

C1903/109

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
INDIAN BRANCH

Report for December 1937

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

<u>Contents.</u>	<u>Pages.</u>
1. <u>References to the I.L.O.</u> ...	1 - 10
2. <u>National Labour Legislation.</u>	
(a) The Indian Mines Amendment Act, 1937: Act receives assent of Governor-General.	11
(b) The Cochin Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937: Referred to Select Committee.	11
(c) Drive for Labour Legislation in Baroda State.	12
(d) Providing Rooms in Mills for Children of Women Employees in Bombay: Notification of Government of Bombay.	12
(e) Safety in Mines: Proposed Amendment to Indian Coal Mines Regulations, 1926.	13
3. <u>Conditions of Labour.</u>	
(a) Sickness Insurance and Holidays with Pay for Industrial Workers in Bombay.	14 - 15
(b) Jamshedpur Workers formulate their Demands: Grievances placed before Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for Labour, Bihar.	16
(c) Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for various Centres in India during September 1937.	17
(d) Forced Labour in Hyderabad State: Working of the Bhagela Regulation during 1936-37.	17 - 19
(e) Labour Conditions in Ahmedabad: Bombay Governor's advice to Millowners.	19 - 20
(f) Sickness Leave with Pay for Industrial Workers in Bombay: Views of Millowners Association, Bombay.	20 - 21
(g) Strikes Statistics for Quarter ending 30-9-37.	22 - 23
(h) Alternative Employment for Women Workers excluded from Underground Work in Coal Mines: Bihar Government's Proposals for training in Handloom Industry.	23 - 24
(i) Madura Labour Dispute: Findings of Court of Inquiry.	25 - 26
(j) Action taken by Madura Mills Company on Findings of Court of Inquiry.	27
(k) Wages of Badli Workers in Bombay Mills: Views of Millowners' Association, Bombay.	27 - 28
(l) Threatened Strike in Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation: Negotiations break down.	28 - 30
(m) Cawnpore Labour Dispute.	30 - 32

(n) Ministry Labour Disputes.	32 - 33
(o) Conditions of Shop Assistants in Cawnpore: Karamchari Mandal demands Legislation.	33 - 34
4. <u>Enforcement of Conventions.</u>	
Labour Conditions in Indian Mines: Report of Chief Inspector of Mines, 1936.	35 - 38
5. <u>Industrial Organisation:</u>	
<u>Employers' Organisations.</u>	
(a) Employers' Federation of India: 5th Annual General Meeting, Calcutta, 21-12-1937.	39 - 42
(b) Nomination of Employers' Delegates and Advisers to I.L. Conference: Reply of Government of India to Associated Chambers: Views of Bombay Chamber of Commerce.	43 - 44
(c) 19th Annual General Meeting of the Asso- ciated Chambers of Commerce, India, Calcutta, 20 & 21-12-1937.	44 - 46
<u>Workers' Organisations.</u>	
(a) 3rd session of N.T.U.F., Calcutta, 19 & 20-12-1937.	47 - 52
(b) 1st Madras Provincial Labour Conference, Madras, 14 & 15-12-1937.	53 - 55
(c) 16th session of A.I.T.U.C., Delhi, 1 & 2-1-38.	55 - 62
(d) Trade Union Unity : Meeting of Negotiations Committee, Delhi, 3-1-1938.	63
(e) Provincial Trades Union Federation: New Labour Organisation formed in Madras Presidency.	63 - 64
(f) The Working of the Trade Unions Act, 1926, in Bihar -1936-37.	65
6. <u>Economic Conditions.</u>	
(a) Indian Statistical Conference: 1st session to be held at Calcutta in January 1938.	66
(b) Protection of Minor Industries: Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, demands completion of inquiry.	66 - 67
(c) Development of Industries in U.P.: Provincial Government's new schemes.	68 - 70
(d) Cotton Textile Mill Industry in India during 1936-37.	70 - 71
(e) 9th Industrial Conference, Lahore, 15 & 16-12-1937.	72 - 74
(f) 21st session of All India Economic Conference, Hyderabad - 28 -31-12-1937.	75 - 76
(g) Industrial Development of Bombay: Provin- cial Government's new schemes.	76 - 77
7. <u>Employment and Unemployment.</u>	
Helping Unemployed Youths to set up small industries: U.P. Government's scheme.	78 - 79
8. <u>Public Health.</u>	
Health Conditions in Asansol Coal Mines, 1936-37.	80 - 82

	<u>Pages.</u>
9. <u>Education.</u>	
(a) Educational Reorganisation in Baroda: Government propose to appoint Expert.	83
(b) Vocational Education in Hyderabad State: Mr. Abbot conducting enquiry.	83
10. <u>Agriculture.</u>	
(a) The Madras Agriculturists' Relief Bill, 1938.	84 - 85
(b) The Bihar Moneylenders Bill, 1937.	85
(c) Collective Farming for U.P.: Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's Scheme.	86
(d) Relief to Indebted Agriculturists in U.P.: Temporary Postponement of Execution of Decrees Act, 1937.	86 - 87
11. <u>Maritime Affairs.</u>	
Recruitment of Seamen: National Seamen's Union urges abolition of Broker System.	88
12. <u>Migration.</u>	
Recruitment of Indian Workers for Ceylon Estates: State Council's Decision regarding Franchise of Indian Workers.	89 - 90
13. <u>General.</u>	
C.P. Government's Labour Policy: Informal Conference with Trade Union leaders.	91

References to the I. L. O.

The Indian tour of Director Butler and party was accorded considerable publicity in the Indian press. The principal news agencies and the correspondents of the leading papers covered fairly fully the various activities of the Director at the centres visited by him. This publicity was supplemented by the communiques and special articles sent out by this Office. A number of newspapers published photographs of Mr. Butler (supplied by this Office) as also photographs taken at functions in which he participated (277 cuttings relating to Director Butler's tour have been forwarded with our Minutes H.4/1621/37 dated 16-12-1937 and H.4/12/38 dated 6-1-1938; these relate to his tour up to Delhi and are mostly from papers received in this Office. Further cuttings relating to the tour ~~numbering~~ are being sent with ~~our Minute H.4/~~ ^{by air mail} ~~14-1-1938~~ ^{gov} dated 14-1-1938).

Below is given a summary of the more important editorial comments on the visit:

Editorial ^{Comments} Notes on Mr. Butler's Visit to India.

The Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur, dated 12-12-1937 publishes an editorial note welcoming Mr. Butler. The Journal says:

"During his visits to the industrial centres, Mr. Butler can see for himself the condition of our workers and the attitude of employers towards Trade Unions. We are sure that the Director, during his stay in India, will not only gain first hand knowledge of the life and standard of Indian workers but would also study the extent to which the International Labour Conventions, ratified by the Government of India, are actually applied over here."

* * *

The Statesman dated 15-12-1937 publishes an editorial note welcoming the visit to India of Mr. Butler. The paper remarks:

"For though it is often protested in this country that India does not get its money's worth out of the membership of the

League of Nations, it does think the work of the I.L.O. both important and helpful". It adds: "For India, though backward in organisation and technique, has great determination about progress in the industrial sphere, and problems relating to industry and labour are coming to the fore. Mr. Butler's visit should do good. And anyhow he is a welcome visitor for his own sake and because of his responsible position in the world."

* * *

The National Call dated 15-12-1937 publishes an editorial article under the caption: "The I.L.O. and India: Director Butler's Welcome Visit." The paper points out that the visit of Director Butler to India, which by the way testifies to the I.L.O.'s abiding interest in India, is bound to stimulate the social conscience considerably, and thus smoothen the way for the adoption of a progressive social code for India.

* * *

The Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 14-12-1937 publishes an editorial article under the caption: "Fate of Geneva". The following are important extracts:

"Geneva has not been able to protect China. She could not protect Abyssinia. As an international instrument of maintaining peace in the world she has utterly failed. She survives in one part of her activity. It is the International Labour Conference. But for the I.L.O., Geneva might have, without regret, wound up her business. Thanks to the foresight of the peacemakers at Versailles, they had made the I.L.O. a separate organisation though it was also an off-shoot of the war, and was intended to be used as an instrument of peace. *** The I.L.O. more truly represents the nations of the world than the League. The nations have apparently found in this organisation far more common points of agreement than in the parent body, the League. Even if the League goes, the I.L.O. is likely to survive. Its usefulness in improving the conditions of labour throughout the world is universally recognised. *** Without trying to prejudice the Director of the I.L.O., we may say that Mr. Butler will be convinced that Indian workers are more in need of the amenities than even the workers of the West, and this not only in their own interest, but also in the interest of the industries themselves and the people in general."

* * *

The December 1937 issue of the Indian Textile Journal publishes an editorial article under the caption: "I.L.O. Chief Visits India". The paper remarks:

"For many years the I.L.O. was no more than a "mental abstraction" to most Indians, though the annual session of the Geneva Conference and the appointment of the Indian employers' and employees' delegates helped to create a momentary interest which, however, there was nothing to sustain over and long and continuous periods.*** Mr. Butler's visit, this cold weather, therefore, should stimulate India's languishing interest in the Geneva Organisation. It is well that his Indian tour has been so planned as to include the capitals of the major industrial Provinces and important industrial centres like Jamshedpur. He will be offered facilities to confer with Government officials, captains of industry and trade union leaders, and these personal contacts should be eminently helpful to a better mutual understanding between the Indian viewpoint on the one hand and those who guide and formulate international Labour policy at Geneva on the other."

* * *

The Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 23-12-1937 publishes an editorial article under the caption:"Wanted - Industrial Co-ordination." The paper asks:

"Can the International Labour Organisation which has made a valuable contribution to the cause of social justice in the post-war period perform a useful function at the present stage of our industrial evolution? We suggest that it is by this criterion that the public, including the employers and the workers, will judge the value of Mr. Butler's visit." It adds: "We trust the Director's visit will help to show that the I.L.O. can make a useful contribution to the solution of vital national problems through co-ordination and harmony of interests and will tend to remove a feeling that its reforms are dictated from some distant international centre."

* * *

The Leader dated 18-12-1937 publishes an editorial article under the caption:"India and I.L.O." The paper points out:

There is one matter to which the attention of the authorities of the I.L.O. may be drawn. They would do well to remember that conditions in western countries and in India are not identical, and that a scheme of reform which is considered necessary in the case of a country like, say, France, may not necessarily be desirable in the interests of India.*** Our advice to the Geneva authorities therefore is "go slow".

* * *

The National Call dated 22-12-1937 publishes an editorial article under the caption:"The I.L.O. and India: Significance of Director Butler's Tour." The paper remarks:

"The complaint has often been voiced that in drafting international labour conventions, the I.L.O. and the International Labour Conference in several cases have not made sufficient allowances for the special conditions prevailing in India, for its comparatively late entry into the industrial sphere, and for the manifold other handicaps under which the country is labouring. We are sure that Mr. Butler's present Indian tour will go a long way to remedy this defect and make Geneva well and truly informed about Indian conditions."

* * *

The Leader dated 24-12-1937 publishes an editorial article under the caption: "The Labour Movement in India", appreciating the efforts of the I.L.O. towards reduction in hours of employment in India, and stimulating social legislation generally in the country.

* * *

"Federated India", Madras, dated 15-12-1937 publishes an editorial note under the caption: "The I.L.O. and Agricultural Labour". The paper remarks:

"We also hope that Mr. Butler will have something to say about agricultural labour which has always received step motherly treatment at Geneva. So far industrial labour has almost monopolised the deliberations of the I.L.O. This is not as it should be, for the condition of the agricultural labourer is in no way better than that of his urban confrere, though he is not able to make himself heard by the powers that be. If anything, it is decidedly worse, at any rate in India where rural unemployment is one of the most serious problems with which the country is faced at present."

* * *

The National Call dated 24-12-1937 publishes an editorial note under the caption: "Wages in the Textile Industry." Commenting on the evidence given by Mr. W.J.Cullen, representative of the Sholapur employers, before the Bombay Textile Inquiry Committee, in the course of which he pointed out that Sholapur suffers from severe competition of mills in Indian States, the paper remarks:

"The equalising of labour conditions in British India and

the States and the enforcement of I.L.Conventions ratified by British India in Indian States are matters of great urgency. We hope that in the discussions between the Government and Mr. Harold Butler, Director of the I.L.O., who is now touring India, this matter will come up for prominent discussion and that a settlement fair to all parties would be arrived at."

* * *

The Hindustan Times dated 27-12-1937 makes a reference to Mr. Butler's visit in the "Political Notes" sent by the paper's Special Delhi Correspondent. It is pointed out:

"The International Labour Office has done very good work in India, educating the public on the one hand and stimulating the Government to undertake legislation and reform on the other. It is good that Mr. Butler has gone to the provinces first and made the acquaintance of popular Ministers and learnt their views before coming to the Government of India, for that I think, is the proper way to study the Indian problem."

* * *

The Madras Mail dated 14-12-1937 publishes an editorial article under the caption: "Penalising the Responsible Employer". The paper remarks:

"It will be impossible for Mr. Butler to study conditions, the results of labour legislation, during his extremely brief sojourn in India.*** At best he can only get a glimpse of conditions, in certain factories, and hear certain points of view from employers or labourers or administrators. He cannot study the operation of the labour laws and regulations for himself. It follows, therefore, that he must take back to Geneva a very imperfect view of industrial conditions in this Presidency."

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Other References to the I.L.O.

The Planters' Chronicle dated 27-11-1937 publishes an article dealing with the work of the 23rd session of the I.L. Conference.

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The Bombay Chronicle dated 4-12-1937 and the Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 19-12-1937 publish an article under the caption: "A Trip to Ireland" by Gaganviharilal Mehta; in the course of the article incidental references are made to the 23rd session of the I.L.Conference.

* * *

The December 1937 issue of the Journal of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, publishes the Chamber's views on the report of the Indian employers' delegation to the 23rd session of the I.L.Conference submitted to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

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A Government of India Press communiqué wired out by the Associated Press setting forth the items on the agenda of the 24th I.L.Conference, is published by the Statesman and the Hindustan Times dated 29-12-1937.

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The Union Herald dated 16-12-1937 and the Planters' Chronicle dated 25-12-1937 publish an earlier communique on the subject issued by the Government of India on 12-11-1937.

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A brief news item to the effect that Mr. T.V.K.Naidu and Mr. Karunanidhi have been recommended by the Central Council of the Railway Workers' Union, Trichinopoly, for nomination as workers' delegate and adviser respectively to the 24th session of the I.L.Conference, is published by the Hindu dated 13-12-1937, the Hindustan Times dated 14-12-1937, the Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 16-12-1937 and the Statesman dated 17-12-1937.

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A news item to the effect that the Government of the United Provinces, consulted by the Government of India about holidays with pay for factory workers, has recommended that it should be made obligatory on all factories to grant 67 days' holidays with pay in the year is published in the Hindu, the National Call and the Hindustan Times dated 15-12-1937, and the Leader, the Statesman and the Times of India dated 16-12-1937.

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The Times of India dated 17-12-1937 publishes an editorial note regarding the views of the U.P.Government on the subject of holidays with pay. The paper observes: "If it is sought to have more than double the number of holidays, the additional burden on industry will be considerable."

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The Hindu dated 1-12-1937 publishes the first instalment of a series of articles on "Unemployment Conditions in 1936" contributed by this Office to this and a few other selected papers.

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The Hindu dated 13-12-1937 publishes the second instalment of the above series of articles.

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The Hindu dated 25-12-1937 publishes the third instalment of the above series of articles.

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The National Call dated 7-12-1937 publishes an editorial article on "Unemployment in Cochin: Programme of Public Works." In the course of the article, numerous references are made to the I.L.O.

* * *
Industrial Bulletin (No.154) dated 22-11-1937 issued by the Employers' Federation of India, Bombay, publishes a note on "The 40-Hour Week in Textiles" dealing with the speech delivered by Mr. William Scholes, one of the technical advisers to the British Employers' Delegation at the last I.L.Conference, at the Aston-Underlyne and District Mill Managers' Association on 8-10-1937, about the recent I.L.Convention re. 40 hour week for the textile industry. The speech was directed against the 40-hour week.

* * *
The Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce during October 1937 publishes the gist of correspondence between the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and the Government of India on the subject of the necessity for consulting Chambers of Commerce regarding the nomination of employers' representatives to the sessions of the I.L.Conference.

* * *
The Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur, dated 12-12-1937 publishes under the caption: "Epistles-Brief and Frank", a letter to the Secretary, Department of Labour, Government of India, re. the selection of the personnel of the Indian Labour delegation to the 24th I.L.Conference at Geneva. The paper demands that the Government should send in this capacity only bona fide ^{workers} labourers.

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The Bombay Chronicle dated 24-11-1937 publishes an article summarising the Section: "Agricultural Workers: The Economic Situation of Agriculture" of the I.L.O.Year-Book, 1936-37 (pages 490-498).

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The Financial News, Bombay, dated 27-11-1937 publishes an article outlining the history of the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The part played by the I.L.O. in stimulating employers' organisations is referred to in the article.

* * *

The Bombay Chronicle dated 24-11-1937 and the Indian Labour Journal dated 12-12-1937 publish the first instalment of a series of articles on Minimum Wage Legislation in India, by Mr. Dinker Desai, Member, Servants of India Society; in the course of the article, numerous references are made to the I.L.O.

