12-1-1938. The main features of the Bill are summarised below:

No employer shall knowingly employ a woman in a factory during the 4 weeks immediately following the day of her delivery. Every woman employed in a factory shall be entitled to the payment of maternity benefit at the rate of her average daily earnings calculated on the total wages earned on the days when full time work was done during a period of three months preceding the date on which she gives notice of her confinement or at the rate of 8 annas per day, whichever is less, for the actual days of her absence (but for a period not exceeding 4 weeks) during the period immediately preceding her delivery and for the 4 weeks immediately following her delivery. The maximum period for which a woman worker can be entitled to benefit is 8 weeks, namely, the 4 weeks preceding and the 4 weeks following the day of delivery. Benefit can be claimed only by those women workers who have been in continuous employment in a factory for at least six months immediately preceding the date on which they give notice of confinement.

The Bill stipulates that any notice of dismissal given by an employer to a woman worker during the period of confinement shall be unlawful and inoperative.

The Bill lays down that, if any employer contravenes the provisions of this Act, he shall, on conviction, be liable to payment of a fine which may extend to Rs. 500/- for the first offence and Rs. 1000/- for a second or subsequent offence.

(Extracted from pages 13-17 of the U.P. Gazette Extraordinary dated 12-1-1938).

# 3

The Cochin Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937. +

The main provisions of the Cochin Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937, which was introduced in the Cochin Legislative Assembly on 3-12-1937, and referred to a Select Committee on the same date (vide page 11 of our December 1937 report), are as follows:

Rate of Benefit: It is provided that every woman worker in a factory, not being a seasonal factory, shall be entitled to the payment of maternity benefit at the rate of three annas a day for the actual days of her absence during the period immediately preceding her confinement and for the four weeks immediately following her confinement.

Period of Benefit: The maximum period for which any woman shall be entitled to the payment of maternity benefit is fixed at seven weeks, that is to say, three weeks up to and including the day of her confinement and four weeks immediately following that day. If a woman dies during this period, the maternity benefit shall be payable only for the days up to and including the day of her death.

Method of Payment: The amount of maternity benefit for the period up to and including the day of confinement is to be paid by the employer to the woman within forty-eight hours of the production of such proof as the Government may, by rule, prescribe that the woman has been confined. The amount due for the subsequent period shall be paid punctually each fortnight in arrear.

(Summarised from copy of the Cochin Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937, forwarded to this Office by the Government of Cochin.)

(A copy of the Bill was forwarded to Geneva with our minute ~~xxx~~ D.1/62/38 dated 13th January 1938.) +

The Central Trade Union Regulations, 1938:

Draft Notification of Government of India. +

Attention is directed to pages 31-38 of Part I of the Gazette of India dated 8-1-1938 where is published the draft (Notification No.L.1785, dated 4-1-1938 of the Department of Labour, Government of India) of certain regulations which the Central Government proposes to make in regard to trade unions

whose objects are not confined to one province. These regulations relate mainly to the registration and audit of such unions. The draft, it is stated, will be taken into consideration on or after 8-4-1938. †

Poisoning by Nitrous Fumes Classed as Occupational Disease: U. P. Government Notification. †

Attention is directed to Notification (Miscellaneous) No. 3372/XVIII -489 dated 13-12-1937 of the Industries Department, U.P. Government, published at page 31 of Part I of the U.P. Gazette dated 8-1-1938, whereby the Government has added "poisoning by nitrous fumes or its sequelae" as an occupational disease under Schedule III of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1930. †

The Bengal Shop Hours and Shop Assistants Bill, 1938: Non-Official Bill to regulate Conditions of Shop Assistants. †

Mr. Humayoon Kabir, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, has given notice of the introduction of a Bill, the Bengal Shop Hours and Shop Assistants Bill, 1938, in the current session of the Council. The principal provisions of the Bill are summarised below:

Working Hours of Shops.- (1) A shop shall not be open to the public (a) on Sunday, a day fixed for general rest or leisure, (b) before 9 A.M. in the morning and after 6 P.M. in the evening, on first four days of the week, (c) before 2 P.M. and after 6 P.M. on Friday, half day provided for Mohamadan subjects to say their prayers, (d) before 9 A.M. and after 9 P.M. on Saturday, a long day provided for the people working in offices and mills, to enable them to make their purchases,

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(e) or on such days which may be fixed by the Government of Bengal as gazetted public or general holidays and announced in the local press or in the Gazette of Calcutta. (2) All shops shall remain open from 9 A.M. in the morning up to 9 P.M. in the night on 10 days preceding each of the three main festivals, known as Durga Puja, Id-Ul-Fitr, and Christmas, but shall remain entirely closed on the festival days mentioned in this clause.

Exempted Places.- The provisions of the Bill shall not apply to the following: (a) government offices, public utility concerns, pharmacies, establishments for care of the sick, restaurants, fuel shops, newspaper stalls, ice depots, hotels, railway station stalls, etc., and partial exemption shall be granted to meat and fish stalls, pastry shops, etc.

Hours of Work of Shop Assistants.- (a) No shop assistant shall be employed in any shop for a longer period than 8 hours a day for the first four-days of the week, or for a longer period than 48 hours per week. (b) No shop assistant shall be employed continuously for more than five hours without interval for rest or meals. (c) There must be allowed for every shop assistant for meals during the daily employment, not less than one hour, either at the same time or at different times; but it shall be before 2 o'clock in the afternoon. (d) No shop assistant shall be allowed or made to sleep in the shop or place of business during the night.

Minimum Wages.- (a) No shop assistant in a shop shall be paid less than Rs.30/- in case of persons of 21 years or over, Rs. 25/- in case of persons between 18 and 21 years, and Rs.20/- in case of persons between 15 and 18 years. (b) The minimum wages fixed in this Section shall not be subject to any abatement by individual or collective agreement. Employers shall pay net wages to employees at not less than the minimum wage clear of all or any deductions.

Date of Payment of Wages.- All wages payable to a shop assistant earned in any month, shall be payable not later than the 10th day of the following month.

Leave Facilities.- (a) Any shop assistant who has been engaged to serve for a period of one year or over or has been in continuous service for the same period shall be entitled to - (b) sick leave for one month on half pay on production of a proper Medical certificate, (c) privilege leave for 15 days on full pay per each year of his service.

Compensation for Accidents.- In case of any accident happening to a shop assistant while on duty, he or his legal nominee shall be entitled to a compensation which must be decided by a court of law properly constituted, which shall be authorised

to settle such claims taking into consideration the salary, status and position of the injured or deceased.

Minimum Age.- No person below the age of 15 shall be employed in any shop for any purpose whatsoever.

Definition of Shop Assistant.- Shop assistant<sup>s</sup> means any person of either sex employed for hire in a shop as clerk, accountant, typist, salesman, window-dresser, travelling representative, in the town or in any part of the whole province of Bengal, or hawker engaged solely for the purpose of selling in or out of the shop-premises or employed for any purpose whatsoever in the shop, but not the night watchman specially engaged for the purpose of safeguarding shop-premises in the night.

Scope of Application.- The proposed legislation, it is provided, shall in the first instance apply to areas recognised as municipalities in terms of the Bengal Municipal Act, 1932, but the Government may ~~be~~ by notification extend its application to any other area within the province.

(Summarised from copy of the Bengal Shop Hours and Shop Assistants Bill, 1938, forwarded to this Office by the General Secretary, Shop Assistants Association of Bengal, Calcutta.)



7/15

Conditions of Labour.

Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for Various  
Centres in India during October 1937. +

The cost of living index numbers for working classes in various centres of India registered irregular changes during October 1937 as compared with the preceding month.

Bombay.- The index number (Base: ~~year~~ year ending June 1934) of the cost of living for working classes in Bombay in October 1937 remained unchanged at 108. The average in the year 1936 was 104.

Ahmedabad.- The index number (Base: year ending July 1927) of the cost of living in Ahmedabad in October 1937 fell by 1 point to 76; for 1936 the average was 71.

Sholapur.- The index number (Base: year ending January 1928) of the cost of living in Sholapur rose by 1 point to 72. The average for 1936 was 71.

Nagpur.- The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in October 1937 rose by 1 point to 66.

Jubbulpore.- The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in Jubbulpore in October 1937 declined by 5 points to 60.