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The December 1937 issue of the New Review, Calcutta, publishes a review of I.L.O. publication "The Social Consequences of the Economic Depression" by Wladimir Woytinsky.

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A Reuter's message to the effect that Italy has given notice of withdrawal from the I.L.O. is published in the Hindu dated 17-12-1937 and the Statesman, the Times of India and the Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 18-12-1937.

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The Times of India dated 18-12-1937 publishes an editorial note on the decision of Italy to withdraw from membership of the I.L.O. The paper remarks: "In the regulation of international industrial conditions, the I.L.O. has an excellent record of humanitarian achievement. Its membership comprises 61 countries (excluding Italy but including the United States of America), which is three more than that of the League of Nations."

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A Reuter's message sent from Geneva on 18-12-1937 to the effect that Italian officials of the League of Nations and the I.L.O. have been asked by the Government of Italy to resign from the League is published by the Statesman and the Bombay Chronicle dated 19-12-1937 and the Leader, the Times of India and the Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 20-12-1937.

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The Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 2-1-1938 published a Swiss letter dated 22-12-1937 (by air mail) from the paper's Swiss Correspondent; the letter, among other matters, points out that Italy has withdrawn its membership from the I.L.O.

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The Hindu dated 25-12-1937 publishes a "Letter from Switzerland" dated Geneva, 11-12-1937 from the paper's Geneva Correspondent; the letter contains several incidental references to the I.L.O.

* * *
 "Federated India", Madras, dated 15-12-1937 reproduces an article under the caption: "Paid Holidays and the Shorter Working Week: Why the Movement is Growing" contributed by Mr. Herbert Tracey, to "Industrial News" dated 4-5-1937. Copies of the article were sent to this and a few other papers by this Office.

* * *
 "Indian Affairs", Calcutta, dated 2-12-1937 publishes a leading article under the caption: "Labour Policy of Congress." Referring to the welfare work necessary to improve the efficiency of the Indian worker, the paper points out: "The recommendations of the Labour Commission have to be implemented in full; and the more progressive ideas of the I.L.O. or of M. Blum or Mr. Roosevelt may be left to await their turn."

* * *
 The Hindustan Times dated 13-12-1937 publishes ~~an extract~~ ⁱⁿ from the "Political Notes" by the paper's Special Delhi Correspondent ^{a brief note} about the transfer of the office of the Indian Branch of the League of Nations from Bombay to New Delhi. It is pointed out: "The location of the League of Nations office at New Delhi will help to bring it into as close and intimate a touch with the Central Legislature and the Government of India as has been the ^{case} with the International Labour Office."

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 The Statesman dated 1-1-1938 publishes a news item to the effect that Khan Bahadur Mian Mohammad Afzal Husain, Principal, Punjab Agricultural College, Lyallpur, has been invited by the Director of the I.L.O. to serve as an expert on the Permanent Agricultural Committee of the I.L.O.

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 An article under the caption: "The Story of the I.L.O.: Aims, Methods of Work and Results Achieved", contributed by this Office, is published by Federated India, Madras, dated 8-12-1937, the Leader dated 12-12-1937, the Hindustan Times dated 20-12-1937, the Bombay Chronicle dated 22-12-1937 and the November 1937 issue

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of the Tisco Review, Jamshedpur. The article is based on a Geneva communique on the subject.

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The November 1937 issue of the Tisco Review, Jamshedpur, publishes an editorial note directing attention to the above article.

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The Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur, dated 19-12-1937 publishes an article under the caption: "Understand the Strikers" by Mr. D.B. Bedekar; in the course of the article, several incidental references are made to Geneva Conventions.

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The Hindustan Times dated 25-11-1937 publishes the report of a debate held at Jubbulpore in the third week of November 1937 on the motion that "in the opinion of the House, the League of Nations has failed to justify its existence." The motion, on being put to vote, was carried by an overwhelming majority.

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No Indian newspapers and periodicals received during the month in this Office published items from the I.L.O. News Bulletin or Press News.

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The following messages having reference to the I.L.O. emanating from Reuter or other European news agencies and press correspondents were published in the Indian press during December 1937:

1. A Reuter's message from Geneva re. Italy's withdrawal from membership of the I.L.O.
 2. A Reuter's message from Geneva dated 18-12-1937 re. the resignation of the Italian officials of the League and the I.L.O.
 3. A 'Letter from Switzerland' from the Swiss correspondent of the Hindu, published in the issue of the paper dated 25-12-1937.
 4. A Swiss Letter from the Correspondent of the Amrita Bazar Patrika published in the issue of the paper dated 2-1-1938.
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National Labour Legislation. +

The Indian Mines (Amendment) Act, 1937:

Act receives Assent of Governor General. ✓

Reference was made at pages 11-12 of our September 1937 report to the introduction in the Central Legislative Assembly of a Bill to amend the Indian Mines Act, 1923. The Bill was taken up for consideration by the Assembly on 5-10-1937 and was passed by it on the same day (vide pages 15-16 of our October 1937 report). The Indian Mines (Amendment) Act, 1937, received the assent of the Governor General on 3-12-1937 and is published at pages 55-56 of Part IV of the Gazette of India dated 11-12-1937.

The Cochin Maternity Benefit Bill:

Bill referred to Select Committee. ✓ +

On 3-12-1937 Dr. Mrs. D'Souza Williams introduced in the Cochin Legislative Council a Bill to make provision for the payment of maternity leave and benefits to women workers in factories, and also moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Mrs. Williams, in recommending the Bill to the House, remarked that the provisions of the Bill were very modest when compared to those of the Madras and Mysore Acts on the subject. For instance, she has provided for the payment of only As. 3 per day as maternity benefit as against As. 8 in the Madras and Mysore Acts.

The Bill was referred to a Select Committee on the same day. ✓
(The Hindu, 6-12-1937)
+

Drive for Labour Legislation in Baroda State. +

In the Baroda State Assembly, Mr. Rasulkhān Pathan, a member, moved a resolution on 11-12-1937 urging on the Government the necessity for adoption by the State, with necessary modifications to suit local conditions, labour legislation on the lines of the Trade Disputes Act, the Trade Unions Act and the Payment of Wages Act of British India. The motion, however, was not pressed to a division in view of the assurance given by the Prime Minister that he would take note of the general sense of the House in favour of the motion, and explore ways and means to carry out the objects underlying them. The Government accepted the resolution.

(The Times of India, 14-12-1937.) +

Providing Rooms in mills for Children of Women Employees
in Bombay: Government Notification. +

Attention is directed to pages 1-2 of Part IV-A of the Bombay Government Gazette dated 6-1-1938 where is published the draft of a Notification, No. 1262/34 dated 23-12-1937, issued by the Political and Reforms Department, Bombay, making it obligatory on factories having more than 100 female workers to provide sufficient number of rooms for the use of children of women employees. The notification lays down certain conditions to be complied with in the construction of such rooms. +

Safety in Mines:

Proposed Amendment to Indian Coal Mines Regulations. +

Attention is directed to pages 2015 to 2025 of Part I of the Gazette of India dated 18-12-1937 where are published certain amendments which the Government of India propose to make in the Indian Coal Mines Regulations, 1926. The amends relate to adequate safety measures in mines. +

Conditions of Labour.

Sickness Insurance and Holidays with Pay for Industrial
Workers in Bombay: N.T.U.Federation's Criticism of
Government's Scheme.

At pages 18-19 of our November 1937 report was given the salient features of a scheme for sickness leave with pay, which has been sponsored by the Government of Bombay. In expressing the views of the Committee of the National Trades Union Federation on the scheme, the General Secretary of the Federation complains that the Government is very vague as to whether the sickness insurance scheme which the Government would ultimately establish, ~~will be~~ be based on the scheme it has now outlined or on ~~a~~ certain statistical data bearing on the subject now being collected by the Labour Office, Bombay.

Criticism of Government's Scheme.- As regards the statement that the Government hopes that a fully developed scheme of social insurance may, in course of time, be evolved from the scheme now outlined by the Government, the N.T.U.F. expresses the view that it is impossible for a fully developed scheme to grow out of the scheme now adumbrated, especially in view of the fact that the present scheme is not likely to yield any financial margin which will be available to help the future development of social insurance schemes. Another drawback is that the Government does not propose to make any contributions to the fund.

The Government proposal for combining sick leave with holidays with pay is not tenable, since the scheme contemplates the grant of paid leave only on production of medical certificate; the holiday aspect of leave with pay is completely lost sight of.

Federation's Proposals.- Keeping ^{within} the frame-work of the Government scheme, the Federation makes the following suggestions for improvement:

- (a) The leave to be granted should be either for sickness or holidays, or both, until a full sickness insurance scheme is evolved.
- (b) The period of leave should not be less than four weeks in a year.
- (c) Provision should be made for the accumulation of leave

for a period of at least three years so that the worker can take, in the case of protracted or serious illness, full advantage of the scheme.

(d) The scheme should contain a provision ^{ensuring} that a change of employment should not involve loss of leave due but not utilised before such change takes place. If the scheme is to be of real benefit to the worker, it is necessary that it should contain such a provision.

(e) The fund which the Government proposes to maintain under the scheme should receive not merely the cash value of the leave not taken but the whole cost of the leave which the employer will be required to incur on his workmen; and the Government should pay directly to the worker the amount due to him on account of his leave. This procedure, if adopted, will remove many practical difficulties that may come in the way of the worker in getting his leave and pay.

(f) The amounts which may accumulate in the name of each individual worker should be drawn upon on his retirement from industry or on his attaining a certain age and should be paid to him either in lump sum or in instalments in accordance with his wishes.

(g) In case the worker dies before getting the amount due to him on account of a portion of his leave not being used, it should be paid to his wife or children or to his father or mother or other dependants, if any.

(h) The provision with regard to ten days' contribution from the workers should be deleted.

Contribution to the Fund.- If it is intended that a nucleus of a fund should be started for protecting the workers against sickness, retirement, old age or death, the Committee of the Federation would welcome such a move, if both the Government and the employers make adequate contributions for this purpose. Such a move, it is remarked, is overdue and the Committee urges that a beginning should be made immediately. It is urged that it should be quite distinct from the scheme for leave with pay. The schemes dealing with sickness insurance, old age, etc., are, broadly speaking of a contributory character, and where they are non-contributory, the financial burden is entirely borne by the State. In any scheme on a wider basis that the Government may prepare, the workers will bear their due share of the financial responsibility, provided, the State and the employers will bear their respective shares.

(The Indian Labour Journal, 12-12-1937)

Jamshedpur Workers formulate their Demands:
Grievances placed before Parliamentary Secretary
to Minister for Labour, Bihar. +

The workers of Jamshedpur submitted in the first week of December 1937, to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industries and Labour, Bihar, who was touring the province to study labour conditions, a memorandum containing the various demands of the workers to improve their conditions of work. The following are the more important of the demands mentioned in the memorandum:-

1. Recognition by employers of properly constituted unions.
2. Security of Service.
3. Minimum living wage.
4. Unemployment insurance.
5. Free and compulsory primary education for children of labourers and provision of night school for adults.
6. Free quarters.
7. Free medical aid for workers and their families.
8. Liquidation of workers' debts and control of usurious agencies.
9. Humane treatment of workers: physical torture and abuse by superiors to be made punishable by legislation.
10. Bribery of all kinds to be made punishable by legislation.
11. Introduction of provident fund schemes.
12. Introduction of bonus on a graded scale to all workers, and a profit sharing bonus.
13. Grant of annual, casual and festival leave.
14. Sickness insurance with pay during sickness.
15. Collection of union's subscription dues through pay roll..
16. Recognition of the right of workers to strike as a last resort and to picket.
17. Abolition of the contract system of employment.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-12-1937).
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Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for Various Centres in India during September, 1937. ✓ +

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

Bombay.— The index number (Base: Year ending June 1934) of the cost of living for working classes in Bombay in September 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 September 1937 rose by 1 point to 77; for 1936 the average was 71.

Sholapur.— The index number (Base; year ending January 1928) of the cost of living in Sholapur declined by 2 points to 71. The average for 1936 was 71.

Nagpur.— The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in September 1937 remained stationary at 65.

Jubbulpore.— The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in Jubbulpore in September 1937 remained unchanged at 63.

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

Forced Labour in Hyderabad: Working of the Bhagela Regulation. ✓ +

Reference was made at pages 21-22 of our January 1936 report to the promulgation by the Government of H.E.H. the Nizam of Hyderabad of the Bhagela Regulation which prohibited certain forms of forced labour in the Hyderabad State. According to a press note issued by the Hyderabad Government on the working of the Regulation during 1346 Fasli (6-10-1936 to 5-10-1937), the

Government is satisfied that, with the increased attention that is being paid to the Regulation by both officials and non-officials and because of the careful rules framed to implement the Regulation, the old time hereditary service will altogether disappear, giving place to the annual wage contracts between the labourer and employer which already prevail over the greater part of the Dominions.

Regulation of Agreements: The Bhagela system is prevalent mostly in Telingana districts. During this first year, Tehsildars (revenue officers) have, in the course of their tours, been explaining the provisions of the Bhagela Regulation to bhagelas and their masters. The Regulation has also been given wide publicity by social workers and copies translated into the local vernaculars have been distributed. It can only be in remote villages that knowledge of the Regulation has not yet penetrated. Tehsildars have examined many agreements made between farm-labourers and masters under the new Regulation, but almost all of them are reported to be on unstamped paper and many are said to be only oral agreements. As the Regulation has been in force for only one year and as the bhagela has been under an inferiority complex for generations, it will require one or two years' further experience to discover whether these so-called oral agreements are genuine, voluntary agreements respected on both sides or are a cloak for still keeping alive old debts legally cancelled by the Regulation.

The universal absence of stamped agreements suggests that the landlord places the burden of purchasing stamped paper on the bhagela and that the latter is unable to find money for it. When the Bhagela Regulation is converted into an enactment by the Legislative Council, provision may have to be made to make the landlord responsible for executing the agreement on a stamped paper at his own expense and for furnishing a copy of it to the bhagela.

Absence of Sanctions to enforce Regulation: Another difficulty which may acquire further importance with time is the absence of any legal sanction or remedy in those cases where bhagelas are compelled to work on the old system for hereditary debts despite the debts having been invalidated by the Regulation. In some talukas, landlords are very powerful and bhagelas too timid and backward to complain. The result is that no agreements under the Regulation have yet been entered into, for instance in some villages of Nalgonda district. Individual complaints have been also made in Nizamabad and in Warangal of bhagelas having been forced to execute documents. The offender in one case was a village patel and he was promptly suspended. No rules have yet been made under the Regulation as this requires further experience.

Effects of the Regulation: The reaction on the whole ~~has~~ ^{been} reported from both official and non-official sources to have been very satisfactory. In some parts, wages have (to some extent) increased. In others, bhagelas and their masters have come to satisfactory oral agreements. In a few places, these simple labourers decline to leave their masters' service as long as the old debts remain to be paid, although they have been told that they are free. Cases have come to notice where the bhagela, while making a new agreement, has insisted on the old debt being mentioned therein, considering it both dishonest and ill-omened to deprive his old master in this manner of his dues. In one report, it is stated that the employers are saying that, owing to labour difficulties, they will have to surrender part of their holdings.

(The Hindu, 7-12-1937.)

Labour Conditions in Ahmedabad:

Bombay Governor's Advice to Millowners. ✓

Sir Roger Lumley, the Governor of Bombay, while on a visit to Ahmedabad on 10-12-1937, addressed the Millowners' Association, Ahmedabad, on the local labour conditions. Following are relevant extracts from his speech:

Proper Organisation of Employers Essential: Referring to the lack of proper organisation of employers, the Governor said: "Your recent troubles have shown that your organisation is not comprehensive ~~or~~ completely effective. It seems to me essential that you should bring in all the employers and improve the discipline of your members, so that the reasoned agreements of the majority should not be upset by the refusal of a few to cooperate. It is also essential that you should look with an impartial eye on the grievances of labour."

The Danger of Undesirables in Labour Movement: "The recent strikes have shown that there are active agencies abroad which will seize on every grievance to foment trouble and to increase their own power for bringing about strikes at their own will, regardless of whether the grievance is real or not. Your position when faced by such agencies will be much more difficult than it is now, when for the most part you have to deal with organisations genuinely representative of labour."

Necessity for ~~perfect~~ Conciliation/Machinery: "You know better than anyone what rates of wages the industry will stand, and my advice to you is within those limits to remove all grievances which you know to be genuine, so that you may have a contented labour population, which is the best defence against ~~destructive~~ destructive agitation. You cannot afford interruptions to work if you are to compete successfully with foreign competition. You

must, therefore, perfect your conciliation machinery. I am sure that the Ministry will give their support and sympathy to any measures of this sort which will improve the relations between both parties."

(The Times of India, 11-12-1937.)

Sickness Leave with Pay for Industrial Workers in Bombay:
Views of Bombay Millowners' Association.

Reference was made at pages 18-19 of our November 1937 report to the Government of Bombay's circular letter to industrial interests in the Presidency explaining the Government's scheme of sickness insurance and holidays with pay for industrial workers. A brief summary of the views on the scheme expressed by the Millowners' Association, Bombay, is given below:-

Necessity for Slow Pace in Labour Reforms:- While the millowners are in favour of doing what is feasible and practicable for the advancement of the social welfare of industrial workers, they make it clear that the rate of advance must be dictated by the industry's capacity to finance their legitimate share of such schemes without imperilling competitive capacity.

All-India Legislation preferred: Legislation on matters like sickness insurance, holidays with pay, old age pensions and social benefits of a like character must, in the view of the Association, ^{should} be of an all-India character, and ~~in~~ so far as sickness benefits and old age pensions are concerned, the salutary principles followed in other countries, namely, contribution towards the cost by the State in the case of sickness benefits and provision of the whole or greater part of the cost by the State in the case of old age pensions, must be followed.

Financial Position of the Industry - a strong consideration: The sickness benefit scheme apparently constitutes only a small item of the Government's social programme, and the total financial burden with which it is proposed to saddle the textile industry of the province must naturally be known before a definite opinion can be expressed as to how far the industry can go in support of schemes of this nature. In this connection reference is made

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to the fact that a comprehensive inquiry is at present being made into the wages paid in the cotton textile industry of the province, and the Association suggests that if it can be demonstrated that the industry can afford to pay higher wages than are now current, then it might make proposals which would involve the industry in additional burdens which would naturally restrict its capacity to make advances in other directions.

Industry Unable to bear Burden: Turning to the proposals put forward in Government's letter, the scheme set out would seem to have been formulated without due consideration of the expense and administrative difficulties involved. It is proposed that employers should contribute to a central fund an amount equivalent to one month's wages for every operative employed. This would mean a burden of about Rs. 4,000,000 per annum in the case of mills in Bombay City and Island, which could certainly not be borne by an industry which for more than a decade has been making losses. If the cost could be passed on to the consumer by raising the prices of cloth and yarn, the position might be different, but if an attempt were made to raise prices by an amount equivalent to the cost of Government's proposals, the production of Bombay mills would become unsaleable in competition with the manufactures of mills in other parts of India and with the productions of foreign manufacturers.

Present time not Propitious for Labour Reform: The appropriate time for the introduction of schemes of sickness insurance, leave with pay and the like would be when the industry had definitely regained its profit-making capacity and after it had been established that the financial burden of these schemes was well within the industry's capacity to pay, but even then, the Association would deprecate action of a provincial character which would place an unfair handicap on ~~the~~ Bombay industry in competition with ~~the~~ industries in other provinces, and they would similarly deprecate a scheme which envisaged contributions by employers and employees only and no contributions from the State. In these circumstances, the Association cannot support the proposals put forward by the Government.

(The Times of India, 9-12-1937.) ✓ +

Quarterly Strike Statistics for Quarter ending30-9-1937. †

According to the statistics of industrial disputes in British India for the 3rd quarter of 1937 ending 30-9-1937, published by the Department of Labour, Government of India, there were 80 disputes during the period. The 80 disputes involved 121,397 workers and entailed a loss of 1,030,781 working days. The largest number of disputes occurred in Bengal, where 26 disputes involving 37,109 workers entailed a loss of 392,324 working days. Next come Madras with 19 disputes involving 6,393 workers and entailing a loss of 47,201 working days, Bombay with 11 disputes involving 14,449 workers and entailing a loss of 83,058 working days, the United Provinces with 9 disputes involving 54,631 workers and entailing a loss of 406,811 working days, the Punjab with 5 disputes involving 1,884 workers and entailing a loss of 2,560 working days, Assam with 4 disputes involving 1,600 workers and entailing a loss of 29,400 working days, Bihar with 3 disputes involving 2,120 workers and entailing a loss of 35,284 working days, and the Central Provinces, Delhi and Sind with one dispute each involving 1,247, 684 and 1,280 workers and entailing a loss of 17,458, 6,112 and 2,560 working days respectively.

Classified according to industries, cotton and woollen mills were responsible for 33 disputes (it includes one strike which spread to three industries) which involved 72,072 workers and entailed a loss of 671,273 working days; jute mills were responsible for 14 disputes involving 35,583 workers and entailing a loss of 250,759 working days; engineering workshops were responsible for 4 disputes involving 1,202 workers and entailing a loss of 7,459 working days; other industries were responsible for 31 disputes involving 12,540 workers and entailing a loss of 101,290 working days; railways (including railway workshops) and mines did not report any strike.

Of the 80 disputes during the quarter under review, 31 were due to wage questions, 1 due to hours, 31 due to personnel, 3 due to leave and hours and 14 due to other causes. In 7 disputes the workers were successful, in 27 partially successful and in 36 unsuccessful. 10 disputes were progressing at the end of the period under report.

(Strike statistics for the quarter ending 30-6-1937 were given at pages 28-30 of our September 1937 report.) +

Alternative Employment for Women Workers excluded from
Underground Work in Coal Mines: Bihar Government's Proposals
for Training in Handloom Industry. +

Reference was made at page 21-22 of our September 1937 report to the Government of India's communiqué regarding the exclusion of women workers from underground work in coal mines with effect from 1-10-1937. The problem of finding alternative employment for the women so thrown out of work has been engaging the attention of the Bihar Government for some time past. The Government had under consideration a scheme for devoting a portion of the Central Government's grant for training in handloom weaving industry for the purpose of establishing three institutions where the unemployed women workers could be given training in cottage industries (vide page 54 of our March 1937 report). But this suggestion did not find favour at the Ministers' Conference held at Lucknow in December 1936 (vide page 64 of our December 1936 report). The Government has now under preparation a fresh scheme, in many respects resembling the original scheme,

of training women excluded from mines in handloom industry.

Details of the Scheme: The scheme consists of training the women in handloom weaving and basket making. As regards the providing of the finances for the scheme, it is understood that the local Government has sanctioned a working capital of Rs. 4,000, while the Government of India has sanctioned Rs. 30,000 to be distributed in three years. The scheme consists in the establishment of two institutions, one at Jharia and the other at Sijua, for giving training in the above industries to 30 women, out of whom, 20 will be in the weaving section and 10 in ^{the} basket making section. The teaching staff for each institution will consist of a weaving mistress, one mistry and a basketry instructor. Each woman will be paid four annas a day during the period of training. 25 per cent. of the amount will be retained as deposit in her favour for loom, yarn, etc., which will be required for setting up her business when she leaves the institution after training.

It is understood that the recurring cost of both the institutions for one year will be Rs. 9,720 and the non-recurring expenses Rs. 840.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-12-1937.)+

25

Madura Labour Dispute:

Findings of the Court of Inquiry.

Reference was made at page 24 of our November 1937 report to the appointment of a Court of Inquiry by the Madras Government to go into the grievances of the Madura textile workers against the management of the Madura Mills. The following is a summary of the report which has now been published.

Terms of Reference: The questions referred to the Court were: - (i) whether the system of two weeks night shift and one week day shift is or is not reasonable in view of the conditions prevailing in cotton mills generally in India and the special reasons put forward by the Management; (ii) whether the action of the executive of the Madura Labour Union for textile workers in supporting a strike without notice was or was not proper; and (iii) what recommendations should be made to the employers and the workmen.

Night Shift System: The Court of Inquiry has found that the night shift system was not a new innovation in the mills. The Court, however, admits that two weeks night shift entails hardship to the spinners. But this does not mean, according to the Court, that in the present conditions obtaining in India labour should not be called upon to do night work. Another point considered in the same connection by the Court was the management's assertion that their sole object of introducing two night weeks and one day week was to retain in employment women and half-timers already in their employment, and to re-employ those displaced in January 1935, owing to the introduction of the new system, and the assertion of the workers and of the Labour Union that the change was brought about merely to sweat labour and make large profits, is correct. In its opinion, the assertion of the management is not unfounded and it has pointed out that the mills derive no extra benefit by mere change in the system of work, for it was open to them to dispense with the services of women workers and to take in men in their place and continue the old system of one week night and one week day shift.

Lack of Notice of Strike: In the opinion of the Court, the strike which began on 9-9-1937 was undertaken without notice to the employers, and that the Secretary of the Madura Labour Union acted improperly in supporting the same.

Recommendations of the Court of Inquiry: (1) Profit Sharing Scheme: The Court considers that in all probability what is really in the minds of the workers in going on strike was not so much the extra inconvenience they were put to as the desire

to have some increase in their wages. The Court remarks that it should be possible for the management to think of this question, and see whether night work should not mean some extra allowance to the workers. What it is to be ~~must~~ exactly must be left to mutual settlement or arbitration, It will of course be ideal if a profit sharing system is introduced by providing for the payment of a small share or bonus out of the profits to the workers annually at the time of the Deepavali or the Tamil New Year, as this would take away the feeling that the labourers have no share at present in what is produced.

(2) Reduction in hours: In the opinion of the Court, the number of hours of work at night should be reduced from 9 to 8.

(3) Strike after Proper Notice: According to the Court, ~~the~~ strikers should always give adequate notice, at least of one week, of their intention to go on strike along with a list of their grievances. The Court suggests that the Trade Disputes Act might be amended to require one week's notice for strikes.

(The Hindu, 9-12-1937.)

Government's Views on Court's Findings: The Government of Madras issued a communiqué on 8-12-1937 expressing ^{its} ~~their~~ views on the findings of the Court of Inquiry. The communiqué states that the Government is inclined to endorse the conclusions of the Court. At the same time, it would draw the attention of the management and the workers to the observations of the Court on the subject of relationship between the employer and the workers' organisations. The Government trusts that a properly constituted union of workers in the mills will be duly recognised by the management in the interests of the industrial progress and peace of the province. On the question of notice of strike, the Government has declared ^{its} ~~their~~ policy already in ^{its} ~~their~~ Press Communiqué of the 22nd October 1937 (vide page 101 of our October 1937 report). That policy is clear and definite and still holds good. The Government trusts that the management of the mills will give due consideration to the recommendation of the Court for an increase in wages and reduction in hours of work, especially for workers employed on night shift.

(The Hindu, 8-12-1937.)+

Action taken by the Madura Mills Company on the Findings of the Court of Enquiry. +

The Madura Mills Company, Ltd., after an examination of the findings of the Court of Enquiry, has decided to give its employees in the mills at Madura, Tuticorn and Ambasamudram a bonus with effect from 1-1-1938. Below are given the details of the bonus scheme:

Details of the scheme: A bonus of one rupee per month will be paid to all workers below the rank of maistry or fitter who work for ten or more nights during ~~any~~ any month; ~~which~~ will cost the Company about Rs. 130,000 per year. Increments to certain workers are also being made at Tuticorn and Ambasamudram with effect from 1-1-1938, in order to bring workers there into line with workers at Madura. It is estimated that this will cost the management about Rs. 65,000 per year.

It is understood that the workers' union also has accepted in full the findings of the Court.

(The Hindu, 26-12-1937.) +

Wages of 'Badli' Workers in Bombay Mills:

Views of the Millowners' Association, Bombay. +

The Millowners' Association, Bombay, on the recommendation of its Labour Advisory Sub-Committee, had recommended to its member mills in August 1936 that 'badlis' (substitutes) working for the posts of doffer jobbers and line jobbers should be paid the same rates of wages which were paid to the permanent operatives in whose places the 'badlis' were working. As the Association was informed that some member mills were not enforcing recommendations, the question was re-considered by the Association at a

meeting held on 15-11-1937; it was resolved that a letter should be addressed to all members of the Association recommending that all 'badli' workers should be paid the same rates as permanent operatives except in the case of supervisory occupations and occupations in which the wage paid was regulated according to the personal skill, and/or experience and/or efficiency. According to this resolution, a doffer boy who is promoted to a tarwalla's post will be eligible for a tarwalla's rate of pay, whereas a line jobber acting as 'badli' for a head jobber need not necessarily be paid the wages paid to the permanent head jobber. In such cases, however, it was suggested that in view of the additional responsibility involved in his new occupation, the 'badli' should be paid a rate higher than his pay as a line jobber but lower than the pay given to the permanent head jobber.

(Extracted from the Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, during November 1937.) +

Threatened Strike in Calcutta Electric Supply

Corporation: Negotiations break down. +

Reference was made at pages 25 to 27 of our September 1937 report to the threat of the workers of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation to strike work unless their grievances were redressed, and to the appointment of a Calcutta Citizens' Negotiations Committee with the Mayor of Calcutta as president, to bring about an amicable settlement. The Committee held several meetings in October and November at which the Mr. J. Parkinson, Acting Agent of the Corporation, and the Labour

Commissioner, Bengal, took part. According to a report on its activities ~~XXXX~~ presented towards the middle of December 1937 by the Negotiations Committee, at a meeting of the Committee held on 4-10-1937 which was also attended by the acting Agent of the Electric Supply Corporation, ~~Mr. J. Parkinson~~ and Mr. A. Hughes, Labour Commissioner of Bengal, an agreement was reached between the acting Agent and the Committee regarding security of service, increase of pay, extension of provident fund, benefits of gratuity and other grievances of the workers. Certain other points put forward by the workers in their memorandum were not pressed by the Committee after hearing the view-point of the Electric Supply Corporation.

Subsequently, the Mayor interviewed the Labour Commissioner and Mr. F.T.Homan, Permanent Agent of the Supply Corporation, with a view to holding further meetings to ratify the agreement reached at the meeting on October 4. Mr. Homan told the Mayor that he did not like any third party to come in between the Electric Supply Corporation and its workers. In the circumstances, the Committee declared its inability to take any further steps to bring about a settlement. (The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-12-1937.)

On 4-12-1937, the Agent of the Corporation issued a notice to the workers in which he deprecated the strike move and ^{pointed out} said that the conditions of service and the grievances and the demands of the men were being investigated by the Labour Commissioner of the Government of Bengal. Over and above this, the Company was considering the appointment of a labour officer for the purpose of making enquiries and investigating the grievances of the

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employees. The Company wished it to be known that they were at all times willing to listen to the grievances of their employees, and that they are always ready to remedy those grievances which have been proved to their satisfaction to be ~~genuine~~ genuine. The Agent warned the workers of the serious consequences of the strike and declared that in carrying on negotiations for a settlement the Corporation could not recognise or deal with the Calcutta Electric Supply Workers' Union as at present constituted.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-12-1937)

The attitude of the management was condemned by the Calcutta public at a meeting held on 24-12-1937~~x~~ (The Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 25-12-1937), and by the Union which has begun collecting signatures for giving the necessary 14 days' notice to the management of ~~their~~^{its} intention to ~~strike~~^{declare a} strike.

Cawnpore Labour Dispute. †

~~MinerxxLaboxxDisputex~~

Reference was made at pages 25-26 of our November 1937 report to the developments in the Cawnpore strike situation during November 1937 and to the order issued on 30-11-1937 by the District Magistrate prohibiting labour leaders who were responsible for the disturbed conditions in the mill area, from addressing meetings of workers. This order was ~~very much~~ resented by the labour leaders and was defied by a few which led to several arrests.

Justifying the prohibitory order, the Premier declared at a meeting of the Congress Party in the U.P. Legislature held on

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9-12-1937 that the order had to a great extent restored peaceful conditions and that its operation would be relaxed as soon as conditions permitted. The Premier said that the situation became particularly serious after the death of Sami Ahmed, overseer of the Elgin Mills (vide page 26 of our November 1937 report), and communal tension had increased thereby. He emphasized that he never wanted to let the spirit of violence spread, that the enforcement of such restrictive measures was not to his liking, but that he was forced to resort to them. For five months, he added, violence was being preached in Cawnpore, and he appealed for the support of Moslems in restoring peace and order. Referring to the labour policy of his Government, the Premier said that the Government's policy was to do everything in its power for the labourers. The Government had to adopt measures which, though regrettable, were inevitable.

(The Statesman, 10-12-1937)

Towards the close of December, the labour situation became worse, workers in several mills declaring lightning strikes. In this connection, a long letter was addressed by Pandit Harihar Nath Shastri, the President of the Mazdur Sabha (local Workers' Union), to the Premier of the United Provinces, analysing the situation in Cawnpore due to the withdrawal of recognition by the Employers' Association of the Mazdur Sabha, reduction of wages in certain mills, and the penalising of certain

workers and their gradual ~~weeding out~~ ^{dismissal} from a number of mills on account of their alleged association with the Mazdur Sabha.

The Labour Enquiry Committee, appointed towards the end of October 1937, held ^{several} ~~its~~ sittings during December ^{and} collected ~~and~~ evidence.

Minor Labour Disputes.

1. Calcutta Dock Workers' Strike: Dock workers employed in the King George's Docks, Calcutta, numbering about 5,000 declared a strike on 14-12-1937. The demands of the strikers were: (1) recognition of the Dockmen's Union, (2) permanence of service with provident fund benefits for dockmen, (3) free quarters or compensation money, (4) one month's leave with full pay in the year, (5) no victimization of strikers, and (6) reinstatement of dismissed men.

The strike was called off unconditionally on 23-12-1937.

2. Coimbatore Mill Strike; Court of Enquiry Appointed: Reference was made at pages 24-25 of our November 1937 report to the Coimbatore textile strike and to its settlement. On 29-12-1937 the Government of Madras appointed a Court of Enquiry to enquire into: (i) whether the demands mentioned in different memoranda by textile workers are just and reasonable, and, if so, what should be the recommendations; (ii) whether the representations made by mill-owners are just and reasonable, and, if so, what should be the nature of the recommendations; and (iii) other recommendations, if any, by the Court regarding the textile industry of Coimbatore as a whole.

(The Hindu, 30-12-1937.)