(Extracted from the Monthly Survey  
of Business Conditions in India,  
October 1937 issue). +

Minimum Wages for Vacuum Pan Sugar Factory Workers in U.P.:

Government's Suggestion to Factory Managers. +

According to a press note issued by the Government of the United Provinces in the third week of January 1938, the local Government has requested the managers of all vacuum pan sugar factories in the province to give effect to the decision of the representatives of such factories, who were present at the sugarcane conference convened by the Government of the United Provinces and Bihar in September 1937, that the wages of labourers employed in these factories should not be less than 5 annas a day. They have also suggested to the managers that, instead

of dispensing with the services of technical staff during the off season, they may at least be kept on half pay, as is being done at present by some factories.

(The Leader, dated 22-1-1938). +

Minimum Demands of Press Workers of Patna. +

At an extraordinary meeting of the Patna Press Workers' Union held at Patna on 11-1-1938, a resolution was adopted declaring that the existing Factory Act does not adequately safeguard the interests of press workers, and urging the Bihar Ministry to amend the Factory Rules so as to include provision for the following:

(1) A seven-hour working day and a 40-hour week, (2) 15 days' casual leave and one month's sick leave with full pay in the year, (3) leave on all gazetted holidays, (4) double wages for over-time, (5) unemployment, sickness, old age and accident insurance, (6) minimum wages of Rs. 30 per month, (7) payment in the first week of every month, (8) security of service, (9) compulsory recognition of Trade Unions, (10) registration of collective agreements, (11) a graded scheme of increments, and (12) bringing under the Factory Act presses employing five or more workers.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1938). +

Demands of Cawnpore Shop Assistants:

Shop Assistants' Conference 12-1-1938. +

A Conference of the shop assistants of Cawnpore was held at Cawnpore on 12-1-1938, Acharya Narendra Deo presiding. (At pages 33-34 of our December 1937 report reference was made to a meeting of shop assistants of Cawnpore held on 1-1-1938 under the auspices of the Karamchari Mandal, a rival organisation.)

Dr. K.N.Katju, Minister for Labour and Industries, U.P., opening the Conference, advised shop assistants not to lean too much on the Government, but to organize to increase their bargaining power, and referred to the Bill that was being moved in the provincial Assembly by Mr. Rajaram Shastri seeking to obtain prescribed hours of work and fixed holidays for shop assistants.

Acharya Narendra Deo, in his presidential address, deplored the extremely unsatisfactory working conditions of the 25,000 odd shop assistants of Cawnpore, and asserted that Shop Acts, like those in force in European countries, should be immediately passed.

Demands of Shop Assistants.- Resolutions were adopted demanding (1) the introduction of a 48-hour week, (2) observance of Sundays as holidays and closure of shops on gazetted holidays, (3) framing of regular leave rules, (4) grant of an hour's rest-interval in the day, and (5) ensurance of a rule to the effect that no shop assistant should be normally made to work later than 8 p.m.\* It was also demanded that shop-keepers infringing these rules should be made laible to fines ranging from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 500/-.

(The Statesman, 13-1-1938 and the Hindustan Times, 15-1-1938.) +

Grievances of Anamalai Plantation Workers:

Labour Union's Memorandum to Minister for Labour. +

The Hon. Mr. V.V.Giri, Minister for Industries and Labour, Madras Government, who was on tour in the Anamalai tea plantations towards the middle of January 1938, was presented with a memorandum embodying the grievances of the plantation workers by the Anamalai Labour Union.

Bad Housing Conditions.- The memorandum drew the attention of the Minister to the poor housing conditions of workers on some of the estates. It was pointed out that the houses provided were not sufficiently spacious and did not afford necessary privacy. Again, the water-supply was defective and it was demanded that attention should be directed to this problem urgently, since malaria and other diseases were rampant. It was also pointed out that no reliable figures were available of mortality rates, as the birth and death registers were in the hands of planters. These, it was urged, must be transferred to the Panchayat Board.

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Payment of Wages.- The rates of daily wages were unsatisfactory and each adult male must receive not less than Rs. 20 per mensem and each adult female Rs. 18. Wages must be paid fortnightly, directly to the labourers. The memorandum drew attention to the unsatisfactory nature of the supply of rice, the way the labourer got indebted to the maistry and the unsatisfactory system of weighing of ~~the~~ leaves which caused loss to the worker.

Medical Relief and Welfare Work.- The memorandum also dealt with the inadequacy of medical aid and pleaded for recreational facilities, sickness insurance, health inspection of workers at least once a year, maternity benefit, leave on festival occasions, compulsory education for workers' children and care of destitutes.

Free Assignment of Lands.- It was urged that the plantation workers should be given free assignment of sites on Government lands in villages adjoining the plantations, and should be encouraged to settle down on such lands.

Permission to visit Estates.- The authorities of the Anamalais Workers' Union should be permitted to visit <sup>and inspect</sup> the estates and in this behalf they should be given statutory powers and privileges ~~accorded~~ accorded to jail visitors.

(The Hindu, 19-1-1938) †

8-Hour Day introduced in French India. †

At pages 26-29 of the report of this Office for June 1937 a summary of the provisions of the new Labour Code for French India was given. In respect of hours of work, the Code provided that in all industrial and agricultural establishments in French India the hours of work should not exceed 9 hours per day up to 31-12-1937 and that from 1-1-1938 the hours should be reduced still further to 8 hours per day and the working week to 48 hours. According to the Karaikal (a French possession in India) Correspondent of the United Press, the Governor of French India has issued an order in January 1938 fixing the working hours of operatives in textile mills in French India at 8 hours a day.

(The Hindustan Times, 22-1-1938.) †

11 12

Minimum Monthly Pay of Rs. 25/- for Municipal  
Employees: Recommendation of Standing Committee of  
Municipal Corporation, Bombay.

A proposal to give a minimum salary of Rs.25/- per month to municipal employees, exclusive of benefits such as house rent allowance or free quarters, was approved by the Bombay Municipal Standing Committee on 26-1-1938. The minimum scale will not apply to women, children and men on daily wages.

The proposal came before the Committee in the form of a report by a sub-committee of the whole Standing Committee to which the question was referred on the strength of a resolution passed by the Corporation on 31-3-1937, suggesting a minimum salary of Rs. 30/- per month for municipal employees.

The Municipal Commissioner, Bombay, in his letter dated 10-5-1937 commenting on the resolution of 31-3-1937, had stated that he could not support the proposal as the extra liability could not be borne out of current revenue, and increased taxation would be unwelcome. He therefore suggested that the pay grades of municipal staff (excluding men, women and children on daily wages) should be fixed at Rs. 20- $\frac{1}{2}$ -25 per month, exclusive of benefits like house-rent allowance, free quarters, etc., wherever provided. The number of employees whose scales of pay had to be revised by the acceptance of the scales he proposed, the Municipal Commissioner pointed out, was 7,230 and the extra cost involved Rs. 186,959 (including Rs. 14,387 on account of Provident Fund).

In place of the Rs. 20- $\frac{1}{2}$ -25 per month minimum pay proposed by the Municipal Commissioner, the Standing Committee has recommended a minimum pay of Rs. 25/- per month. The recommendation has yet to be sanctioned by the Municipal Corporation. The scheme, if accepted, will take effect from 1938-39.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 21-1-1937 &  
The Times of India, 28-1-1938).

Factory Administration in the N.W. Frontier Province, 1936\*.

Statistics of Factories.- During 1936 the total number of factories subject to the Factories Act was 28 as compared with 29 during 1935. No new factories were added to the register during the year, while one factory was removed from the register. Of the 28 factories on the list 27 worked during the year under report.

Number of Operatives.- The total number of operatives employed in all factories during the year was 1,149, as compared with 1,147 in 1935. Of the 1,149 operatives employed, 1,061 were males, and 16 females, as compared with 1,115 and 32 respectively during the previous year. The decrease in the number of women workers during the year 1936 is reported to be due to very little cotton ginning being done in factories. 72 adolescents - persons between the ages of 15 and 17 years - presented themselves for certification; all were found fit and were permitted to work in factories as adults.

Hours of Employment.- It is pointed out that most perennial factories kept well within the ~~xx~~ statutory 54-hours week; the majority, particularly military factories, found a 48-hours week sufficient for their requirements.

Wages.- The report points out that there was little change during the year in the wages paid to skilled and unskilled labour. The average wages of unskilled labour for ~~x~~ males remained Rs. 0-8-6 per day, and Rs. 0-4-6 for females (cotton gin workers) per day, the same as in 1935.

Water Supply, Lighting and general Sanitary Conditions.- Water-supply both for drinking purposes and for the efficient running of factory plants was found to be sufficient and good in all factories throughout the year. Lighting arrangements in factories were also proper. Sanitary conditions in factories were generally well maintained and sufficient to assure the good health of factory workers.

\* Government of the North-West Frontier Province - Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the North-West Frontier Province for the year 1936. Manager, Government Stationery and Printing, N.W.F.P., Peshawar. Price 0-5-0 or #0-0-6 pp. 6 +viii

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Accidents.- Only 1 accident, and that a minor one, occurred in the year, as compared with 4 in the previous year.

Inspection.- Of the 27 factories which worked during the year under report, 19 were inspected once, and 5 twice. 3 factories remained uninspected, due to the fact that they were not found working at the time of the Inspector's visit. The total number of inspections carried out during the year was 29. -

## Workers' Organisations.

### All-India Railwaymen's Federation:

#### First Zonal Conference held at Calcutta, 18-12-1937.

The 1st Zonal Conference of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, as was previously decided (vide page 61 of our July 1937 report), was held at Calcutta on 18-12-1937, Mr. Jannadas M. Mehta presiding. Prominent among those present were Messrs. N. M. Joshi, V. V. Giri and Sibnath Banerjee.

Resolutions adopted: The Conference adopted several resolutions; ~~a summary of~~ the more important of them <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ given below:

(1) "This Conference endorses the protest made by the Convention of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation against the continued default of the Government of India in respect of implementing to the full the International Labour Convention about hours of employment on railways (vide pages 59-61 of our July 1937 report) ratified by them more than sixteen years ago in spite of the fact that they have been twice censured by the International Labour Organization, Geneva, and assures the Federation of its strong support in pressing it once more on the attention of the authorities both in India and at Geneva.

(2) "This Conference considers the report of the Indian Railway Enquiry Committee (Wedgwood Committee) as reactionary and one-sided, particularly in its amazing accommodation of an increasing number of fat jobs for Europeans and in totally ignoring the workers' point of view.

(3) "This Conference invites the attention of the Railway Board to the very illiberal attitude adopted by certain railway Agents in the matter of recognizing the unions of workers and urgently demands that the recommendations of the Whitley Commission made in this behalf as early as 1931 may be implemented at an early date.

(4) "This Conference condemns the recently introduced new scales of wages which have led to a further reduction in the already low standard of wages existing on the railways, and requests that the old scale may be immediately restored.

(5) "This Conference is of opinion that the exclusion of 65 per cent. of the railway workers from the benefit of provident fund contributions leaves large numbers of workers unprovided for in old age and on retirement, and urges that, in view of the



1502  
improved finances of the railways, this long-delayed measure may be introduced at an early date."

(The Trade Union Record, Bombay,  
December 1937.).

Recognition of Registered Trade Unions in C.P.:  
Informal Conference under Government auspices with  
Mill Managements. .

An informal meeting attended by the Prime Minister, the Minister for Industries, the Secretary, Commerce Department, and the Registrar of Trade Unions, C.P., as also by representatives of the textile mill managements of the province was held at the Government Secretariat, Nagpur, on 13-1-1938.

The principal subject discussed was the question of employers according recognition to registered trade unions. The representatives of mills expressed the opinion that they had no objection to recognising genuine trade unions, but that they were opposed to accord recognition to unions whose activities were controlled, not by workers, but by outside agitators. It is understood that the representatives of the mills will submit a memorandum on the subject to the Provincial Government at an early date. It was suggested at the meeting that the Government should appoint a Labour Officer to settle industrial disputes.

(The Hindustan Times, 15-1-1938).-

4th Bengal Provincial Labour Conference, Kankinarah,  
8 to 11-12-1937. .

The 4th session of the Bengal Provincial Conference was held at Kankinarah, Bengal, from 8 to 11-12-1937, Mr. K.C. Roy Chowdhury, M.L.C., presiding.

The Hon. Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy, Minister for Labour, Bengal, opened the conference. In his speech, he referred to the conflicting ideologies of the two principal labour groups in the country, one, which believed in class war-fare and revolution, and the other, which believed in minimising conflicts

between employers and workers, and stressed the fact that Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Ministries eschewed all forms of violence. He advised workers to be non-violent and to organise themselves in bona fide trade unions.

Mr. Roy Chowdhury, in his presidential address, said that what had happened in the British labour movement a hundred years ago was perhaps repeating itself in India. The Chartist movement had put back for a long time the clock of trade unionism in England. It was, therefore, incumbent on all honest Indian trade unionists to oppose Chartist revolutionaries or, their ~~xx~~ modern incarnation, the Communists, who would ruin industry and its workers.

Resolutions adopted: The Conference adopted, among others, resolutions urging (1) the promotion of legislation to impose penalties on those who incited workers to go on lightning strikes and made gifts of money to strikers, and expressed the opinion that such strikes were generally fomented for political purposes, and (2) the passing of maternity legislation, with provision for leave for six weeks before delivery and six weeks after, with pay.

(Summarised from text of speeches and Resolutions of the Conference forwarded to this Office by the Honorary Secretary, Bengal Labour Conference, 4th Session, Kankinara.)

15th Half-Yearly Meeting between A.I.R.F. and the  
Railway Board, New Delhi, 26 and 27-1-1938.

The 15th half-yearly meeting between the All India Railway-men's Federation and the Railway Board was held at New Delhi on 26 and 27-1-1938. The deputation from the Federation included, besides Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, the President, and Mr. Guruswami, the Acting General Secretary of the Federation, eight delegates from certain unions affiliated to the Federation. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta led the deputation.

The questions discussed at the meeting were: (1) Revised scales of pay for journeymen and chargemen on the North-Western, Eastern Bengal and other State-managed railways; (2) Policy regarding recovery of alleged overpayments paid to staff on State-managed railways; (3) Working of the Payment of Wages Act; (4) Accumulation of leave for inferior service staff on State-managed railways; (5) Conciliation of railway disputes on State-managed railways; (6) Procedure to be adopted in respect of alleged breaches of accepted policy of state-managed railway administrations.

The following is a summary of the discussions on the more important items:

Working of Payment of Wages Act.- The Federation complained that as fines have been restricted under the Payment of Wages Act, it has opened the door for infliction of severer punishments, such as reduction of pay and stoppage of increments. The Federation cited in support of their complaint that after the passing of the Act the North-Western Railway administration had amended their penalties for breaches of the pass rules, and the former penalty of a fine equivalent to one week's pay for the first offence had been replaced by reduction of pay for three months which was a much more severe punishment. They also referred to a case having occurred on the North-Western Railway in which for loss of railway property worth about Rs. 21, about 160 men had been fined four annas each, the railway administration thus realising more than the actual cost of the property lost by them, and reiterated their submission that employees should not be left worse off after the passing of the Payment of Wages Act.

The Chief Commissioner agreed to the principle that the staff should not be worse off after the passing of the Act than they were before in the matter of punishments and pointed out that under the pass rules certain punishments were inflicted on employees for certain breaches of the rules, and that the passing of the Act had not affected the position of railway administrations in the matter of imposition of punishments. He agreed to look into the matter.

Accumulation of Leave. - As regards the subject of accumulation of leave, the Chief Commissioner pointed out at the outset that the new State Railway Leave Rules issued in 1930 were favourable to railway staff in inferior service, in that under these rules the grant of leave to such staff was not subject to the "no extra cost" condition governing their leave under the Fundamental Leave Rules, and further quoted figures of expenditure incurred during the last few years on the State-managed railways on leave reserves for inferior staff.

The Federation contended that on account of the inadequacy of leave reserves and the fact that reduction was being made in the category of gangmen in particular, staff in inferior service were not getting leave when applied for, and that, as leave in the case of inferior staff was not cumulative, they were deprived of the benefit of the Leave Rules.

The Chief Commissioner pointed out that grant of leave was always subject to the exigencies of service and that it could not be claimed as of right. He, however, agreed to ascertain from State-managed railway administrations the leave reserves maintained by them, and the extent to which the benefit of leave under these rules was nullified by the absence of adequate leave reserves.

182

Conciliation of Railway Disputes and Recognition of Unions.-

The Chief Commissioner referred to the setting up recently of Conciliation Machinery for prevention of disputes and to the appointment of a Conciliation Officer, Railways, at Calcutta, for ~~xxx~~ one year in the first instance, and said that the Conciliation Officer was at present dealing with recognised Unions.

The Federation stated that they were against having a number of Unions on the same railway and submitted that, at least, during the period ~~such~~ Unions were taking definite shape, unrecognised Unions might be given some facilities by the Conciliation Officer.