3. Textile Labour Situation in Bombay Presidency: Reference was made at pages 21-23 of our November 1937 report to the settlement of the Ahmedabad textile labour strike. During December allegations have been made by the Mill Kamdar Union that the millowners have not been observing the terms of the settlement as the wages prevailing in 1935 have not been restored by them. The leaders of the Union have made representations to the Bombay Government on the subject. In Bombay City sporadic strikes of brief duration occurred in several mills, chiefly on the issue of wages.

4. Proposed B. N. Railway Labour Strike: At the 9th session of the Bengal and the North Western Railwaymen's Conference held on 19-12-1937 it was decided to organise a general strike of the workers in the Railway if their grievances were not redressed. The workers demand chiefly a revision of the existing grades and scales of pay. +

Conditions of Shop Assistants in Cawnpore:

Karmchari Mandal Demands Social Legislation. +

It is understood that the shop workers of Cawnpore have organised themselves into a union called "Karamchari Mandal". The Mandal held a meeting on 1-1-1938, Mr. Rafi-ud-Din Ahmed Kidwai, Minister for Revenue, United Provinces, presiding. The shop assistants complained against long hours of work ranging from early morning till midnight. The meeting adopted a resolution requesting the Government to pass legislation implementing the I.L. Conventions regarding hours of work and weekly rest

periods. The meeting also, by another resolution, requested the provincial government to make statutory provision for the grant of holidays with pay.

(The Statesman, 4-1-1938.) †

Enforcement of Conventions.

Labour Conditions in Indian Mines:

Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines, 1936.* ✓
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Number of Persons Employed: During the year under report the daily average number of persons working in and about the mines regulated by the Act was 269,593, as compared with 253,970 in the previous year. The increase was 15,623 persons, or 6.15 per cent. Of these persons, 130,724 worked underground, 69,193 in open workings and 69,676 on the surface. The numbers of men and women, respectively, who worked underground, in open workings and on the surface were as follows:-

	Men		Women	
	1936	1935	1936	1935
Underground	123,423	119,830	7,301	9,551
In open workings	52,122	45,689	17,071	14,193
Surface	51,413	48,548	18,263	16,159
Total	226,958	214,067	42,635	39,903

The increase in the daily average number of persons employed in 1936, as compared with 1935, is reflected in the larger quantity of minerals produced, the increases being most marked in iron ore, manganese and mica.

Number of Women Workers: The number of women employed underground was 7,301, or 5.59 per cent. of the total number of men and women employed underground. The percentage of women employed underground in coal mines was 6.87, as compared with 8.99 per cent. in 1935, 10.94 per cent., in 1934, 13.14 per cent. in 1933 and 14.84 per cent. in 1932. The provincial distribution of the women who worked underground was as follows:-

Province.	Number of women employed underground.		
	In coal mines.	In salt mines	Total
Bengal	2,755	..	2,755
Bihar	3,847	..	3,847
Central Provinces	658	..	658
Orissa	9	..	9
Punjab	..	32	32
Total	7,269	32	7,301

1936, as compared with 9,551 in 1935.

*Indian Mines Act, 1923.- Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India for the year ending 31st December 1936: Delhi, Manager of Publications. Price Rs. 2.14 or 5s. pp. 272

Distribution of workers: Coal Mines: The daily average number of persons employed in coal mines was 162,917, which is 3,663 more than the number employed in 1935. Of these persons, 48,297 were males employed in cutting coal, 23,856 were males employed as loaders of coal and 21,374 were women. Annual returns relating to coal mines showing the number of persons actually at work, and also of persons who should ordinarily have been at work but were absent on a selected day in February showed that on the selected day 192,174 persons were either at work or were prevented from attending work. This figure is 29,257 more than the average number of persons employed in coal mines during 1936.

According to the report, some of the percentages of absentees were as follows:- All mines from which returns were received:8.5; Jharia:3.3; Raniganj:8.8 and the Central Provinces:7.0. The low percentage of absentees in Jharia coalfield is ascribed to the fact that a larger proportion of the labour force ^{was} resident at or near the mines than in the other areas.

Average output of coal per person: Figures showing the average output of coal per person employed are given below:

	Tons of coal per person employed.			
	Underground and in open workings.	1934-35	Above and below ground.	1934-35
	1936.		1936	
British India	180	181	126	128
Bengal and Bihar	183	157	128	136
Assam	134	162	93	100
Baluchistan	44	54	44	58
Central Provinces	164	159	118	114
Orissa	207	204	158	149
Punjab	110	113	71	63

The report points out that there was a decrease in the average output of coal per person employed. In comparing the figures with similar figures in other countries it should be remembered that both men and women are employed in Indian coal mines.

Workers in other mines: The number of persons employed in metalliferous (including mica, stone, clay and salt) mines was 106,676, which is 11,960 more than the number employed in 1935. Out of these, 85,415 were men and 21,261 were women. Of the women, 32 worked underground in salt mines.

Wage Position: It is pointed out that in most cases there has been very little change in the wages paid to miners. There was, however, a decrease of 3 pies in the wages of underground miners in the Jharia coalfield, and an increase to the same extent in the wages of miners working in open workings. There were slight variations in the wages of other workers.

Accidents: It is pointed out that during the year under report, in mines regulated by the Act there were 214 fatal accidents, which are 12 more than in 1935 and 39 more than the average number in the preceding five years. In addition to the fatal accidents, there were 978 serious accidents involving injuries to 1,011 persons, as compared with 842 serious accidents, involving injuries to 869 persons in the previous year. The so-called "serious" accidents reported were those in which an injury was sustained which involved, or in all probability would involve, the permanent loss of or injury to the sight or hearing or the fracture of any limb or the enforced absence of the injured person from work for a period exceeding twenty days. 477 persons were killed and 1,032 persons were seriously injured. The latter figure includes 21 persons injured in fatal accidents. The number of persons killed was 165 more than in 1935. 395 persons, killed were men and 82 were women. In one case 209 lives; in one case 35 lives; in one case 7 lives; in two cases 4 lives; in one case 3 lives and in seven cases 2 lives were lost. The increase in the number of persons killed over the previous year is mainly accounted to the large number of lives lost in two accidents by an explosion of inflammable gases and coal-dust, and by suffocation by gases at Poidih and Loyabad collieries, respectively.

Causes of Accidents: There was an increase in the death rate of men employed underground, a decrease in open workings, and an increase in the rate of men employed on the surface. With respect to women, there was an increase in the death rate underground and in open workings. There were no deaths on the surface. The causes of the fatal accidents have been classified as follows:-

	No. of fatal accidents.	Percentage of total number of fatal accidents.
Misadventure	147	68.69
Fault of deceased	23	10.75
Fault of fellow workmen	10	4.67
Fault of subordinate official	28	13.08
Fault of management	5	2.34
Faulty material	1	0.47

Health and Sanitation:- (a) Asansol: The Asansol Mines Board of Health held three special and eleven ordinary meetings during the year. The year was healthier than the preceding two years. The death rate for all ages and the infant mortality rate were markedly lower. The birth-rate for 1936 showed an upward trend as compared with 1935. The death-rate among the colliery population was considerably lower than that of the general population in all months of the year except in June and December. The total number of accidents—major and minor—recorded in colliery dispensaries was 7,728 as against 6,068 in the previous year. Epidemic cholera of a virulent type was practically absent from the mining settlement during the year. There were 434 attacks and 180 deaths, as against 1,144 attacks and 616 deaths in the previous year. The incidence rate in collieries

was about double that in the villages and municipal towns. This is ascribed to the fact that collieries are more exposed to risk of infection owing to the constant migration of labour. Some of the larger collieries provided their own piped water supply--the pit water being chlorinated with or without previous filtration. Inoculation was carried out in collieries in anticipation of the two seasonal rise of cholera and in certain areas during the course of an epidemic. Altogether 61,157 persons were protected by inoculation.

Small-pox took a higher toll during the year. There were 925 attacks and 79 deaths, as compared with 123 attacks and 20 deaths in the previous year. The epidemic reached its peak in April, and gradually declined during the following months. The vaccinal condition of the mining population was a great asset in meeting the emergency, about three-fourths of the total population having been protected by re-vaccination during the preceding year. The total number of persons vaccinated in 1936 was 156,254 which is 40 per cent. of the total population.

The Leprosy Campaign was re-organised during the year. A detailed survey brought the total number of leprosy cases to 4,747 with a percentage of incidence of 1.3. Three new Leprosy clinics were opened during the year bringing the total to fourteen.

As regards malaria, it is pointed out that there was a steady decline in the incidence of the disease.

(b) Jharia: During the year the Jharia Mines Board of Health held twelve ordinary, five special and two joint meetings with Jharia Water Board. The estimated population of the Settlement was 550,056 persons. The death rate was 16.10 per thousand, as compared with 20.43 in the previous year. There were 64 cases of suspected cholera with 39 deaths, as compared with 893 cases with 447 deaths in the previous year. The number of deaths on collieries from cholera was 14, as compared with 42 in the previous year. The total number of anti-cholera inoculations performed was 6,350. Along with the rest of the province, the coalfield suffered from an outbreak of small-pox, there being 3,733 cases with 329 deaths, as compared with 1,186 cases with 58 deaths in the previous year. 483 samples of food were analysed in the Board's laboratory and prosecutions were ordered in all cases of adulteration. With a view to improve the colliery housing still further, the five years' housing programme of the Board was enforced during the year. Subjects chosen for propaganda work were leprosy, maternity and child welfare, general hygiene and sanitation and ventilation in the mines.

Inspections: It is pointed out that during the year, many reports from provincial and district Medical Officers of Health, acting as Inspector of Mines in respect of health and sanitation, were received. All the reports were dealt with and most of the recommendations were carried out.

(The working of the Indian Mines Act, 1923, in 1935 was reviewed at pages 28-33 of our December 1936 report.) ✓+

Industrial Organisation.

Employers' Organisations.

Employers' Federation of India: 5th Annual

General Meeting, Calcutta, 1937.

The fifth annual general meeting of the Employers' Federation of India was held at Calcutta on 21-12-1937, with Mr. C.K.Nicholl, the Deputy President, in the Chair, in the absence of Sir H.P.Mody, the President. The following is a brief summary of Sir H.P.Mody's presidential address read out at the meeting:

Political Situation.- Sir H.P.Mody referred to the introduction of the new Constitution in India and said that the Government of India Act, in the shaping of which men of different races and political persuasions had been making their contributions for more than a decade, came into being in April 1937, and a new era began. The Congress, after a period of hesitation and doubt marked by many misunderstandings, decided to take office, as a result of the statesmanlike handling of the situation by the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi, with the result that now in most of the Provinces a government conducted under the leadership of the largest political organisation in the country is functioning. The working of the Constitution during the last few months has unmistakably demonstrated the vastness of the powers vesting in the popular ministries and the reality of the co-operation which the latter have received from the Governors as well as the Services. In every sense of the word, the destinies of the people of this country are in a great many vital matters being controlled by their elected representatives.

Economic Situation.- As regards the repercussions of the Reforms in the industrial and economic spheres, Sir Hormusji said that far-reaching changes have been initiated or are under contemplation in the economics of the countryside by measures regulating the relations of landlords, tenants and money-lenders. The problem, he remarked, is most difficult, and if it is tackled with a sense of realism and uninfluenced by the clamour of extreme elements, a new era full of hope will set in. "Agriculture is the greatest of India's industries, and any measures calculated to ease the burden on the sorely harassed cultivator and to promote his productivity and earning power must necessarily have a profound influence on the economic life of this country. The process, however, must be evolutionary, though the

tempo has to be faster, and one must not lose sight of the capacity of those to whose shoulders the burden of financing the reforms may be shifted."

Labour Reforms. - "In the industrial sphere, the inspiration for labour legislation has practically passed on to the Provincial Governments. While the powers of the Centre have been retained in many directions, it has ceased to be the main spring of legislative activity. In the Provinces, governed by Congress Ministries, ambitious programmes have been outlined, and have already started being implemented. In the Province to which I belong (Bombay) and which is usually singled out for the doubtful honour of becoming a pioneer of progress, legislation seems to be under contemplation, particularly on the question of holidays with pay and sickness insurance. A Committee of Inquiry has also been set up dealing with wages and conditions of work in the textile industry, and with comprehensive terms of reference. Employers in this country cannot possibly look on what is happening without a feeling of considerable apprehension. While we must definitely discard the worn out theories and conceptions of the capitalist age, and recognise increasingly and in a practical manner our obligations to those who are producing the goods we sell, we must insist on certain well defined limitations to our capacity to pay. While conceding to labour its rights, we cannot be expected to abrogate our own. The fundamental principle must be that while labour has a right to benefit from our prosperity within legitimate limits, it cannot be allowed to destroy or impair the incentive to enterprise which is so largely at the root of the industrial system.

Co-ordinated Labour Legislation Desirable. - The policies being pursued in some of the Provinces bring to the fore a question of great importance. It is becoming evident that the pace of legislation in certain places is going to be much faster than in others, arising not merely from the composition of the Governments concerned, but also from the progress in industrialisation which has been attained. This will accentuate the inequality of the conditions which already prevail, and give to certain Provinces a definite advantage over others. I am not suggesting that differences in the standards of life obtaining in different places should all be flattened out, but I do feel that the burden already imposed by higher standards should not be further aggravated. I have often stressed the necessity of setting up an All-India Industrial Council for the purpose of co-ordinating, as far as possible, labour legislation in the different Provinces. I hope that industrial opinion in this country will apply itself to the solution of this question, and that a machinery for co-ordination will soon be established. When Federation is inaugurated, the problem of labour conditions in the Indian States will also have to be dealt with.

India and the I. L. O. - Speaking on the influence of

I.L.O. on labour legislation in India, Sir H.P.Mody made the following remarks:

"In any consideration of the problems affecting Labour, insistence must be laid upon the peculiarity of Indian conditions. To the idealists at Geneva and elsewhere, the scale of wages obtaining in Indian industries may appear to be very inadequate, but it is forgotten that the efficiency of the Indian worker, whether due to poor physique, climatic conditions or any other cause, is low, with the result that the labour cost per unit of output is as high as in some of the advanced countries of the West. There is another consideration which might convince the impatient reformer of the necessity of hastening slowly. India is still in the infancy of her industrial development; and while it is not suggested for a moment that progress should be achieved by means of sweated labour, it is clear that the standards laid down for countries more securely established cannot be applied to India, except very gradually. The fabric of our industrial structure might otherwise suffer a blow from which it may find it difficult to recover."

"That brings me to the activities of the International Labour Office. As the Indian Employers' Delegate to the last Conference, I had opportunities of watching at close quarters what hitherto I had been observing from Reports and other compilations. I am sorry to have to observe that my experience has confirmed the belief I had entertained for a number of years that the conditions of India and other countries similarly situated were being largely ignored by those responsible, whether at the Office or at the Annual Conferences, for the laying down of policies. It is a matter of great gratification, therefore, that Mr. Butler, the Director of the International Labour Office, has come out to this country to study first-hand our problems and our difficulties. I extend to him a hearty welcome on behalf of all employers' interests, and I can assure him that we appreciate the great work he is doing, and are anxious to be placed in a position fully to co-operate with him."

40-Hour Week for Textile Industry.- Referring to the adoption by the I.L.Conference of the Convention re. 40-Hour Week in the Textile Industry, Sir Hormusji said: "It is instructive to note that among those who supported the proposal were countries which had no textile industry worth the name. There were also not wanting delegates who declared themselves in favour, even though they stated that the special circumstances of their own countries did not admit of the adoption of a 40-hour week. Here I would like to draw attention to a matter of considerable importance to employers not only in this country, but everywhere else. It is increasingly evident that while the workers' delegates present a united front, there are divisions of opinion amongst the employers' delegates arising from the fact that some of them represent countries where one desperate expedient after

another is being tried out in order to meet the economic crisis. The difficulties of the employers are accentuated by the lukewarm attitude often displayed by governmental delegates. The result is a gradual weakening of the position of employers, and if the tendency were to continue, the International Labour Conference would soon be merely registering the decrees of the spokesmen of Labour."

Importance of the Employers' Federation.- Stressing the necessity and importance of employers being well organised on an all-India basis to safeguard their interests, Sir H.P.Mody said that the time is fast approaching when a common policy and common viewpoint will have to be evolved, and that can best be done by a central body like the Employers' Federation of India. He hoped that it may be found possible in the near future for a conference to be held under the auspices of the Federation of those who represent industrial and commercial interests in the various Indian legislatures.

Employers and Labour Problems.-In conclusion, Sir Hormusji emphasised that the strength of the employers would depend not merely upon unity of effort, but upon such progressive and enlightened outlook as they might bring to bear upon their ~~relations with their~~ labour. Social justice, he said, is the foundation of human progress, and to the ~~the~~ utmost of the employers' abilities it must be their endeavour to promote it. They must work to the end that every advance in the industrial development may bring about, not merely increased wealth, but increasing employment and well-being to the working classes of this country.

Office-Bearers for 1938.- Sir H.P.Mody was re-elected President and Sir Edward Benthall and Mr. C.K.Nicholl were re-elected Deputy Presidents.

(Summarised from the text of the Presidential Address a copy of which was supplied to this Office by the Secretary of the Employers' Federation of India.)