The Chief Commissioner said that he could not agree to dealing with Unions which were not recognised. He suggested that the standing of the Federation would be enhanced if it only permitted affiliation of recognised Unions and said that he would be prepared to discuss with the Federation, at the next half-yearly meeting, the whole question of the recognition of Unions. He asked the Federation to draw up for the consideration of the Railway Board a model constitution and rules, which, if adopted by Unions, might be accepted by railway administrations as a basis for grant of recognition.

Representation of individual cases.- The subject of the "Procedure to be adopted in respect of alleged breaches of accepted policy of State-managed Railway Administrations" was then discussed.

The Federation inquired whether they would be permitted to represent to the Railway Board individual cases in which they considered the punishment~~x~~ imposed was out of proportion to the offence committed, and no hearing was obtainable from railway administrations.

The Chief Commissioner said that if Railway administrations were certain that individual cases were only represented by Unions after thorough and searching examination, he thought that Agents would not object to look into them, but at present few Unions, if any, were equipped with machinery for the examination of individual cases. He was not prepared to admit as a general practice discussion of individual cases between the Federation and the Railway Board, but agreed to give consideration to certain examples which the Federation had put forward.

(The Statesman, 30-1-1938)..

Economic Conditions in Assam Tea Plantations,  
1936. +

The following information regarding economic conditions in 1936 in the Assam tea industry - acreage under tea cultivation, output, and number of workers employed - is taken from a press summary of a review of the subject issued by the Department of Agriculture, Assam.

Statistics of Gardens.- The number of tea gardens in Assam at the close of the year was 1,103, as against 1,067 at the end of the previous year; of these, 365 were owned by Indians. The total area under tea during the year increased from 437,204 acres to 438,805 acres; land not previously planted with tea accounted for 1,448 acres, replanted land previously abandoned, for 1,956 acres, and land abandoned, for 1,803 acres. The total area of land within the tea estates of Assam was 1,682,852 acres, as against 1,671,633 in the preceding year; 26 per cent of the land was actually under tea. The area occupied by Indian planters was 258,892 acres.

Output of Tea.- The total output of tea in the province during the year was 223,073,051 lbs. of black and 96,259 lbs. of green tea, as against 226,128,260 lbs. and 211,526 lbs. respectively during the previous year, or a decrease of 3,170,746 lbs. in all. Green tea was manufactured in one garden only during the year, as against two gardens in the previous year. The total output of green tea decreased from 211,526 lbs. to 96,259 lbs. It is pointed out that, due to the restriction scheme, the general condition of the tea industry was on the whole satisfactory, although the prices on average remained almost the same as in the last year. Strict economy had to be observed in almost all the gardens due to the world-wide depression.

Number of Workers.- The daily average number of labourers employed in gardens during the year was 505,237, as against 519,435 in the ~~year~~ previous year; the decrease is reported to be due to the restriction scheme.

(The Statesman, 5-1-1938.).

## Employment and Unemployment.

### Unemployment in Bombay:

#### Resolution in Legislative Council regarding the Appointment of Enquiry Committee Accepted. \*

Mr. S.C.Joshi moved in the Bombay Legislative Council on 17-1-1938 a resolution recommending the appointment of a representative committee to inquire into and report upon the extent of acute unemployment among the middle and the lower classes in the province, and to suggest remedies and methods for checking and improving the situation. Mr. Joshi, in moving the resolution, pointed out that in India neither the Central nor the Provincial Governments had taken any serious step to tackle the problem of unemployment.

Dr. M.D.Gilder, Minister of Health, ~~is~~ speaking on behalf of the Government, pointed out that there was no settled industrial labour in India. Labour usually <sup>migrated</sup> ~~fled~~ from town to village, according to the conditions of employment; but the figures which Government had collected so far showed that employment was increasing in the Province. In 1930, 357,000 workers were employed in industries; in 1936 the number rose to 392,000; in 1930, 33 mills worked night shifts for two months, employing 9,000 men; the figure for the past six months in 1937 showed that 85 mills worked with 56,000 workers. The figures for the whole of that year, however, were not yet available. In Bombay the building industry seemed to be thriving, creating more employment for workers. There was also more employment of unskilled labour in the docks.

The resolution was accepted by the Government.

(The Times of India, 19-1-1938.) \*

#### Dacca University Establishes Employment Bureau. \*

An Employment Bureau has been established at the University of Dacca in order to assist its unemployed students in securing employment. The Bureau keeps information about vacancies that occur from time to time in Government and other offices. An attempt is also being made to maintain touch between the University

and business houses, to suggest names of probationers and assistants and select apprentices for practical training in firms.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-12-1937)

Facilities for Indian Apprentices:

Bombay Legislative Assembly Resolution.

A non-official resolution was moved in the Bombay Legislative Assembly on 27-1-1938 recommending, with a view to the reduction of unemployment, to the Government that steps should be taken to ensure that all "non-India" firms supplying Government corporations or municipalities with goods or services should be compelled to take Indian apprentices to learn the business concerned.

The Hon. Mr. L.M.Patil, Minister for Local Self-Government, accepted the resolution, suggesting, however, the substitution of the word "all" for "non-Indian" in the resolution. The following is the text of the amended resolution, which was adopted:

"This Assembly recommends to Government to issue instructions to all departments of Government, semi-Government bodies, municipal corporations and municipalities to insert in all contracts and agreements with all manufacturers and suppliers for the supply of stores, materials, machinery or services a clause to the effect that the suppliers and manufacturers concerned ~~may~~ shall offer or procure, as the case may be, every facility to Indian apprentices for practical training in factories, workshops or offices owned, managed, controlled or patronised by them so as to enable Indian apprentices to acquire a full knowledge of the technique and work of their trade, industry, calling or profession."

(The Times of India, 29-1-1938.)

Reducing Unemployment in Bihar:

Principal Measures taken by the Government.

A Press Note issued by the Information Officer, Bihar, in the last week of January 1938, sets forth the measures taken by the Government of Bihar for reducing unemployment in the province. Below are given the more important of the steps taken:

1. Employment and unemployment matters have been constituted/ into a special portfolio under the charge of the Minister for Education and Development (vide page 53 of our June 1937 report).

2. With a view to helping educated middle class youths to secure employment, the Government has already taken action on some of the recommendations made by the Bihar Unemployment Committee (vide pages 41-44 of our November 1936 report), and schemes for the establishment of technical schools, half-time vocational schools and cottage-industries institutes and for setting up demonstration parties in various handicrafts are under consideration.

3. It is pointed out that the Information Bureau attached to the office of the Director of Industries is making every endeavour to assist educated young men in securing employment. The Bureau has so far registered 1,733 candidates for employment; out of which, it has secured employment for 299 (144 in regular posts in various industrial concerns, factories and railways and 155 as apprentices). ~~8fxthxxx~~

4. The question of expanding the activities of the Bureau so as to improve its usefulness and increasing facilities for industrial training is also receiving the consideration of Government. It is proposed to appoint a Standing Advisory Committee attached to the Bureau.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-1-1938.).

New Scheme for Recruitment to Government Service:

Qualifying Examination at Age-17:

Government of India's Proposals.

The Government of India which has been considering for some time past the possibility of alleviating unemployment by alterations in the system of recruitment for Government service has recently submitted for the consideration of the provincial Governments a new scheme of recruitment for posts in Government service. The following details about the new scheme are taken from a circular letter outlining its proposals which the Government of India has sent to the Provincial Governments towards the end of January 1938 with a view to elicit their opinions (the Provincial Governments have been asked to reply by June 1938):

A Preliminary Qualifying Examination at the age of 17: The principal feature of the scheme is the institution of an yearly examination, to be taken at the age of 17, success in which would be an indispensable preliminary step to candidature for practically all Government posts. While success in this examination would give no right to an appointment, failure would constitute a definite and final bar to Government service.



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2331

(2) Number of Passes limited by Government's requirements.- The number of passes or diplomas offered would be based on Government's probable annual requirements of officials, though the former would be considerably greater.

(3) Change in Nature of Examination.- While Government considers the form of the examination a matter for experts, it suggests that it should differ from that now normally employed and might partake more of the nature of an intelligence test, the questions being as objective as possible.

(4) Lowering of Age Limit and Educational Qualifications.- The Sapru Report on Unemployment in U.P. had proposed that, with a view to reduce the numbers of those who now unprofitably go in for university education, (1) Government should not insist on university qualifications for posts which do not require such qualifications, and (2) that the maximum age for admission to non-gazetted services should be lowered. The Government of India agrees that the proposals of the Sapru Committee should be adopted as far as is reasonably possible. It is engaged in a general reduction of the maximum ages now applicable for admission to its non-gazetted appointments and intend to ensure that, where the requisite qualifications can be secured without a collegiate course, the maximum age should ordinarily be 19, and that in other cases the age should be 21, unless there are exceptional circumstances necessitating the recruitment of older men.

(5) Co-operation of Provincial Governments.- If the proposals are regarded as sound it is hoped that the provincial Governments will be prepared to come into a joint scheme with the Central Government, thus closing recruitment to all who fail to pass the new test.

Advantages of the new scheme.- The main aim of the scheme is to meet the changing conditions in which Government can no longer absorb more than a small number of those who enter universities with the hope of obtaining official service, and to prevent some of the consequent waste of talents and frustration of hopes. Under the new scheme, the <sup>un-</sup>successful candidates in the preliminary qualifying examination will know at 17 years of age that they have no prospects of securing government employment, and they will therefore ~~would~~ take up studies which will fit them for other professions.

Possible Objections.- In its circular letter, the Government of India also refers to several possible objections to the scheme. The principal ones are: (1) it might exclude from government service the boy who is late in developing; (2) the proposed examination might exercise a dominating influence on school education and curtail the freedom of schools to modify

their courses and experiment with new subjects, (3) the addition, with doubtful results, of yet another to the long list of examinations which Indian students have to undergo before getting anywhere; (4) the difficulty of limiting the numbers sitting for the examination to manageable proportions; (5) the elaborate organization needed and its cost.

(The Statesman 28-1-1938).+

Unemployment in Bombay: Resolution adopted  
by Bombay Legislative Assembly. +

On 27-1-1938 Mrs. Lilavati Munshi moved in the Bombay Legislative Assembly a resolution requesting the Bombay Government to appoint a Committee to enquire into the causes and state of unemployment in the Province and suggest measures of relief. Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Labour), accepted the resolution on behalf of the Government. The resolution was adopted by the House unanimously.

(The Times of India, 31-1-1938)..+

Resolution re. Unemployment Bureaus:

Bombay Legislative Assembly rejects non-official Suggestion.

On 28-1-1938 Mr. Jhabvala moved in the Bombay Legislative Assembly a resolution recommending to the Government the establishment of unemployment bureaus, one of the functions of which should be to keep a register of unemployed persons and to secure suitable employment for them. Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Labour), said that he had no quarrel with the object of the resolution, but that it was a vague one and there was nothing mentioned in it as to what kind of responsibility was expected of Government. He believed that the resolution would not help in relieving unemployment in any way. He said that Government already had its views in regard to industrial labour, and that it was its plan to start labour exchanges.

Mr. Jhabvala's resolution was rejected by the House.

(The Times of India, 31-1-1938).+

253

Public Health.

Provincial Health Ministers' Conference,

Madras, 29-12-1937.

A Conference of Ministers of Public Health belonging to different provinces was held on 29-12-1937 at Fort St. George, Madras, to evolve a fairly uniform policy for the various ~~in~~ provinces in dealing with constitutional and administrative problems in regard to medical and public health matters.

The Ministers present were the hon. Dr. T.S.S.Rajan (Madras), the hon. Dr. M.D.Gilder (Bombay), the hon. Mr. Syed Nausher Ali (Bengal), the hon. Babu Jaglal Chowdhuri (Bihar), the hon. Dr. Hemandas R. Wadhvani (Sind), and the Rev. J.J.M.Nichols Roy (Assam). The hon. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Premier, Madras, opened the Conference. Col. N.M.Wilson, I.M.S., Surgeon-General with the Government of Madras, and Col. C.M.Ganapati, I.M.S., Director of Public Health, attended the Conference, as also some officials from other provinces.

The following Press Communiqué dated 30-12-1937 was issued by the Ministry of Information, Madras, regarding the decisions of the Conference:

At the Conference of Ministers in charge of Public Health in various Provinces held at Fort St. George on 29-12-1937, resolutions were passed recommending suitable action by Provincial Governments in regard to the following subjects:-

Honorary Medical Staff.- (1) The appointment in large numbers, wherever practicable, of independent medical practitioners as honorary teachers and professors in the teaching institutions and as honorary surgeons and physicians in the hospitals owned and managed by the State.

Uniform Standard of Medical Education.- (2) The adoption of one uniform standard of medical education throughout India consistent with the special circumstances prevailing in each Province and without lowering the standard of University education.

Prevention of Quackery.- (3) The prevention of persons who have not attained the prescribed standard of medical education from setting up medical practice.

Refresher Courses.- (4) The institution of refresher courses to be made obligatory on all medical employees of State and local bodies, including the subsidised rural practitioners.

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12/37

Free Examination of Clinical Material.- (5) The establishment of laboratories for the free examination of clinical material in all suspected cases of infectious diseases sent by registered medical practitioners,

Rural Medical Relief.- (6) The extension of rural medical relief to all villages.

Post Graduate Studies in Public Health.- (7) The institution of post-graduate courses of study in theory and practice of Public Health for rural medical officers so as to enable them to discharge efficiently their duties as sanitary officers.

Pure Drinking Water Supplies.- (8) The supply of pure drinking water to all villages.

Health Surveys.- (9) The investigation of the health conditions of the people by means of health surveys as conducted in the Province of Madras under the Poonamallee Health Unit Scheme.

Manufacture of Drugs to be Stimulated.- (10) The encouragement in all possible ways of the manufacture in India, of drugs, biological products and hospital equipment and the testing and certification as to quality of such drugs, products and equipment by authorities constituted by Provincial Governments before they are put on the market.

(The Hindu, 29 & 30-12-1937).+

2735

Co-operation.

Co-operation in Baroda State, 1935-36.\* +

Growth of the Movement.- At the commencement of the year (1-8-1935 to 31-7-1936) there were 1,103 societies. During the year 12 new societies were registered, while 4 societies were cancelled. The total number of societies on the register was thus 1,111 at the end of the year. Out of these, 112 societies were under liquidation and 999 societies were actually working. During the year under report membership increased from 49,113 to 50,905. The average membership advanced from 44.4 to 45.8 per cent per society. The working capital rose from 8.044 millions to Rs. 8.191 millions. The total reserve fund increased from Rs. 1.301 millions to Rs. 1.392 millions. Similarly the deposits increased from Rs. 4.268 millions to 4.439 millions.

Classification of Societies.- The 1,111 societies at the end of 1935-36 consisted of 18 central institutions, 893 agricultural and 200 non-agricultural societies. Of the 893 agricultural societies, 747 were credit, 74 consolidation of scattered holdings, 17 cotton sale, 11 milch cattle, 10 power pump, 3 cattle breeding, 7 supply, 2 ginning, 5 pure seeds, 1 each of water works and milk supply and 15 rural reconstruction societies. The 200 non-agricultural societies consisted of 164 credit, 6 housing, 22 students' stores, 7 supply and 1 mutual help societies.

Central Societies.- Among the Central Societies, the Shree Sayaji Sabakar Sevak Sangh continued to render useful service to the movement. During the year, its membership rose from 584 to 664. It organised seven conferences and held six classes for training secretaries. Lectures with lantern slides were given in 180 villages. The institution's monthly: "Gram-jivan" continued to discuss questions of village uplift, co-operation, agriculture and other topics of rural interest.

Agricultural Societies.- With a slight increase in the number of agricultural societies, their membership also increased from 29,033 in 1934-35 to 29,151 in 1935-36. It is pointed out that the policy of the department is not to multiply the number of societies, but to rectify and consolidate the existing societies and to introduce the non-credit side of work through the existing small credit societies.

Non-Agricultural Societies.- The 200 non-agricultural societies had between them 19,165 members during the year under review, as against 17,986 members in the previous year. There was an all round increase in their reserve fund, ~~xxxx~~ share capital and working capital.

Credit Societies.- Of the 156 credit societies in non-agricultural areas, 17 were urban, 14 employees, 56 flood relief,

\*Report on the working of The Co-operative Societies in Baroda State for the year 1935-36. Baroda State Press, Price Re.1-6-0. pp. 93.

2836

41 weavers, 12 chamars, 8 bhangis and 8 other societies.