Mr. H.B.Butler, Director of the I.L.O. attended the meeting and delivered a short speech. +

Nomination of Employers' Delegates and Advisers
to I. L. Conference: Reply of the Government of India:
Opinion of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce. +

Reference was made at pages 41-42 of our October 1937 report to the letter, addressed by the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India to the Government of India protesting against the latter's attitude in disallowing the claim of chambers of commerce in India to participate in the nomination of employers' delegates and advisers to the I. L. Conference. The following is a summary of the reply, ~~letter~~, addressed to the Associated Chambers, by the Government of India.

Representation of Genuine Interests.- The Government of India points out that the mere fact that an association might be interested in the decisions made in so far as these might affect the general trend of commerce and trade, did not give that association any standing under Article 389 of the Treaty of Versailles by which the Government was bound. In consequence, the basing of the appointment on nomination by bodies whose sole claim was of this character would be an infringement of the treaty. It is stated that the Government would hesitate to affirm that commercial employers, qua employers were excluded; the position was rather that agreement had to be reached "with the industrial organisations which were most representative of employers." Having full regard to the extent of employment, the Government does not think that any Chamber of Commerce, as such, could claim to rank among "the most representative organisation", a term which, in most countries, probably connoted a single organisation of employers and a single organisation of workers.

Representation of purely British Interests.- As regards the Associated Chambers' claim that the right of purely British interests appeared to be disregarded, the Government points out that "purely British interests" on the employing side are properly represented by the British employers' delegation. The treaty contemplated that the delegation should be a national one and no legislation, ~~Imperial or National~~, could form an adequate ground for action which was not in conformity with the Treaty. Shipping companies registered in India, in the Government's opinion, must be regarded as Indian employing interests, and the question of whether any organisation includig such companies had a right to have its nomination considered depended on whether it was or was not the most representative organisation, or if

there was no predominant organisation, one of the most representative organisations. The Government considers that this term, even when a maritime conference is in view, must be regarded as referring to employers generally and not merely to employers of seamen.

View of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce regarding Government's reply: Expressing its views on the Government's reply, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, in a letter to the Associated Chambers, states that the reply received from the Government appeared to meet the points raised in the Associated Chambers' letter fully and fairly, and it did not consider, therefore, that it would be profitable to pursue the matter further with the Government of India.

(Extracted from the Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce during November 1937.)+

19th Annual General Meeting of the Associated Chambers
of Commerce, India, Calcutta, December, 1937.

The 19th session of the annual general meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India was held at Calcutta on 20 and 21-12-1937 under the presidentship of the Hon. Mr. Reid Kay. The opening session was attended by invitation by Mr. Harold Butler, Mr. P.W.Martin, Mr. R.Rao and Dr. P.P.Pillai. The meeting was formally opened by H.E. the Viceroy.

Viceroy's Address: In the course of his opening address, the Viceroy first reviewed the political changes in India as a result of the inauguration in 1937 of the Constitutional Reforms. Dealing with economic subjects, he referred to the recent trade negotiations between the United Kingdom and India and to the decision of the Government of India to appoint an Economic Adviser to the Government in order to develop the intelligence service of India.

The Unemployment Problem: Referring to the last session of the Industries Conference held at Lahore, the Viceroy invited

the attention of the meeting to the discussion on industrial surveys and the connected subject of the development of schemes of apprenticeship, and to the several schemes for helping young men of the educated classes to start and conduct small industrial enterprises which were discussed at the Conference. In ~~this~~ connection, he referred to the unemployment problem in India and expressed the belief that the provincial governments will meet with complete success in their endeavour to solve the problem. He assured his readiness to extend all help in the fight against unemployment.

Mr. Reid Kay's address: After welcoming the visitors and delegates to the session, Mr. Reid Kay surveyed the political and economic problems of India. In particular, he referred to the advance made by India in recent years in labour legislation and observed:

"As regards labour, we sometimes feel that the pace at which labour legislation is being introduced is perhaps faster than the circumstances demand, but we also realize that labour is now fully alive to the advantages of collective bargaining which have been established in other countries and we can only hope that wise counsels will prevail in pursuing this development in this country on sound and reasonable lines, keeping always in mind the need for cautious action in the initial stages of this great adventure."

Resolutions adopted: Resolutions were passed: (1) urging the Government of India to take steps to give relief from the incidence of double taxation to assesses taxed in both British India and in Mysore and other Indian States; (2) protesting against the withdrawal of tariff valuations without notice; (3) suggesting improvements in the services rendered by the Post and Telegraph Department; (4) urging the Government to make it compulsory for country crafts in inland rivers to carry navigation lights; (5) recommending the removal of the remaining surcharge upon income-tax and super-tax;

(6) protesting against the taxation ⁱⁿ India of foreign incomes of residents not domiciled in India; (7) urging the reduction of the stamp duty on inland currency bills; and (8) recommending that, in view of the high cotton surplusses and the possibility of Japan replacing Indian cotton now taken by her by Chinese cotton, ^{the Govern-} ~~quota~~ ^{ment} of India should, in the trade discussions between India and the United Kingdom, make arrangements by which an assured market for Indian ~~market~~ cotton of suitable quality may be ^{found} ~~formed~~ in the United Kingdom.

(Summarised from the text of resolutions adopted, a copy of which was communicated to this Office by the Secretary of the Associated Chambers of Commerce.)+

47

Workers' Organisations.

3rd Session of the National Trades Union Federation,
Calcutta, 19 & 20-12-1937.

The third session of the National Trades Union Federation was held under the presidentship of Mr. B. Shiva Rao at Calcutta on 19 and 20-12-1937. Besides a large number of delegates, the Conference was attended by Mr. H. B. Butler, the Hon. Mr. V. V. Giri, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Mr. N. M. Joshi, the Hon. Mr. Sushil Kumar Roy Chowdhuri and several other labour leaders.

Welcome to Mr. Butler. - At the outset, Mr. B. Shiva Rao, the President, extended a cordial welcome to Mr. Butler, who was present on the occasion, ^{and} paid tribute to the work of the I.L.O.

Mr. Butler then addressed the Conference on the work of the I.L.O. and his impressions of the Indian labour movement.

Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose and the Hon. Mr. V. V. Giri also spoke and paid tributes to the work of the I.L.O.

Speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee. - In the course of his welcome address, Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose, Chairman of the Reception Committee, expressed disappointment that the Congress Ministries had not yet taken active steps to translate into practice the Karachi Resolution on Fundamental Rights adopted by the Indian National Congress. He also criticised the slow pace at which the Government of India was implementing the Whitley Commission's recommendations and condemned the policy of Government and employers in putting obstacles in the way of according recognition to organised unions of workers. He referred to the spirit of discontent in labour ranks and stressed the necessity for rapid labour reforms. Mr. Bose

also paid a tribute to the work of the I.L.O. and emphasised the necessity for the International Labour Organisation to pay greater attention to the needs of Asiatic labour. He ~~was~~ closed with a strong appeal for trade union unity.

Presidential Address.- At the outset, Mr. Shiva Rao welcomed to India and to the session of the Federation Mr. Harold Butler, the Director of the International Labour Organisation. He then referred to the activities of I.L.O. to which, he said, the workers of India owed a very heavy debt.

Industrial Unrest.- Condemning the recrudescence of industrial unrest since the inauguration of ^{the} new constitution and lightning strikes, Mr. Shiva Rao said that even a man so entirely on the workers' side as Mr. Giri has been compelled to strike a note of warning that the workers should not declare strikes except as a last resort, and place themselves in the wrong by striking without notice. The Federation generally endorses the principle enunciated therein. But he did not accept the analysis of the present situation put forward in certain quarters that this manifestation of industrial unrest, widespread and potentially dangerous in certain centres ~~as it is, is due to the inflammatory teachings of communists.~~ The workers had been hit particularly hard during the period of the economic depression because of their inability to safeguard even the standards to which they had been previously accustomed. The situation worsened due to the abnormal political circumstances prevalent in the country during the same period. The workers suffered heavily on account of the tendencies of the police to deal generally with industrial disputes as though they were activities of a political character. The machinery for their settlement through conciliation or arbitration was hardly ever utilised.

Referring to the strikes that took place during the last few months ~~he said~~ that they were the first fruits of a release from the repressive but otherwise do-nothing policy of the Government of the last several years. The workers were impatient for reforms that had long been overdue. The workers were hopeful that under the new provincial Governments, especially with the pledges that the Congress had given both at its annual sessions and in its election manifesto, a definite and comprehensive programme would soon be put into operation. The volume of industrial discontent prevalent in India was a measure of the failure of the old administrations to deal with the workers in a spirit of fairness and justice. He appealed to the Provincial Governments to treat labour matters with sympathy and understanding.

Industrial Relations.- Criticising the attitude of capitalists, the President said: "In the name of industrial development they have with remarkable success exploited the Swadeshi (nationalist) movement and the demand for protective tariffs. We too believe in industrial development and are willing to play our part in order to

facilitate it. But can we look on complacently when it implies the physical and moral wrecking of millions of lives in the name of industrial progress? The employers talk of industrial peace. We too want it. But industrial peace does not, cannot and should not mean the perpetuation of the ghastly conditions under which our workers live, in dwellings which are a disgrace to our civic life, on wages which are with few exceptions on a starvation or semi-starvation level, victims of exploitation and disease hastening them to a premature death. Employers have been unwilling, barring honourable exceptions, to concede even the elementary right of organisation to the workers, and provincial Governments have believed implicitly in the policeman for suppressing the workers and called it industrial peace. During these years, the phenomenal growth of population in India and the spread of unemployment have played havoc with the conditions of the workers. Is it any wonder then that the moment a party came into power pledged to the removal of all the evils associated with industrialisation, the workers should break out into manifestations of discontent through a series of strikes?"

Necessity for Better Organisation.- Mr. Shiva Rao advised the workers to take the opportunity of the changed political situation in India to organise themselves into strong unions. He also advised them to view the work of Congress Ministries with sympathy and appreciation and said that there must be mutual co-operation between the provincial governments and the Federation.-

Trade Union Unity.- Stressing ~~on~~ the need for unity and powerful organisation, he said: "Let our energies for the coming year be directed towards building up the organisation where it does not exist, and strengthening it where it is weak. The Trades Union Federation, the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Association at Ahmedabad with its branches elsewhere - all of them put together do not represent more than a very small fraction of the working classes in this country. I appeal to you and venture to appeal to our Comrades of the Trades Union Congress to return once more to a united workers' movement. On more than one occasion and in more than one centre, during the last twelve months, we have worked together to the greater advantage of the workers."

Suggesting ~~an~~ all-round unity and bringing ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ all the three organisations into one common fold, Mr. Rao said: "If a Round Table Conference be considered necessary for the purpose, let us agree to one being summoned at an early date, but every factor points to the supreme need for such unity."

(Summarised from copies of speeches supplied to this Office by the Secretary of the N.T.U.F.).

Resolutions.- The Conference passed a number of resolutions, the more important of which are reproduced below:

(1) Programme of Labour Legislation.- Mr. N.M. Joshi moved

the following resolution:

(a) This Federation views with alarm the deplorable plight in which the industrial workers in India are placed on account of extremely low wages, long hours of work, bad housing conditions, lack of provision against risks like sickness, old age, unemployment, and invalidity. The Federation regrets the fact that the efforts of the Central and Provincial Governments to improve the conditions and raise the standard of life of the Indian working class have so far been negligible.

(b) While recording its conviction that social ownership and control of the means of production will be the only solution of the economic problem, the Federation urges that during the transition period vigorous efforts should be made to ameliorate the condition of the working class. It, therefore, suggests to the Government and Legislatures in India to undertake a programme of labour legislation ^{embodied in} requesting the following:

- (i) A scheme of social insurance giving the workers protection against the risks of sickness, unemployment, invalidity and old age entirely under the control of public authorities;
- (ii) Reduction of hours of work to 48 per week leading eventually to 40 hours a week without reducing wages;
- (iii) Legislation for fixing minimum living wage for all industries, regulated and unregulated;
- (iv) Legislation for the protection and general improvement of the conditions of work and life of workers employed in plantations, docks and other occupations; and
- (v) Abolition of child labour under the age of 15.

In moving this resolution, Mr. Joshi said that it would be admitted on all hands that vigorous and immediate efforts should be made to improve the condition of the working classes. But during the last 16 years very little had been effected in this direction. Since last year, in seven out of the eleven provinces Congress had formed ministries. It was now necessary for the leaders of labour to tell the Congress and other popular ministers what should be the programme of labour legislation which they should immediately undertake. Mr. Joshi would give the first consideration to the question of social insurance for workers. There was no legislation to provide against sickness, unemployment and other risks and that must be the first piece of legislation which the Congress ministries should undertake. Dealing with the question of wages, the speaker held that in India the standard of wages was extremely low. He would not suggest that the Government should increase the rate of wages by means of legislation, but they should bring some machinery into existence by which wages in India could be fixed. There should, however, be a minimum living wage enabling the workers to live a decent life.

(2) Unsatisfactory Application of Hours of Work Convention.-
Mr. Jamnadas Mehta moved the following resolution:

"This Federation endorses the protest of the All-India Railway-men's Federation against the continuous disregard by the Government of India of their obligations under the International Convention regarding the hours of employment which they ratified 16 years ago and assured the Railway workers of the strong support of this Federation in their efforts to secure the full benefit of that convention".

(3) Safety in Coal Mines.- In view of the grave menace to human life in the coal mines and of the wastage of national resources, as disclosed by the report of the Coal Mining Committee, this Federation calls upon the Government of India to lose no time in giving effect to its recommendations regarding safety and prevention of wastage.

(4) Representation at Tripartite Conference on Coal Industry.- This Federation urges the Government of India to send a delegation on behalf of the Indian colliery workers to the forthcoming Tripartite Conference ~~to~~ called by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office at Geneva early next year.

(5) Housing of Workers.- The Federation views with dismay the continued existence of repulsive slum areas in most of our industrial towns and the appalling conditions due to over-crowding of the working class population generally. The Federation puts on record its conviction that it is the duty of Governments and statutory local bodies subsidised liberally by Governments to shoulder the burden of housing the industrial population in an adequate manner. The Federation therefore requests the various Governments to make it obligatory for statutory local authorities to undertake a prompt, adequate and bold programme of industrial housing and slum clearance and to take upon themselves the responsibilities of giving adequate financial assistance to the local bodies for this purpose.

(6) Industrial Development of India.- The Federation is of the opinion that rapid industrialisation of the country is essential for the social and economic improvement of both the workers and peasants of India. The Federation, therefore, requests the Indian Governments to take all necessary steps to quicken the pace of industrialisation in India and at the same time to exercise special control over industries protected or aided by Government by means of Government directors, inspectors and auditors.

(7) Recognition of Trade Unions.- The Federation deplors the policy on the part of employers of labour, including Governments, of discouraging the formation and growth of trade unions among their employees by refusing to grant recognition to them. In the opinion of the Federation, healthy growth of trade unionism is one of the primary conditions for the maintenance of industrial peace. The Federation, therefore, requests the Government of India and the

new Provincial Governments to grant recognition to the unions of their employees and to take measures to secure recognition from private employers of the unions of their employees.

(8) Government Repression.- The Federation observes with grave concern that some of the Provincial Governments, even under the new regime, have been using (a) Sec. 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code thereby prohibiting meetings and processions and restricting the personal freedom of workers and (b) the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act which has been universally condemned as a piece of repressive legislation. Both these measures result in placing the workers at a disadvantage in their legitimate struggle with their employers. The Federation, therefore, requests the Government of India, as also the new Provincial Governments, as far as in them lies, to take necessary steps so to amend Sec. 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code as to prevent its use in cases of trade disputes and to repeal the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act in toto.

The Federation is grieved to find that in some cases the police went to the extent of opening fire on workers. The Federation enters its strong protest against such action on the part of police and requests the new Provincial Governments to make it a rule to institute a public enquiry in all cases of firing by the Police specially on their own initiative.

(9) Trade Union Unity.- This Federation endorses Mr. Giri's proposals for unity with the amplification that the Federation retains the right of affiliation with foreign organisations as an individual unit, but the A.I.T.U.C. or the Central Organisation can not have any foreign affiliation during the period of the agreement, while the individual unions of the A.I.T.U.C. will be free to affiliate themselves with any foreign organisation as individual units. With regard to political questions and strikes, individual unions will be free to take any action they please in the absence of any mandate given by three-fourths ~~majority~~ majority of the Central organisation. It is to be further understood that for the purpose of representation at the general body meeting and for constituting the general council, the working committee and other committees, the affiliated unions of the Federation will be regarded as though they are separate units in the combined body and representation shall be accorded on that basis.

This Federation further authorises Messrs. V.R.Kalappa, B. Shiva Rao and R.R.Bakhale to negotiate with representative of All-India Trade Union Congress and any other labour organisations in the country for securing all round unity on the above lines and to report to the General Council at any early date.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-12-37).

Office-bearers.- The General Council of the Federation elected the following as office-bearers for the next two years: President: Mr. N.M.Joshi; Vice-Presidents: Messrs. J.N.Gupta, B.Shiva Rao and S.C.Joshi; Secretary: Mr. R.R.Bakhale; Treasurer: Mr. Jamnadas Mehta; Assistant Secretary: Mr. S.V.Parulekar.

(The Hindu, 23-12-1937).

1st Madras Provincial Labour Conference. +

The first session of the Madras Provincial Labour Conference was held at Madras on 13 and 14th December 1937 under the president-ship of Mr. S. Guruswami, General Secretary of the All India Railway-men's Federation.

Mr. Chakkarai Chettiar's Speech: In the course of his speech as the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. V. Chakkarai Chettiar, Vice-President of the Madras Labour Union, appealed to the workers to organise themselves into unions and strengthen the labour movement. He expressed pleasure at Mr. H.B. Butler being in their midst at Madras but expressed doubt^{as to} whether Mr. Butler would, in the short time at his disposal, be able to study thoroughly the labour situation in the country. Lastly, Mr. Chettiar deprecated labourers going on lightning strikes and advised them to try more peaceful means before resorting to strikes.

Presidential Address: (i) Labour under the New Constitution: Mr. Guruswami, in the course of his presidential speech, referred to how the recent Indian reforms have affected labour, and reviewed the work of Provincial Ministries for ameliorating labour conditions in the country. He expressed the opinion that these political changes and recent developments have raised legitimate hopes in the minds of workers that their conditions will be bettered rapidly.

(ii) India and the I.L.O.: Mr. Guruswami next dealt with the position of India vis-a-vis the I. L. Conventions. The International Labour Conventions, he said, provided for ample safeguards and exceptions in favour of the employers so that there was no excuse for India either not ratifying them or not implementing them after ratification. In regard to the Washington Hours and Geneva Weekly Rest Conventions, three out of the four Class I railways in the Presidency did not enforce them, and similarly 48 out of the 54 railways in India did not give statutory protection to the workers. The Washington Unemployment Convention was a dead letter, although it did not impose an obligation greater than that of collecting unemployment statistics and constituting employment exchanges under the control of the central authority. The Convention relating to Workmen's Compensation for Accidents was not ratified, though there was no impediment to its being enforced. The Convention

relating to employment of women before and after confinement could be ratified in this country and enforced. In respect of conventions relating to social insurance providing for sickness, old age, widows and orphans' benefits, the responsibility of the Government was being evaded on the ground of absence of adequate actuarial data. He drew attention to the existence of the East Indian Railway Colliery Benefit Fund which provided for sickness, invalidity, old age, widows and orphans' benefits on the basis of a contribution of two pice per week by a ^{male worker and one pice per week by a} female worker, and granted benefits at the rate of about three annas per day. The experience available from the working of this Fund could be easily utilised for promoting similar schemes in the Province.

Unemployment, he declared, was becoming an increasingly menacing question. The results of rationalisation should first be utilised for protecting the rights of the existing workers in respect of security of service and must be shared by the employees also. What was immediately required was a contributory scheme in which the workers, the employers, and the Government would equally participate to create a fund out of which the unemployed who could not be absorbed by normal wastage might be given relief.

(iii) Provincial Ministries and Labour: Mr. Guruswami next suggested reforms in the existing Acts to provide for the application and enforcement of the existing Factories, Workmen's Compensation, Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Acts, more efficiently.

Mr. Guruswami also dealt with the charge made against Indian workers that they were inefficient and attributed this inefficiency, if at all it existed, to the workers' adverse conditions of work, and to malnutrition. He hoped that the Provincial Governments would, ~~in connection with organised labour,~~ take all available measures to raise the standard of living of the workers. At the same time he pointed out that nothing much could be expected from Government unless workers organised themselves and made their influence felt.

Speeches of Messrs. Murthi and Bapineedu: Messrs. B.S. Murthi and M. Bapineedu, Parliamentary Secretaries to the Madras Ministry, also addressed the Conference. They assured the workers of the sympathy and help of the Congress Ministry for the labour movement and advised them to organise themselves into strong unions.

Address of Welcome to Mr. Butler: On 14-12-1937 an address of welcome on behalf of 34 unions in the Presidency was presented to Mr. Harold Butler, Director of the I.L.O., who attended the Conference on that day. Mr. Butler replied suitably; Mr. P.W. Martin also spoke on the occasion.

Resolutions: (1) Demands of Workers: On a motion from the Chair, the conference accepted a resolution to the effect that the Bombay Government's Labour policy as recently outlined in a Press communiqué (vide pages 84-86 of our August 1937 report) and supported by the Labour Sub-Committee of the Indian National Congress, ^(vide pages 82-83 of our report, 13th Feb. 1937) was a step in the right direction and urged the Madras

55

Government to take immediate action in respect of (1) an eight-hour day without reduction in earnings, (2) extension of the Factories Act and the establishment of an auxiliary non-official inspectorate, (3) protection of trade unions and their recognition, (4) social insurance, providing unemployment benefits, old age pension, etc., on a contributory basis, (5) joint standing ~~machinery~~ machinery for each industry to investigate and settle labour disputes and study economic conditions with a view to constant improvement of the position of the workers, (6) enforcement of International Labour Conventions, (7) introduction of legislation for exercise by the Provincial Governments of powers exercisable under the Government of India Act in respect of All-India labour legislation in so far as such powers were confined to the Central Government under the provisions of previous labour legislation, and (8) special measures to promote the health of employees in industries like the tobacco industry.

(2) Trade Disputes (Amendment) Bill condemned:- The conference considered that the proposed Trade Disputes Bill was a reactionary measure, indirectly calculated to handicap Provincial Governments in dealing with trade disputes and urged the Government of India and members of the Central Legislature to secure the withdrawal of the Bill, which introduced a new method of declaring strikes illegal without removing the reactionary features of the Trade Disputes Act already in force. +

(The Hindu, 13, 14 and 15-12-1937). +

16th Session of the A.I.T.U.C., Delhi, 1 & 2-1-1938.

The Sixteenth Session of the All India Trade Union Congress was held at Delhi on the 1st and 2nd January 1938, Mr. Shibnath Bannerjee presiding. The Session was well attended by delegates from affiliated unions.

Mrs. Chando Bibi, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of her speech welcoming the delegates, dealt with the plight of the Indian peasants and workers and made the following observations:

Ideal of Workers' Movement.- "We want the abolition of the Zamindari system and the nationalisation of land, bank, insurance, trusts, syndicates - etc.; in one word, we want socialisation

of all means of production. Our working slogan is: land to the peasants, factory to the workers, peace and bread to all. We want a democratic republic of the workers and the peasants. Our immediate demand is to set up a Constituent Assembly on the basis of Universal, direct and adult suffrage."

Minimum Demands of Workers.- "Our minimum demands are that doles must be given to the unemployed, or work must be provided for them. The workers shall have the benefit of old age insurance. The contract system in the factories must be abolished and there shall be permanency of service. The minimum wages of the workers must not be less than Rs. 50 a month. There shall be free and healthy quarters for them. Free medical treatment should be provided. Free schools for the education of the workers and their children should be started immediately. The rent of the peasants should be reduced to half and the arrears of rent must be remitted. There should be no attachment of their moveable and immovable properties for rent decrees. Co-operative banks should be started to lend money to the masses without any interest. Free pasture land should be arranged for the grazing of the cattle. Bribery and the 'Begar'(forced labour) system must be ended."

Presidential Address.- The following are relevant extracts from the presidential address of Mr. Shibnath Bannerjee:

Imperialism Condemned.- The working class in India can have freedom from exploitation, only after it has removed another obstacle from its way, namely, foreign domination. Moreover any fight for colonial liberation will weaken the Imperialists and hasten the day for emancipation of the people of the world. If the Indian struggle for freedom becomes victorious, British Imperialism will be weakened. In the interest of the Indian working class itself we have to make common cause with all sincere anti-imperialist forces who are struggling for national liberation.

A.I.T.U.C. and the National Congress.- The working class is realising these facts more and more and the Trade Union Congress has shown its extreme eagerness for working in co-operation with the Indian National Congress. I must confess that the response from the side of the Congress has been most unsatisfactory and disappointing. If we continue to exert pressure on the Congress by enlisting workers and peasants as Congress members individually and by means of independent mass organisations of workers and peasants, we shall be able to batter down the opposition of reactionaries and interested parties. Due to the influence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other radical forces as the Congress Socialist Party, the Congress is giving up some of its old habits of thought and action. It is our duty to hasten and quicken this process of radicalisation. In spite of occasional setbacks and reverses we should proceed on the correct line without minding opposition or provocation. But our strength lies in our solid organisation of trade unions and peasants unions.

Necessity for Mass Organisation of Workers.- We come across a strange theory that huge mass trade and peasant unions is an unattainable ideal in India. The working conditions of workers in India are so horrible that even such concessions seemed by trades unions as stopping of abuses and assaults, stopping of bribery, granting security of service, recognition of unions, etc., which do not involve any extra payment by the employers are enough, for the time being, to organise them. In the last general strike in the Bengal jute industry in which over 200,000 workers participated, the gain has been partial security of service and partial stopping of abuses and assaults and partial stopping of bribery, and still the workers feel they have gained much, and we too are finding it easier to organise them. Before the strike, the unions of jute workers were in a moribund condition with barely a thousand members, but after the strike over 25,000 have joined the union and large numbers of workers are daily joining. So, it is not quite correct to say that there is no basis for mass membership of trade unions. What is correct is that proper attempts have not been made and attempts had often been baffled by the internal strifes and distrust of the different groups in the trade union movement.

Low Wages of Indian Workers.- Most of the industrial workers are engaged in such industries as jute, cotton, coal, iron, railway etc. which are existing also in other parts of the world where the wage level is higher than India by 400 to 1,000 per cent. Even making allowance for less efficiency here, which is directly the product of low wages, the wages can be increased much higher, say by 100 per cent, and still compete at an advantage on the international market. For instance, jute workers in Dundee get 8 to 10 times as much as the jute workers of Bengal, but the Hessian and gunny produced are sold in the same market. How can we say that there is no scope for increasing wages? This argument holds good also for workers in railway, iron, coal, cotton and other big industries.

Labour and Provincial Legislatures.- The inauguration of the New Constitution has given us great possibilities for organisation. The elections to the different Provincial Legislatures gave us great opportunity, of approaching the masses of workers and carrying on an extensive and intensive agitation amongst them for their Fundamental Rights. It must be admitted that we made the fullest use of this opportunity and the result has been most gratifying to us. For the first time in the history of the Labour movement in India some of the direct representatives of the workers are in the Provincial Assemblies where they can defend the rights of workers and carry on agitation for the fundamental rights of workers such as security of service, minimum wage, old age provision, sickness insurance, unemployment allowance, stopping of bribery, recognition of unions, etc. If the mass agitation and struggle outside is co-ordinated with agitation inside the Assemblies, quick and better results can

6. 58
be assured and our members in the Assembly are also quite conscious of their responsibilities in ~~the~~ this matter.

A.I.T.U.C. and Labour Sub-Committee of the Congress.- The Labour Sub-Committee of the Congress was formed with a view to guide the policy of the Congress with regard to problems of labour. While such moves are welcome, it must be emphasised here and now that the struggle of the working class must be carried on by their independent class organisation and the Indian National Congress should not encroach upon the rights of the Trade Union Congress to organise the workers. Some confusion has unfortunately been created by the statements of some responsible leaders of the Congress claiming to organise the workers under the Congress Committees. The statement of Pandit Jawaharlal on this point was quite clear, but it seems that the reactionary forces are conspiring to break the harmonious relations that are being built up between the Indian National Congress and the Trade Union Congress. I wish to emphasise here that the Labour Sub-Committee of the Congress should include a nominee of the T.U.C. and there should be more consultation between these two bodies.

Workers and Local Bodies.- The workers have now some representation in Provincial Assemblies, and they have fully utilized it. It is time they paid some attention to municipal administration. Industrial workers live in large towns, and, if there was adult franchise, the municipalities would come under the control of workers in a short time. Even with restricted franchise, many workers in cities have the right of voting in municipal elections. Invariably, the quarters of the workers are the most ill-lighted and ill-cleaned, the most dirty and filthy. They do not get sufficient number of latrines or water-taps even. Yet, so far, no organised attempts have been made to send some representatives of workers to municipalities. The workers can fight these elections in alliance with the Congress with such demands as, stopping of bribery, and corruption and nepotism, replacing the bustees (huts) by municipal houses, free education, free medicine, crèches for children, cheap and pure milk, ghee, oil, etc., municipalisation of bus, tram, gas, electricity, telephone, parks and playgrounds, unemployment relief, adult franchise, etc. We must demand of the local Congress ^{to set apart} some seats for working classes ^{in municipal committees.}

Repression of Labour.- The working class movement in India is faced with serious handicaps, particularly in Bengal, Promulgation of sections 144 and 124-A of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and shooting of strikers have not been abandoned even by some of the Congress Ministries. Added to these, attempts are made in Bihar to liquidate the activities of the Kisan (peasant) Committee there, Such offensives on the part of the Congress leaders must at once be stopped. I hope the Working Committee of the Congress will realise this and put a check on these Congress Ministers.

Unemployment Problem.- In almost all advanced countries of the world some form of relief or unemployment allowance is given to the unemployed, and thus their miseries are mitigated to some extent. In India, even the attempt to collect statistics has been tenaciously opposed by Government. We are thankful to Pandit Jawaharlal that from hundreds of platforms he has asserted that Swaraj must mean the removing of poverty and unemployment. We regret, however, to say that the Congress Ministers, have not taken up this problem very seriously as yet. The T.U.C. must continue to press on with ~~all its~~ vigour for whatever relief may be had under the present order of society. The fight against unemployment is really a fight for Socialism.

(The Hindustan Times, 2-1-38).

Resolutions.- Several resolutions were passed formulating workers' grievances and demands and outlining the future policy of the A.I.T.U.C.; a summary of the more important of the resolutions is given below:

1. Trade Union Unity.- The Congress passed the following resolution on the question of Trade Union Unity:

"The rapid and extensive development of strikes and struggles of the workers in the principal industries in the country and the new possibilities of winning basic trade union rights and the minimum demands of the workers, which have opened up because of the formation of Congress Ministries in seven Provinces committed to a programme of realising the same, have accelerated the growing urge for unity amongst the working class and between their leading organisations, namely the A.I. T.U.C. and the National Trades Union Federation. The achievement of organisational unity with the N.T.U.F. and the creation of a central All India Trade Union organisation of the Indian working class has become an urgent task which can no longer be postponed.

"The All India Trade Union Congress, since its Madras session, has been consistently urging for structural unity with the N.T. U.F. and even though the terms of unity proposed by the Federation at its Calcutta session fail to meet the unity proposals of the A.I.T.U.C., the A.I.T.U.C., in the interests of the working class movement, accepts the terms of the N.T.U.F., as the basis for structural unity between the A.I.T.U.C. and the N.T.U.F. and hopes that a joint session of the two bodies will be held as early as possible to give effect to the unity proposal, and appoints a sub-committee consisting of Messrs. Shibnath Bannerji, R.S.Ruikar and R.S.Nimkar to carry on the necessary negotiations with the N.T.U.F. to make arrangements to hold the joint session as early as possible."

The resolution was moved by Mr. Ruikar who said that if the workers put forward their demands with a united voice, the capitalists as well as the Government would be forced to listen to them and agree to their demands. Existing divisions in their ranks did not help to present a united front, with the result that both the capitalists and the Government took advantage of their weakness and benefited thereby. It was time that they closed up their ranks and he was ~~x~~ certain that they did so, they would go from strength to strength and labour could get all their reasonable demands fulfilled.

Mr. B. Shiva Rao, (the President of the N.T.U.F. for 1935-37 and now a Vice-President of the Federation) who attended the session, also spoke on the occasion and stressed the imperative necessity for effecting unity.

2. Federal Constitution for India Disapproved.- "Whereas the Government of India Act has been declared to be wholly unacceptable by all sections of Indian public opinion and whereas this Act does not provide for any sort of fundamental rights of the people and whereas there cannot be any wholesome Federation between autocratic States and democratic provinces and whereas the scheme of Federation adumbrated by the Government of India Act precludes the voice of the masses of the States from any share in the Government of either the States or the Federal Government and whereas even the masses of autonomous provinces have been treated with imperialist insolence by providing indirect representation in Federal Assembly and high plutocratic franchise for the Council of State, apart from other thoroughly objectionable features which the scheme possesses, this session of the A.I.T.U.C. expresses its most emphatic and unequivocal opposition to the scheme of Federation.

"There being a grave danger of a section of nationalists trying to minimise the struggle against this ~~xxx~~ slave constitution into a formal constitutional protest, this session declares that the only effective way to struggle against and end the new Constitution is by revolutionary utilisation of the Legislatures and linking it up with direct action of the masses such as a general political strike and no-tax campaign.

"The Trade Union Congress urges the National Congress to take the initiative in developing mass action with a view to resist the introduction of the Federal Scheme and to quit office if this scheme is thrust upon the people. The T.U.C. assures the Congress its whole-hearted support in the anti-Federation struggle."

3. Charter of Working Class Demands- "In the opinion of the A.I.T.U.C., the Indian struggle for bread and freedom has entered into a new phase with the acceptance of Ministries in seven provinces by the Congress with a clear mandate to combat and to wreck the slave Constitution by all means in its power. The Congress has also clearly pledged to the electorates, and to the people at large, to push to the forefront of the national

struggle, the vital demands of the masses and defend their interests, even as against the vested interests. It has, therefore, provided for us a unique opportunity to develop the struggle and mobilise the entire masses on the basis of their vital demands so that the Ministry may be forced to a position in which it will have no other alternative than either to introduce legislation and measures fulfilling their demands, or to effectively demonstrate before the fighting masses that even their most primary and vital demands cannot be fulfilled without capture of political power by them. In any case, it will develop the initiative of the masses and give them the most necessary political training and carry forward the national struggle to a higher form.