Employees Societies.- There were 14 employees societies as in 1934-35. 3 of them suffered heavily on account of defalcations, 1 was under liquidation and 2 asked for liquidation during the year under report. The remaining societies worked well on the whole. They had a membership of 2,930 as against 2,733 last year, and their working capital amounted to Rs. 319,000 as against Rs. 307,507 last year.

(The progress of co-operation in Baroda State during 1934-35 is reviewed at pages 52-55 of our May 1937 report.)

Progress of Co-operation in the Punjab, 1935-36.\*

General Progress.- The year under report (1-8-1935 to 31-7-1936) closed with 22,554 societies with a membership of 822,544 and a total working capital of Rs. 180 millions. The 22,554 societies included 1 Provincial Bank, 118 central credit, 56 central non-credit, 18,559 agricultural and 3,820 non-agricultural societies. The Government of India gave a special grant for the purpose of educating the staff in co-operative activity. The movement also received help from the Government of India subvention for schemes of rural benefit which was devoted to consolidation of holdings and spread of better living societies.

Classification of Agricultural Societies.- The 18,559 agricultural societies consisted of 16,832 credit societies, 18 purchase and sale societies, 217 production societies, 166 better farming societies, 1,210 consolidation of holdings societies and 94 other societies. The total membership, including societies and individuals, of these was 632,348 as against 604,279 in the previous year.

Non-Agricultural Societies.- The 3,820 non-agricultural societies are classified as follows: 1,192 credit (652 urban and 540 rural), 107 purchase and sale, 312 industrial, 1,365 non-agricultural thrift, 108 arbitration and 736 better living societies.

Industrial Societies.- The number of industrial societies was 312 as against 299 in the previous year. 8 of the new societies were of weavers. There was an increase of 187 members

\* Annual Report on the working of Co-operative Societies in the Punjab for the year ending 31st July, 1936. -Lahore: Printed by the Supdt., Govt. Printing, Punjab, 1937. Price Re. 0-6-0 or 7d. -pp. 47+xvi

29/37

during the year. Advances and Recoveries both increased during the year. In 1935-36 Rs. 387,622 worth of raw material was purchased by societies and advanced to members.

Arbitration Societies.- The 108 societies of this class decided 805 cases during the year; of these cases, 71 were enforced through action in civil courts.

30 Years of Co-operation in the Punjab.- In his review of the report, the Secretary, Development Department, Government of the Punjab, points out :

Co-operative Societies in the Punjab were first registered in 1905-6. This report describes the position of the movement 30 years later and shows the astonishing results of a generation of effort - 22,554 societies with 823,000 members, and a net working capital of over Rs. 120 millions, a sum much larger than the present budgetted income of the Punjab Government. Allowing for those who are members of more than one society and assuming a family of five per member, the movement has touched over  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions of the population. The Central Banks hold Rs. 50 millions of deposits, and members borrow from their credit societies at 6 to  $9\frac{3}{8}$  per cent simple interest instead of at  $18\frac{3}{4}$  to 25 per cent compound from the money-lender. But figures of this kind tell only half the tale. As an educative and social movement it is probably the greatest force for good in the province today. The total cost of the movement in 1935-36 (including the cost of managing 22,554 societies) was Rs. 3.3 millions, nearly two thirds of which was provided by the societies themselves. No organisation in the province has a more genuine popular feeling behind it.

And yet, great as has been the achievement of the past, only the fringe of the many economic problems presented by the province and its 34,000 villages has been touched. Fifty per cent or more of these villages have no thrift and credit society. Thousands of villages need a Better Living Society to show them the new light and how to harmonise it with the old. The great and difficult problem of marketing is still almost untouched, and in the village litigiousness and faction are as great a curse as ever.

In the economic field, the chief service of the movement is the provision of a carefully controlled system of credit founded upon integrity and thrift. This is all the more necessary now that legislation and the fall in prices have partially dried up the ordinary sources of credit. Much, however, remains to be done if expansion is to proceed smoothly. Recoveries of agricultural societies are still less than 14 per cent of the amount on loan; overdue interest, much of which however can be written off against reserves, totals Rs. 16.7 millions; nearly 1,200 societies are in liquidation.

If the need for Co-operation is great in the village, it is only less great in the town. Though the village has the first claim, the town has by no means been neglected. There are now 652 urban banks with 44,000 members and last year they advanced Rs. 5.6 millions. There are 223 women's societies with ~~4,800~~ 4,600 members, most of whom are more or less urban.

(The Progress of Co-operation in the Punjab during 1934-55 is reviewed at pages 73-75 of our April 1937 report). †



Women and Children.

12th Session of the All India Women's Conference,

Nagpur, 28 to 31-12-1937. +

The 12th Session of the All India Women's Conference was held at Nagpur from 28 to 31-12-1937 under the presidentship of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

In the course of her presidential address, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur stressed the necessity for the All India Women's Association to modify its present urban outlook and to establish intimate contacts with women in the Indian villages and to support actively village and national industries.

The Conference passed a number of resolutions on social, economic and political subjects, the more important of which are summarised below:

1. Labour: Housing of workers.- The Conference recommended that workers should have healthy houses with plenty of air and light, facilities for water and proper sanitary arrangements.

2. Women Workers Eliminated from Mines.- The Conference urged the Government to take immediate action for the provision of suitable employment for women workers eliminated from mines and to fix an adequate minimum wage for male mine workers whose family income has been reduced by such elimination.

3. Unregulated Factories.- A resolution was passed emphasising the necessity for introducing legislation to regulate hours of work in unregulated industries.

II. Social Problems: The Conference adopted resolutions (a) urging the adoption of measures for stricter control of opium and other drugs; (b) supporting the policy of prohibition adopted by certain Provincial Congress Ministries; (c) urging the stricter administration of laws relating to traffic in women and children; (d) stressing the need for imparting information on birth-control methods and establishing clinics for the purpose, especially in labour areas; (e) urging the removal of the present legal disabilities of women; (f) stressing the need for abolishing discrimination on the ground of sex in the matter of recruitment for service in Government departments; (g) recommending the necessity for concerting measures for the moral

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and mental uplift of women in jails, and (h) urging the adoption of Children's Acts in those Provinces and States where they have not yet been adopted.

III. Educational: The Conference adopted resolutions urging (1) the introduction of universal and compulsory primary education with a vocational bias; and (2) the need for every person responsible for the education of children to have studied the principles of dietetics and nutrition, and for authorities to make efforts to supply suitable nourishment to such children as need it, so as to combat the incidence of malnutrition of children.

Office-bearers for 1938: The following were elected office-bearers for 1938: President: Rajkumari Amrit Kaur; Hon. Organising Secretary: Mrs. Dina Asana; Social Section Secretary: Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta; and Educational Section Secretary: Miss L. Lazarus.

(Summarised from the Presidential address and Resolutions adopted at the Conference, copies of which were forwarded to this Office by the Hon. Organising Secretary of the A.I.N.C.)†

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37

Education.

Reorganisation of Indian Education:

Zakir Hussain Committee's Report.

The Zakir Hussain Committee appointed by the All India National Education Conference held at Wardha on 22 & 23-10-1937 under the presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi (vide pages 73-75 of our October 1937 report) to formulate a scheme of basic ~~educa-~~ education for India submitted its report towards the middle of December 1937.

The report is divided into three sections: the first deals with the basic principles and ~~deals with~~ the three main features of the scheme: the teaching of craft work in schools, the instilling of ideals of citizenship, and the self-supporting basis of the scheme; the second deals with the objectives of the scheme and gives the main outlines of the proposed seven years' course of basic education covering (a) the basic craft, (b) the mother tongue, (c) mathematics, (d) social studies, (e) general science, (f) drawing, (g) music, and (h) Hindustani; the third deals with the training of teachers and gives the curriculum for a complete course of teachers' training.

Importance of Craft Teaching.- The scheme is the result of the conviction that the existing system of education in India has failed to meet the most urgent and pressing needs of national life, and to organise and direct its forces and tendencies into proper channels, and that it continues to function listlessly and apart from the real currents of life, unable to adapt itself to the changed circumstances. It is pointed out that any scheme of education designed for Indian children will in some respects radically differ from that adopted in the West, as, unlike as in the West, non-violence ~~being~~ the accepted principle of India.

The basic idea of the scheme is that education should be imparted through some craft or productive work, which should provide the nucleus of all the other instruction provided in the school. This craft if taught efficiently and thoroughly, it is pointed out, should enable the school to pay towards the cost of its teaching staff. This would also help the State to introduce immediately the scheme of free and compulsory basic education. Failing this, it is pointed out that, in the existing political and financial condition of the country, the cost of education would be prohibitive.