"The A.I.T.U.C., therefore, prepares the following charter of working class demands and on behalf of the united working class movement calls upon the Congress, students, youth and peasant organisations, and particularly all Trade Unions, to mobilise the masses on that basis and to bring an irresistible pressure on different provincial Governments to accede to the same.

*The charter of the working-class demands is as follows:
 (1) Complete national independence, ^{the} sovereign rights of the people to be directly exercised by the people in ^{the} legislature, as well as in execution; (2) nationalisation of key industries, adoption of measures calculated to transform hoarded wealth into productive capital, and ~~to~~ guarantee a proper distribution of national wealth so as to release the productive forces of the country and thus quicken the prosperity of the people; (3) abolition of all privileges and institutions which militate against the establishment of democratic freedom and constitutes an unnecessary burden on the national economy; (4) unconditional release of detenus, all class-war and other political prisoners; (5) withdrawal of all repressive measures and laws; (6) adult franchise; (7) freedom ~~press~~ of press, speech and association; (8) workers' right to combine, to strike and to picket during trade disputes; (9) free and compulsory primary education without taxing the masses; (10) full opportunity for military training for all adults and the right to possess arms; (11) abolition of all discrimination ^{on} of caste, colour, creed, race and sex; and (12) withdrawal of all bans on all institutions and individuals".

4. Industrial Workers' Demands. - "For workers, the demands are as follows: (1) Unfettered right of workers to form their own unions and compulsory recognition of registered trade unions by the Government and the employers; (2) minimum wages of Rs. 30 per month payable to all workers, including contract labour; (3) a 40-hour week and a 7-hour day without any reduction of wages; (4) security of service and adequate compensation in case of wrongful dismissal; (5) unemployment insurance, fixing minimum unemployment allowance at Rs. 15 per month; (6) abolition of jobbery, bribery and corruption and direct employment of labour; (7) compulsory grant of gazetted holidays with full wages to all workers; (8) maternity leave for 12 weeks, with full wages

and creches for children; (9) provisions for sick leave, old age pension, provident fund, sanitary housing accommodation and free medical aid, schemes of social insurance being mainly at the expense of the employers, and the State guaranteeing the workers' benefits in case of old age, invalidity, death and unemployment; and (10) equal wages for equal work without any discrimination of caste, colour, creed, race or sex".

5. Peasants' Demands. - "For peasants, the demands are as follows:- (1) Abolition of all intermediaries between the State and the tillers and redistribution of land to the tillers of the soil; (2) a system of graduated taxation above an income of Rs.500 a year and abolition of taxes on uneconomic holdings; (3) at least 50 per cent reduction of land taxes; (4) liquidation of debts and all arrears of rent; (5) feudal and semi-feudal levies to be made cognizable offences; (6) freedom from attachment and execution of rent and money-decrees of home-effects, agricultural implements and that portion of the agricultural holding which is just & sufficient to maintain an average peasant family; (7) fixing minimum prices for main agricultural products; and (8) facilities for cheap credits through co-operative societies at not more than 3 per cent interest per annum".

6. Labour Legislation Programme. - "Whereas the Congress is irrevocably pledged to safeguard the interests of the toiling masses this Conference of A.I.T.U.C. urges upon the All India Congress Committee to call upon the Congress Ministries to implement their election pledges by boldly undertaking the following ^{measures} pieces of legislation in their respective provincial legislatures without any further delay: (1) legislation making recognition of registered trade unions by the Government and employers compulsory; (2) legislation fixing a minimum of Rs.50 per month (in resolution No.4, it will be noted, the minimum wages demanded is Rs.30/-) for all workers and abolition of contract labour; (3) legislation enforcing a 40-hour week and a 7-hour day without reduction in wages; (4) legislation compelling all employers of labour to frame service rules guaranteeing security of service to workers and providing adequate compensation in case of wrongful dismissal; (5) legislation for unemployment insurance fixing a minimum unemployment allowance of Rs. 15 per month; (6) legislation to abolish the jobber and sardar system; (7) legislation to grant gazetted holidays with full wages to all workers; and (8) legislation to grant maternity leave of 12 weeks."

Office-bearers for 1938. - Dr. Suresh Chandra Bannerjee, M.L.A. (Bengal) and Mr. B.K. Mukerjee, M.L.A. (the United Provinces) were elected the President and Secretary respectively for the year 1938.

(The Hindustan Times,
2 & 3-1-1938)

Trade Union Unity;Meeting of the Negotiations Committee at Delhi on 3-1-38.

In order to give effect to the decisions of the Delhi Session of the All India Trade Union Congress on the subject of structural unity between the All India Trade Union Congress and the National Trades Union Federation, a joint meeting of the Negotiations Committee, representing the A.I.T.U.C. and the N.T.U.F., was held at Delhi on 3-1-1938. Messrs. Sibnath Bannerjee, R.S. Ruikar and Nimbkar representing the A.I.T.U.C. and Messrs. Shiva Rao and V.R. Kalappa representing the N.T.U.F. attended the meeting. In view of the fact that the A.I.T.U.C. had fully accepted the unity proposals set forth by the N.T.U.F., a recommendation to the effect that the Secretary of the N.T.U.F. should apply immediately for affiliation to the A.I.T.U.C. was unanimously adopted. The meeting also recommended that a central place, like Nagpur, should be selected as the venue of a special session of the A.I.T.U.C. to be convened shortly. It is understood that at this session election will take place of the office-bearers of the combined central Organisation on the basis of the constitution of the N.T.U.F.

(The Statesman, 4-1-1938).

Provincial Trade Unions' Federation;New Labour Organisation Formed in Madras Presidency.

As an outcome of the Madras Provincial Labour Conference held at Madras on 14 and 15-12-1937 (vide pages 53-55 of this report), a new organisation, called the Madras Provincial

Trade Unions' Federation, has been formed. According to the statement issued by an office-bearer of the Federation, it has been organised with a view to co-ordinating the activities of the various Trade Unions in the province for improving the conditions of workers and to secure the enactment of necessary labour legislation immediately. The Federation has decided that efforts should be immediately made to strengthen the existing trade unions, and bring into existence similar organisations where workers are yet unorganised. Mr. P.R.K.Sharma, M.L.A. (Madras) has been appointed as its General Secretary.

It is understood that in this connection Mr. Sharma would be ~~about~~ shortly undertaking an extensive tour of the province.

(The Hindu, 20-12-1937).

The Working of the Trade Unions Act, 1926, in Bihar, 1936-37.* ✓

Registration of Societies: According to the annual report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act in Bihar during the year ending 31-3-1937, no trade union was registered under the Act during the year under report, but applications for registration together with copies of their rules were received from some unions. These unions, however, could not be registered as the documents submitted by them contained various defects and had to be returned more than once with necessary instructions for rectifying the defects. No certificate of registration of a trade union was withdrawn or cancelled under section 10, and no notice of dissolution of a registered trade union was registered under section 27 (1) of the Act during the year. The total number of registered trade unions at the end of the year was 5 as in last year.

Membership and Finance: The total membership of the unions was 16,685 of whom 15,761 were males and 924 women, as against 15,030 members (14,568 men and 462 women) in 1935-36. The opening balance of four unions during the year was Rs. 99-14-0, while the Metal Workers' Union, Jamshedpur, opened with a debit balance of Rs. 3,345-13-9. The income of all the five unions during the year was Rs. 9,225-8-3, and the expenditure amounted to Rs. 4,674-4-3. The total closing balance of the five unions was Rs. 1,305-4-3.

Activities of the Unions: No important activities of trade unions in general or developments of interest relating to the trade union movement during the year under report were reported.

(The annual report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, in Bihar and Orissa was reviewed at page 32 of our November 1936 report.)

*Annual Report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, in the Province of Bihar for the year 1936-37. Superintendent, Government Printing, Bihar, Patna. Price 0-4-6. pp.3 +

Indian Statistical Conference:

First Session to be held in Calcutta in January. ✓+

The first session of the Indian Statistical Conference, it is understood, will be held at Calcutta on 7-1-1938. His Excellency Lord Brabourne, Governor of Bengal, has consented to be the Patron of the conference, and Prof. R. A. Fisher, Galton Professor in the University of London, will be the General President. Sir James Grigg, Finance Member, Government of India, will address the conference. Besides an afternoon session on the opening day, there will be two sessions each day on January 8 and 9. It is expected that the Conference will work in active co-operation with the Indian Science Congress, which will also be in session at Calcutta simultaneously.

Besides discussing economic statistics, as also public health and vital statistics, the conference will have two joint discussions with the Indian Science Congress, one on agricultural statistics, and the other on theoretical statistics.

(The Statesman, 11-12-1937.) +

Protection of Minor Industries:

Indian Merchants Chamber, ^{Bombay,} demands Completion of Inquiry. ✓

Reference was made at pages 63-64 of our November 1937 report to the decision of the Government of India to suspend the enquiry instituted for protecting Indian minor industries against Japanese competition (vide pages 46-47 of our June 1937 report). The

Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, in a letter addressed to the Commerce Department, Government of India, has expressed dissatisfaction at the Government's decision to suspend the enquiry. Following are the points raised by the Chamber in its letter:

Government's Decision Unjust: The letter points out that ~~it~~ it is unfortunate, after raising hopes in the struggling industries that their case would receive sympathetic consideration, that the Government should abandon the whole inquiry for reasons brought about by temporary factors. The question of Japanese competition is not a recent phenomenon. Indian industries have been suffering from Japanese competition ^{for a long time} and it was Government's duty to ~~review~~ the whole problem and complete the enquiry which it had ordered.

Question at Issue: The Chamber maintains that, assuming that Japanese prices have been steadily rising, the question at issue with which the inquiry was primarily concerned ^x was, how far the prices of important Japanese made articles were below even the cost of production of corresponding Indian-made articles. There was, therefore, nothing to prevent the inquiry being completed, with a view to ascertaining the prices of Indian-made articles, so that as soon as the prices of corresponding Japanese imports were found to be less than the prices of Indian manufactured articles, immediate action could be taken.

(The Statesman, 25-11-1937.)

Development of Industries in U.P.
Provincial Government's New Schemes.

In pursuance of an announcement made by ^{the} Prime Minister, United Provinces, in the course of his budget speech, the Government of U.P. has, according to a press note issued by the Department of Industries, sanctioned the following new schemes for the development of Industries in the province:

(1) Tuitional classes for textile, tanning and wood working industries; (2) improvement of gur (mollasses) industry; (3) improvement of hand spinning industry; (4) improvement of raw hide industry; (5) improvement of glass industry; (6) improvement of cottage oil industry; (7) survey of cottage and minor industries; and ~~the~~ (8) establishment of a commercial intelligence section in the office of the Director of Industries.

Details of the Scheme: (i) Tuitional Classes: These classes will train artisans in improved methods of work at important centres, and will move from one centre to another after organising ^{selected} the industry at each place. They will be equipped to train workers, give demonstration of improved appliances, and solve the difficulties of workers especially in the rural areas. Ten such classes will be started at different ~~pla~~ centres at present as follows: (1) A cotton and silk weaving class, (2) a dari weaving class, (3) two wool weaving and spinning classes, (4) a wool dyeing and printing class, (5) a cotton and silk dyeing and printing class, (6) two carpentry classes, and (7) two tanning and flaying classes.

It is understood that instructors have been appointed and they have proceeded to their respective centres of work.

(ii) Improvement of gur industry: It is pointed out that about 65 per cent. of ^{sugar} cane produced in the province is converted into gur, while the annual output of gur in the province is about 55 million maunds valued at about 110 million ruppees; the importance of the industry to the province is thus obvious. The aim of the scheme ~~for the development of this industry~~ is to introduce improvements in its various phases so that the cultivator may obtain a greater yield, a superior quality and a more favourable price. For

the present, work will be started in 30 districts of the province for (1) distribution of improved bullock power crushers and pans on a large scale, and (2) tuition in improved methods of gur manufacture.

To start with, seven centres have been chosen for intensive work which will consist of (a) trying out the results of small scale experiments on a big scale under village conditions; and (b) the marketing of the improved product. It is understood that one demonstrator, skilled in the art of gur manufacture, has been posted to each selected district; he will give demonstrations in selected villages, and train the people of these and neighbouring villages. Arrangements have also been made with selected firms for the supply of improved bullock power mills and juice boiling pans.

(iii) Improvement of Hand Spinning Industry: The work in this direction is being arranged through the All India Spinners' Association. The draft proposals include conducting of experiments for improvement of the spinning wheel, ~~to~~ ^{and} subsidising ^{of} hand spinners, so that they may earn a minimum daily wage of 3 annas, distributing of spinning wheels and engaging instructors. A sum of Rs. 10,000 is being paid to the Association for this work.

(iv) Improvement of raw hide industry: It is pointed out that the development of this industry is intended for the benefit of ^{the} depressed classes who lose a good deal on account of avoidable defects in ^{raw} hides offered by them for sale in the market. The scheme aims at improving the method of flaying and preserving the hides and ^{packing} them. This is to be supplemented by propaganda for the care of cattle. One demonstration party under an expert curer, and two expert flayers have started work in the Cawnpore district. This party will be moving from place to place in order to assist the sale of better hides, and an advisory committee of persons connected with the trade will be formed at an early date.

(v) Improvement of Glass Industry: In this connection, arrangements are being made to appoint a glass technologist and to engage him in research work at the Benares Hindu University.

(vi) Improvement of cottage oil industries: For improvement of ^{the} cottage oil industry, it is proposed that the following steps ^{should} ~~will~~ be taken: (i) survey of the existing industry; (ii) improvements

in the existing processes of village crushing; and (iii) training educated youngmen for short periods at the Harcourt Butler Technological Institute, Cawnpore.

(vii) Survey of cottage and minor industries: An upto date survey of a few selected industries throughout the province will be made at an early date.

(viii) Establishment of a Bureau of Commercial Intelligence: The Government proposes to maintain an upto date information bureau for important industries of the province. Special staff is to be appointed with effect from 1-2-1938.

(The Leader, 29-12-1937.)

Cotton Textile Mill Industry in India during
1936-37. +

The Millowners' Association, Bombay, has recently issued its annual statement regarding the progress of the Indian textile industry during the year ending 31-~~8~~1937. The salient features of the statement are summarised below:

Number of Mills: The total number of equipped mills in India ^{on 31-8-1937} was 370 as against 379 on 31-8-1936. The reduction is mainly due to the fact that during the period under review the names of mills having less than 50 looms have been deleted. There was a net decrease of 5 mills in Bombay. The number of mills in Ahmedabad decreased by 3. The number of mills in the Bombay Presidency exclusive of Ahmedabad and Bombay City and Island decreased from 65 to 60; the number of equipped mills in Bengal is 26 as against 24 last year. There was no change in the number of mills in the Central Provinces, Berar, Rajputana and the United Provinces, but the number of equipped mills in the Punjab increased by one and in Madras Presidency by two. ~~Out~~ ^{Of} the 370 equipped mills in the country, 35 were partly or completely idle. Of these 35 mills, 5 were located in Bombay City and Island and 10 in Ahmedabad.

Number of Spindles and Looms: The total number of spindles in the equipped mills of the country ~~now stands~~ ^{now stands} at 9,731,000, a decrease of 126,000 during the year. The total number of looms is 197,810, a decrease of 2,252 during the year. In Bombay City and Island the number of spindles fell from 2.985 millions to 2.890 millions

and the number of looms from 68,000 to 67,000. In Ahmedabad, the number of spindles decreased from 2,042,000 to 1,976,400 and the number of looms from 51,000 to 49,000. In the Bombay Presidency, exclusive of Ahmedabad and Bombay City, the number of spindles and looms decreased by 6,300 and 400 respectively. In the United Provinces, the number of spindles and looms were respectively 741,000 and 11,000; the number of spindles increased by 6,000 and the number of looms by 500. The number of erected spindles and looms in Bengal showed an increase of 18,600 and ~~700~~ 700 respectively as compared with last year. In the Madras Presidency, there was an increase of 60,000 spindles. In the Central Provinces, there was no change in the number of looms, but there was an increase of 2,000 in the number of spindles, the figures at the end of the year being, spindles 323,000 and looms 5,739. In Central India, which includes mills in Indore and Gwalior, the number of spindles increased by 2,000 to 370,000 and the number of looms increased by 200 to 10,000. In the Punjab, the number of spindles increased by 6,000 to a total of 94,000.

Number of Operatives: The average number of operatives employed daily on day shift work was approximately 417,000 as against 418,000 in the previous year. Particulars of the numbers regularly employed on night shift work are not available.

Capital Invested: The total laid-up capital of the industry on 31-8-1937 amounted to Rs. 398,200,000.