Basic Crafts.- The report suggests that the following may be chosen as basic crafts in various schools: (a) Spinning and weaving. (b) Carpentry. (c) Agriculture. (d) Fruit and vegetable gardening. (e) Leather work. (f) Any other craft for which local and geographical conditions are x favourable and which satisfies the conditions mentioned above.

Even where an industry other than spinning and weaving or agriculture is the basic craft, the pupils will be expected to attain a minimum knowledge of carding and spinning with the takli, and a practical acquaintance of easy agricultural work in the local area.

Scheme of Studies.- The school day, it is suggested, should consist of 5 hours 30 minutes divided as follows:

The basic craft	3 hours 20 minutes.
Music, drawing and arithmetic	40 minutes.
The mother tongue	40 minutes.
Social studies and general science.	30 minutes.
Physical training.	10 minutes.
Recess.	10 minutes.
	<u>5 hours and 30 minutes.</u>

The school is expected to work 288 days in a year, an average of 24 days a month.

Self Supporting Nature of Scheme.- An important feature of the scheme is that the pupils, through the sale of material produced by them during their training in the several proposed basic crafts, ~~should be made~~ <sup>are enabled</sup> to make a contribution towards the cost of their education. The following details about a seven years' course, with spinning and weaving as basic crafts, will illustrate this aspect:

Total Income for Seven Years.

Out-turn per pupil:

From spinning	...	Rs. 41 13 9
From weaving	...	Rs. 18 15 9
Total		<u>Rs. 60 13 6</u>

The teacher's salary has been calculated at the rate of Rs.25 per month.

Total salary of the teacher for seven years. Rs. 2,100.

Reckoning 30 students per teacher,  
the total income for seven years is Rs. 1,825.

The report suggests that the State should take over at certain standard prices the out-put of the schools.

(Summarised from the text of the Report published at pages 365-380 of "Harijan" dated 11.12-1937. The paper is edited by Mr. M.Desai, Mahatma Gandhi's Private Secretary).

543

Vocational Education in Bombay:

Government appoints Advisory Committee.

The Government of Bombay has appointed a Committee with Rao Bahadur K. G. Joshi as Chairman to advise it on the subject of vocational training for boys and girls in primary and secondary schools in the Presidency. The terms of reference of the Committee are as follow:

Primary Education-- (1) What changes does the Committee suggest in primary education arising out of the Zakir Hussein Committee's Report and the Abbot Report on Vocational education in India?

(2) The Zakir Hussein Committee's Report recommends the idea of educating children through some suitable form of productive work. Central schools will have to be opened to impart instruction on these lines. What should be the total number of these central schools and where should they be located? Would it be desirable to establish central schools in the first instance at each Taluka Headquarters?

(3) What should be the proportion of general education and practical work in the higher primary standards of these central schools?

(4) Should these institutions be treated as pre-vocational or should they be encouraged to be developed in either direction as circumstances would permit?

Types of Handicrafts.- (5) What major types of handicrafts in addition to agriculture could be introduced in these schools in rural as well as urban areas?

(6) The Committee is requested to suggest a three years' syllabus for different kinds of manual work (handicrafts).

(7) Is it necessary to revise the syllabus of the lower primary grades of the central schools? If so make definite suggestions.

Training of Staff for Central Schools.- (8) How and where should teachers for Central schools be trained? Should they be trained in the existing training institutions for primary teachers or in some vocational institutions? Or should intensive Refresher Courses be organised in institutions like the College of Agriculture, with special staffs? What period may be considered as adequate for imparting training in different handicrafts?

(9) How and where can women teachers of central schools for girls be trained? Will a special course of six months be sufficient

for training in household arts, mothercraft and some useful cottage industries?

Cost of Scheme.- (10) What will be the cost of training teachers for central schools?

(11) What will be the approximate cost of maintaining central schools of different types?

(12) What will be the initial cost of introducing the scheme, under the heading equipment and material required for training institutions and the central schools? The Committee is requested to give a complete list of the equipment required together with the rough estimates thereof for all the different handicrafts that it might suggest.\*

Secondary Education.- (1) What should be the proportion of general education and vocational training in secondary schools?

(2) At what stage should vocational training be introduced? What should be its duration?

(3) Propose syllabus for the different kinds of vocational courses which could be suitably introduced in secondary schools.

(4) What would be the approximate recurring and non-recurring cost to Government as regards staff, equipment, contingencies, etc., for (a) technical, (b) commercial, and (c) agricultural courses to be introduced in secondary schools?

(5) How should teachers for vocational courses be recruited? What should be their qualifications and scales of salaries? Will it be necessary to provide any preliminary training to these teachers? If so, in what institutions and through which agencies?

The Committee has been requested to submit its report to Government within two months of its first meeting.

Advisory Committee on Adult Education.- The Bombay Government proposes to appoint two more Committees to advise them on (1) training of primary teachers and (2) adult education. Their personnel and terms of reference of these two Committees are expected to be announced shortly.

(Extracted from Communiqué dated 12-1-1938 on the subject issued by the Government of Bombay, a copy of which was forwarded to this Office by the Director of Information, Bombay.)+

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37/45

Adult Education in Bombay Presidency:

Bombay Government appoints Advisory Committee. \*

In addition to the appointment of a Committee to advise it on the question of vocational training of boys and girls in primary and secondary schools in the Bombay Presidency (vide pages 43-44 of this report), the Government of Bombay has appointed a Committee of sixteen members, with Dr. Clifford Manshardt, Ph.D., Director, Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work, Bombay, as chairman, to advise the Government on the question of adult education. The Committee has been requested to submit a report covering the following points:

1. What should be the place of adult education in the general system of education in a country like India where literacy is very low?

2. What should be the different types of adult education, and what should be the duties of Government in promoting the different types?

3. How should employers of labour in mills, factories, etc., be required to help Government in promoting literacy among their employees? Would it be profitable for the management of mills in Bombay, Ahmedabad, Solapur, etc., and for railway workshop managements to promote adult education among their employees on the lines followed by the Paper Mills of Mundhwa (Poona)?

4. What should be the agencies to conduct and supervise adult education? How far should Government avail themselves of the services of the school boards and their educational staffs for adult education? Should adult education be one of the compulsory duties of school boards?

5. Are cheap books and literature for adult schools, as well as for "continuation" work, already available? If these books are not available, make suggestions as to how they can be provided.

6. Suggest a scheme of village libraries for adults, — their organisation, maintenance and financing.

7. What is the place of the magic lantern, the cinema and the radio in adult education? How far is it possible to reorganise the present Department of Visual Instruction to enable it to take up the work *more effectively?*

8. ~~xx~~ Suggest a scheme for women's adult education — its nature and organisation.

37  
76

9. What should be the basis on which grants-in-aid for adult education should be made?

The Committee has been requested to submit its report to the Government within two months of its first meeting.

Professor R. Choksi, Wilson College, Bombay, is the Secretary of the Committee.

(Summarised from a communique dated 28-1-1938 issued by the Bombay Government, a copy of which was forwarded to this Office).

Educational Reform in Bihar:

Government appoints Enquiry Committee. +

In pursuance of a resolution adopted by the Senate of the Patna University at its annual meeting held on 26-11-1937 recommending to the Government the desirability of appointing a Committee to enquire into and report on the progress of education in the province and prepare a scheme for further expansion (vide page 84 of our November 1937 report), the Government of Bihar has appointed an Enquiry Committee of eleven members, with Professor K. T. Shah as Chairman.

Terms of Reference: The Committee will undertake a general examination of the whole field of education, including primary, secondary, collegiate, technical, industrial and professional education, and suggest improvements and modifications in the existing system which it considers more suited to the requirements of the province. In making recommendations, the Committee will pay special attention to the practical side of education and to the revision of the syllabus with a view to bringing education in closer touch with the life of the people in their daily needs and the problems which confront the province.

(The Hindustan Times and the Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-1-1938.) +



Agriculture.

The Bombay Moneylenders Bill, 1938.

39  
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Attention is directed to pages 149-175 of Part V of the Bombay Government Gazette dated 17-1-1938 where is published the text of the Bombay Moneylenders Bill, 1938 (No. VII of 1938), which the Government of Bombay intends to introduce in the current session of the Bombay Assembly. The following are some of the more important features of the Bill:

Every money-lender is required to take out a licence from a Registrar of Money-Lenders, appointed by the Provincial Government for defined areas. Money-lenders are required to deliver to the debtor a statement of account and a plain and complete receipt for every payment; on the repayment of the loan in full, they are required to mark indelibly every paper signed by the debtor indicating payment or cancellation and discharge of any mortgage, etc. Interest exceeding in amount the principal of the original loan is prohibited. The rate of interest, notwithstanding any agreement between the money-lender and debtor, is limited to 9 per cent. in the case of secured loans, and 12 per cent. in the case of unsecured loans. Compound interest is prohibited. If the Court finds that the money-lender has been over-paid, it shall order refund to the debtor of the sum so over-paid. If a money-lender enters in a bond a sum in excess of the actual loan advanced, it is proposed that he shall be deemed to have committed an offence punishable with fine up to Rs. 1,000. Molestation of a debtor by a money-lender is made an offence punishable with imprisonment of either description up to three months or with fine up to Rs. 500 or with both. Molestation is defined as obstructing or using violence or intimidating or persistently following the debtor.

(Extracted from pages 149-175 of Part V of the Bombay Government Gazette dated 17-1-38.) +

Extension of Punjab Relief of Indebtedness Act, 1934, to Delhi Province; Delhi Debt Conciliation Rules, 1937. +

Attention is directed to pages 1105-1108 of Part II-A of the Gazette of India dated 25-12-1937, where is published the text of a Notification (No. B-15/37-L.S.G./R. & A. dated 22-12-1937), which sets forth rules for establishing Debt Conciliation Boards in the Province of Delhi for settlement of disputes between creditors and debtors. The rules are issued by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, in pursuance of the extension of the Punjab

Relief of Indebtedness Act, 1934, to Delhi Province.

4078

(Pages 1105-1108, Part II-A of the  
Gazette of India dated 25-12-1937.)

Maritime Affairs.1st Patna Divisional Nawik (River Workers)Conference, Dehri-on-Sone, 12-1-1938. +

Under the auspices of the All-India Mallah Sabha the first session of the Patna Divisional Nawik Conference was held at Dehri-on-Sone, Bihar, on 5-1-1938, Mr. Eudhan Roy Verma, M.L. A., presiding. A large number of boat-men, ferrymen, and workers on rafts plying in the Sone river and canals attended the Conference.

Resolutions demanding increased wages for boatmen, ferrymen, and raft-workers, and abolition of bribery among staff in charge of locks and canal pass issuing offices were adopted by the Conference.

To further organise the river-workers a Divisional Nawik (river workers) Union was formed with Mr. B.R.Verma, M.L.A., as President, and Messrs. Sahadeo Saran and G.P.Chaudhry as Secretaries.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika,  
14-1-1938). +

Indians in Fiji in 1936:

Report of Secretary for Indian Affairs, Fiji Government.

The following information regarding the conditions of life and work of Indians in Fiji is taken from the annual report on the subject for 1936 issued by the Secretary for Indian Affairs, Fiji Government.

Population and Vital Statistics: Though immigration to Fiji has been strictly controlled since 1920, the present Indian population in Fiji has grown from 24,368 in 1921 to 85,002 in 1936. The proportion of females to males has risen from a ratio of 65:100 in 1921 to a ratio of 72:100 in 1936. The birth rate during the year under report was 40.15 per mille and the death rate 12.32. Approximately 61,000 of the total number of Indians were born in the colony. The distribution according to religion is: Hindus 70,989; Moslems 11,200; Sikhs 1,000; and Christians 1,813.

Economic Conditions: Indian cane-growers during the year produced 997,008 tons which they sold to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company for £ 743,848. An area of 22,168 acres of land, under cultivation of sugar cane, was held by Indians in the form of leases or otherwise, while 23,062 acres have been leased by the C.S.R. Company to tenants. The average yield per acre of the company's tenants was 24.2 tons as compared with 19.8 tons obtained by independent growers. It is said that Indian growers will benefit greatly from the decision of the C.S.R. Company to embark on the pineapple industry.

Wages Rates - Domestic Servants, Unskilled Labour and Mill Workers: The wages of domestic servants vary between 30s. and £5 per month, according to age and skill, with free rations as a rule. The wage rates for unskilled labour are 2s. 6d. per day in Suva and range from 2s. to 2s. 6d. per day in the country. In the cane-growing season, mill labourers receive a standard wage of 1s. 8d. per day with a bonus of 7d. per day, and certain privileges, including purchase of rations at reduced prices. Bonuses received by cane cutters bring their wages up to 3s. to 3s. 6d. per day. Many workers, including domestic servants, own or rent small holdings on which they grow edible crops to supplement their incomes. The demand for mill and agricultural labourers being more or less seasonal, there is shortage of labour supply at certain times of the year.

According to the report, however, very little destitution and practically no poverty exists among Indians in Fiji.

The report points out that a majority of immigrants and of applicants for immigration permits in recent years have been Punjabis and Gujeratis, both of whom are described as "fortune seekers" rather than colonists. Other immigrants are from Calcutta and Madras. It is stated that there is no tendency among genuine labourers to come to the colony from India.

(The Statesman, 12-12-1937.) +

Labour Troubles in Mauritius:

Statement by Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay. +

Since August 1937 there have been continued labour troubles in various parts of Mauritius, and more particularly, in the different sugar estates, the labour population of which consists mainly of Indians. The following facts with regard to labour and economic conditions in the Island are taken from a statement issued in the second week of January 1938 by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay:

Population and Economic Conditions.- The population of Mauritius is about 400,000 distributed into the following classes in numerical order: (a) Indians (265,796), about two-thirds of the total population; (b) a mixed coloured population, generally known as "Creoles"; (c) descendants of the French; (d) the Chinese, about 10,000; (e) the English.

Grievances of Indian Labourers.- The grievances of the labourers are mainly three: (1) low wages; (2) swindling by intermediaries; (3) reduction of the weight of the variety of cane known as "Uba Fleriot". On 13-8-1937, a crowd of Indian labourers which had marched to Port Louis to represent grievances to the Protector of Immigrants was fired upon and three were shot dead. A Commission of Enquiry, with Mr. Hooper, the Procurer General, <sup>as president and four other members</sup> has since been set up to investigate the whole situation, but as none of the five Commissioners is an Indian, there is considerable dissatisfaction on this score also. Further, the Indian labourers feel that the Protector of Immigrants, who is a Creole, is not sympathetically inclined to Indians.

Causes of Indian Discontent.- Analysing the causes of Indian discontent, the statement cites extracts from a communication on the subject sent to the Association by a Mauritius Correspondent. "The present sequence of strikes is not merely a matter between

employers and employees, but is an express<sup>ion</sup> of a general dissatisfaction of the way in which Indians are treated in the Colony. Low wages and dishonest intermediaries have existed for years, and the question naturally arises why the labourers have not reacted before this. The reason is that the outlook of labourers 25 years ago was very limited; they lived practically in a world which was confined to the boundaries of the sugar estate. With the advent of easier means of communication, spread of Indian films of high morality and especially the absorption of learning and education by their children, the Indian labourers are much more awake than those of one or two generations ago; most of them are aware, to a varying degree, that Indians are not given the share due to them, in proportion to their advancement in the official appointments of the Colony."

(The Hindu, 18-1-1938.) \*

#### Indian Workers in Burma:

#### Government decides on appointment of Agent. \*

The Government of India has decided to appoint an Agent in Burma for the protection of the Indian labouring classes there.

The question was raised in the Council of State in March 1937 by Pandit P.N.Sapru, who moved a resolution recommending the appointment of an Agent on the separation of Burma. Accepting the resolution on behalf of the Government, Sir Jagdish Prasad said the Government was waiting for the new order to come into existence before taking up the question and was also trying to get certain additional statistical information regarding the position of immigrants in Burma, the occupations in which they were employed, and exactly how many Indian immigrants Burma required (vide pages 92-93 of our March 1937 report).

The need for an ~~Agent~~ Indian Agent in Burma was stressed by the Whitley Commission which recommended that he should be an officer who, working in co-operation with the Government of Burma, but holding no appointment under that Government, should be solely responsible to the Government of India. He should have access to the Member or Minister responsible for labour and should furnish to the Government of India an annual report on the conditions of labour and on his own work. The Commission also declared that the industries of Burma largely depended on Indian labour, and that, in fact, the economic life of Rangoon and industrial activity in Burma generally were dependent, on the labour of Indians.

(The Statesman, 6-1-1938.).