Activity of Mills: During the year under review, the industry consumed 1,573,000 candies of 784 lbs. of cotton which is approximately the same as the consumption last year. The average number of spindles working daily during the year was 8,441,000 out of a total of 9,731,000 erected. Last year, the corresponding figures were 8,504,000 working out of a total of 9,857,000 erected. Of the 200,000 looms erected, an average of 177,000 were working daily during the year. This compares with the figures of 178,000 working daily in the previous year out of a total of 200,000. In Bombay City and Island only, 2,322,000 spindles and 59,000 looms, out of 2,890,000 spindles and 67,000 looms respectively, were working regularly. The above-quoted figures of spindle and loom activity do not include night shift working. The figure of cotton consumed, however, includes night and day consumption.

(A statement of the Cotton Textile Mill Industry in India during 1935-36 was summarised at pages 32-34 of our January 1937 report.)

(The Times of India, 29-12-1937 and
The Hindu, 31-12-1937.)+

72

The 9th Industrial Conference, Lahore,

15 and 16-12-1937.

The ninth session of the Indian Industries Conference was held at Lahore on 15 and 16-12-1937. The Conference was attended by representatives of the Departments of Commerce and Labour of the Government of India and those of the eleven provinces, six Indian States and Ceylon. Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, Member for Commerce and Labour with the Government of India, presided over the Conference.

Among the subjects discussed by the Conference were: (1) progress of the schemes for the development of the hand-loom industry, (2) development of schemes of apprenticeship, (3) development of schemes for helping educated young men in starting small-scale industries, (4) publication of a handbook containing information regarding industrial and technical institutions in India, (5) the question of drawing up a plan for the establishment and development of industries of national or economic importance; and (5) the undertaking of industrial surveys of both raw materials and manufactured goods.

Presidential Address: Sir Muhammad Zafrullah referred in the first place to the changes effected in the Government of India by the suffling of the subjects dealt with in the old Department of Industries and Labour and the Department of Commerce and to the changes effected in the Provinces by the Constitutional Reforms. Sir Muhammad, while dealing with the latter subject, expressed the hope that the popular Ministries in the Provinces will be successful in quickening the pace of industrial development in the country.

Middle-class Unemployment: Dealing with the various items on the agenda, Sir Muhammad referred to the unemployment problem in India and regretted that the provincial Governments did not send their memoranda regarding schemes of apprenticeship in time to enable the Conference to come to definite conclusions. He suggested the inclusion of the subject in the agenda for the next session of the Conference also so that by that time some experience would have been gained from the working of the the schemes recently initiated in the provinces.

Industrial Development: Stressing the necessity for conducting industrial surveys with a view to the development of the Indian industries Sir Muhammad said:

"The encouragement and development of the major industries of the country must be our concern equally with the cottage industries if an industrially-minded and technically efficient community capable of providing all grades of the personnel essential to modern industry is to be fostered. Such development must depend, to a large extent, if not almost entirely, on the steps taken by the provinces and States to effect them, and it is necessary that detailed and up to date information regarding the industries which it is considered necessary to assist and develop should be obtained and made available in a suitable form for the instruction of all concerned so as to provide the basis on which plans for their development may be formed.

"We are all I feel sure, in agreement that the most suitable way in which this information can be obtained is by means of industrial surveys, industry by industry, in order of their importance to the country, and it was the opinion of the Industrial Research Council, expressed at its last session, that the oil seed crushing industry is of primary importance in this ~~country~~ connection."

Other subjects: Sir Muhammad then reviewed the problems connected with the oil-seed crushing and oil production industry and with the marketing of oil seeds. He also referred to the development of glass industry in India, especially in the United Provinces. Dealing with the Industrial Research Bureau, Sir Muhammad Zafrullah said that this organisation, which was started three years ago, had completely justified itself. The Government of India, therefore, proposed that it should be placed on a permanent basis, beginning from the next financial year.

Proceedings of the Conference: The following summary of the discussion is based on official communiqué issued on the subject:

1. Hand-loom Industry: The Conference reviewed the progress of the various schemes for the development of the handloom industry in the provinces, which get a grant of Rs. 500,000 annually from the Government of India. Views on the competition between mills and handloom weavers were voiced and the difficulties under which the handloom weaver laboured were represented to the chairman, who promised to place them before the Government of India.

The Hon. Mr. L.M. Patil, Industries Minister, Bombay, explained the scheme started by the Bombay Government for the development of handloom industry in that Province. The Hon. Mr. Giri stressed the necessity for the provinces co-operating to plan and carry out an all-India scheme for the industrial development of the country.

2. Schemes of apprenticeship: Each of the Provincial and States representatives in turn informed the Conference of the facilities at present available in their respective provinces and

the difficulties which were in the way of the proper development of such schemes. From the information supplied to the Conference it was clear that it was only in Bombay that some progress had been made. The discussion indicated that it was recognized that the full co-operation of industrial organizations was essential for the success of any scheme of apprenticeship and the necessity for taking legislative action to secure this was considered. Eventually it was decided that the matter should be further examined by the Provinces and concrete proposals submitted in time to be considered at the next Industries Conference.

3. Educated Unemployed and Small-scale Industries: The Conference next considered the question of schemes for helping educated young men in starting small-scale industries. Description of schemes being tried out in Bengal, Punjab and the United Provinces, were placed before the Conference and the general feeling was that other Provinces should be asked to supply similar information.

4. Handbook of Industrial Information: With regard to the question of publication of a handbook containing information regarding industrial and technical institutions in India including Indian States, it was realised that an All-India publication was impracticable. It was accordingly considered that each Province and State should have its own publication, copies being made available to other provinces and States for dissemination to the public.

5. Woollen and Sericulture Industries: The Conference also reviewed the proceedings of the second and third meetings respectively of the Woollen Industry and the Imperial Sericultural Committees.

6. Economic Programme for India and Industrial Survey: Finally, arising out of the Conference's consideration of the proceedings of the third session of the Industrial Research Council, there was a general discussion of the question of drawing up a regular programme or plan for the establishment and development of industries of national or economic importance and also the question of undertaking industrial surveys in respect of both raw materials and manufactured goods.

(The Statesman, 16 and 18-12-1937.)

21st Session of the All India Economic Conference,
Hyderabad, 28 to 31-12-1937. +

The 21st Session of the Conference of the Indian Economic Association was held at Hyderabad (Deccan) from 28-12-1937 to 31-12-1937 under the presidentship of Dr. P.J.Thomas, Professor of Economics, Madras. Dr. Thomas, in the course of his presidential address, emphasised the need for a planned programme of economic reconstruction with the aim of increasing production and raising the standard of living of the masses. He declared that the outstanding problems of India today ~~are~~ ^{are} how to effect a larger production and a better distribution of wealth?

The Conference discussed, inter alia, the problem of unemployment in India, the rehabilitation of provincial finances, the theory of trade cycles and the history of and problems connected with indigenous banking.

Unemployment in India: Several delegates participated in the discussion on the subject of unemployment in India. Rapid industrialisation, introduction of co-operative farming with supplementary rural industries and co-operative insurance were some of the suggestions put forward as solutions. Dr. Anthony Nader suggested the adoption of an intensive aerial programme of a four-fold nature: military, commercial, university and civil. The military programme is to consist of the establishment of a Royal Indian Air Force and the starting of an Air Force College to train candidates for the Force. The commercial programme is to include the extension of inland air transport, establishment of contact with International Airways for the employment of Indians on Indian routes and the establishment of two aircraft manufacturing plants on the guarantee system. The University programme is to deal with the establishment of an Indian University Air Squadron. The civil programme envisages the extension of ^{the} Sefton-Sassoon Club flying scheme to all principal towns in India.

Dr. Thomas, in winding up the debate, said that the real

problem was not unemployment so much as underemployment and employment during certain seasons of the year only. He believed in co-operative labour and farming and he appealed to administrators to take effective steps in the direction of solving unemployment in co-operation with economists.

(The Hindu and Statesman, 28-12-1937
and the Hindu, 1-1-1938.) +

Industrial Development of Bombay:

Bombay Government's New Schemes. +

In pursuance of the policy of ^{the} Government of Bombay to encourage handicrafts and cottage industries, ~~the Government~~ ^{it} has drawn up a scheme to award scholarships to hereditary workers in sandalwood carving and inlaid work in the Bombay Presidency. The scheme aims at improving the design and workmanship of village workers to meet modern requirements.

Details of the Scheme: According to the scheme, ten scholarships of Rs. 30 each, ^{to be} tenable for a maximum period of two years, will be awarded to the selected candidates wishing to join the Sir J. J. School of Arts, Bombay, for training in modern methods and tastes in wood carving, and third class fares to Bombay, and the school fees will be paid by the Department of Industries, Bombay. The candidates, who must not be more than 30 and less than 18 years of age, will have to enter into an agreement with Government and furnish necessary security. Literate persons will be given preference.

Dyeing Demonstrations: Two dyeing masters and an artist designer are also to be appointed shortly by the Director of Industries. The dyeing masters will be required to conduct peripatetic dyeing and printing demonstrations in different parts of Bombay Presidency with a view to training dyers, weavers and others in modern methods of dyeing and printing of cloth

and yarn. The artist-designer will be required to prepare modern designs in art crafts so as to create a better demand for the ^{out-turn} work ~~of~~ the cottage industries.

Enlargement of Department of Industries: The action taken by the Bombay Government up to now to encourage the handicrafts and cottage industries in the Presidency is the beginning of a comprehensive scheme forming part of the industrial policy of the Bombay Government. The activities of the Department of Industries, at present restricted to a few industries like the handloom industry and fisheries, are to be extended to other industries. The chemical laboratory of the department is also to be developed.

Vocational Training: The question of training people in modern industrial methods has also been engaging the attention of Government. The possibilities of opening vocational schools in places where there are chances of employment for persons trained in such schools are being considered. As a beginning, Government have ~~started~~ decided to start two schools, one for training in leather tanning and shoe-making and the other for prospective tailors, from June 1938 (vide pages 69-70 of our November 1937 report). The whole question is being considered in the light of the recommendations of the Abbot and Wood Committee and ^{of} the United Provinces Unemployment Committee.

It is gathered that one of the proposals before the Bombay Government is to pass an Industrial Education Act for the Province in order to put the vocational education on a sound footing. Efforts are being made to extend the scheme of apprenticeship, at present restricted to Bombay and Ahmedabad, to other parts of the province. The possibility of legislation respecting the training of apprentices is considered a question of time by a section of the employers.

(The Times of India, 14-12-1937.) +

Employment and Unemployment.

Helping Unemployed Youths to set up small Industries:

U.P. Government's Scheme.

According to a press note issued in December 1937 by the Government of the United Provinces, the Government has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 100,000 to be given as grants to educated young men, to enable those who have been trained in a particular industry to set up in that industry or in business or trade connected therewith. The grants will also be used to help those who are already in business or trade to develop and expand their activities, preference being given to groups of individuals or co-operative organizations.

Purpose of Grants: It is pointed out that grants will be given for the purchase of tools, implements and appliances or machinery, including cost of erection; for enabling the recipient to tide over the early stages of manufacture on a commercial scale; for helping him to meet losses due to poor production in the beginning; for encouraging co-operative organisation for joint marketing and where practicable joint purchase of materials; or for other similar purposes depending on the circumstances of each case.

Industries to be Benefited: It is noted that applications for grants from those engaged in handicrafts and cottage industries will be given preference. The list of such industries includes, among others, metal casting, cutlery, dry-cleaning, dyeing and printing, basket making, embroidery, yarn dyeing and balling, brush-making, hat-making, toy making, cottage tanning, soap making, rope making, ^{and} cotton carding, etc.,

Terms and Conditions: These grants will be subject to certain terms and conditions, varying with the nature of each case. In particular, the grantee will have to meet part of the cost of tools, appliances or machinery from his own resources; he will have to supply such data as regards his scheme and the working thereof as may be required by the Director of Industries and Commerce; and he will have to make his accounts available for examination by the officers of the Industries Department. He will have to work according to an approved scheme, failing which ~~he will have to return the machines purchased out of the grant~~ ~~and~~ refund the unutilized portion of the grant, and he may be required to set up the plant at a place to be decided by Government with due regard to technical assistance available from Government schools and other facilities. He may in some cases be required to work with others in a colony or on co-operative lines under the supervision of the Industries Department. In some cases he may be asked to take the machinery already installed at a particular place on hire and work it under suitable guidance for some time but on strict business lines, learning where to buy, what to make and when and where to sell.

(The Leader, 19-12-1937.)+

80

Public Health.

Health Conditions in Asansol Coal Mines, 1936-37.* ✓
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The following information regarding health conditions in the Asansol Coal mines is taken from the Annual Administration Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health for the year 1936-37. The area of the mining settlement under the jurisdiction of the Board of Health is 413 square miles. The population in the middle of 1936 was 407,691, of which 47,659 were living in municipal areas and 335,021 in other areas.

Vital Statistics.- During the year under review the number of births registered was 10,751. The birth-rate was 28.0 per 1000 against 27.1 in the preceding year. The corrected birth-rate on the estimated population is 26.3 per 1000 against 25.6 in 1935.

The number of deaths registered during the year was 7,220 against 8,165 in the previous year, the death-rate being 18.8 per 1000 population against 21.3 in 1935. The corrected death-rate on the estimated population is ~~19.7~~ per 1000 against 20.0 in the preceding year. Births exceeded deaths by 3,531 while the birth-rate exceeded death-rate by 9.2 per 1000.

Infant Mortality.- 1,376 infants died during the year against 1,521 in the preceding year. The infant mortality rate calculated on the number of registered births was considerably lower, being 127.9 against 146.5 in 1935. Causes of infant mortality are not recorded correctly - the parents being too often not in a position to explain the cause of death. It is remarked that there is reason to believe that the main causes are premature birth, infantile debility, bowel disorders, inanition, fevers, respiratory diseases, convulsions and malnutrition.

Principal Causes of death.- Fevers (including Malaria) were responsible for 3,034 deaths, pneumonia for 537 deaths, respiratory diseases for 454 deaths, dysentery and diarrhoea for 254 deaths and cholera for 158 deaths. There were 2,783 deaths due to other causes.

* Annual Administration Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health for the year 1936-37. - pp.42+tables.

Anti-Leprosy Measures.- The Board's leprosy department works in close collaboration with the local Leprosy Relief Association. The work is co-ordinated by an executive committee - the Leprosy Board, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Health being elected the Chairman of the Leprosy Board. Two new constituent branches of the Association were organised in Lalganj and Jemari. The Association has now fourteen branches covering the whole of the mining settlement and as many clinics for treatment, propaganda and survey. The first stage of the campaign - that of initial survey and organisation - was followed by the stage of opening up of a network of clinics within easy reach of all cases of leprosy throughout the settlement. Detailed survey has been carried out for both the general population and the student community by health visitors appointed in each divisional area who also carry out home-visiting of lepers and propaganda among the masses. The Association is now embarking on the third stage viz. that of segregation of the highly infectious lepers.

The number of fresh cases detected by the health visitors during their survey was 1,232 making a total of 5,084 cases of whom 1,440 were infectious. The incidence ranged between 1.1% and 2.5% in the divisional areas with an average of 1.5% for the general population. The incidence in the collieries was 1.19% as against 1.6% in the rural and urban areas.

Health Propaganda.- Health prop^aganda was carried out during the year on the same lines as reported in the previous year. For the general population lantern lectures were arranged throughout the year by the Propaganda Officer of the Board and by the Leprosy Assistants. Besides general lectures, house-to house visits were also paid by these officers.

Maternity and Infant Welfare.- The Board of Health maintains a staff of six health visitors and a lady superintendent. The responsibility of organising and maintaining the welfare activities rests on the local Health and Baby Welfare Society which works through its constituent branches in the areas where the health ~~vis~~ visitors are posted. About a fifth of the mining settlement is covered by the welfare activities. So far the work has been confined to rural and colliery areas. It is only recently that the Asansol and Raniganj branches of the Welfare Society have seriously taken up the problem of welfare work. The welfare work in these centres consists mainly of anti-natal supervision, natal care, post-natal supervision, educative propaganda in mother-craft (Hygiene and sewing) and maintenance of clinics.

Safety in Mines.- In order to safeguard against fire and explosion and ensure safety within the mines, temporary regulations and circulars were issued by the Chief Inspector of Mines from time to time during the year. These dealt mainly with (i) treatment of coal dust to prevent coal dust explosion, (ii) use of explosives, and (iii) precautions against fire.

Exclusion of Women from Under-ground Work.- Owing to partial failure of crop during the preceding two years, supply of labour was plentiful. The gradual withdrawal of women labour underground, it is remarked, is to reach its logical conclusion in October 1937. Even during the year under review, in view of the alarming loss of life in a colliery explosion which occurred ~~amam~~ during the year, one group of collieries stopped women labour outright from going underground. In considering the problem of finding work for the women thrown out of work by exclusion from underground work, the report remarks: "Surface work as is available for women is not however adequate to meet the requirements of the surplus labour thrown out of employment. The decrease in the family income will inevitably lead to undernourishment particularly of the women and the children. The miner's wife who has so long been a working partner and helpmate, ceases to be so and will have a less effective voice in disbursing the family budget. In order to counteract this adverse effect and relieve the economic distress, it may be necessary to open up new opportunities of employment for the women folk. It would be well worth considering if the appointment of a wholetime welfare officer may not be advisable at this stage to work out a scheme of training for the unemployed women in small cottage industries. Such an officer could undertake the training in different centres suitably distributed throughout the coalfield."

(The Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health for 1935-36 is reviewed at pages 69-71 of our December 1936 report).

(A copy of the Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health for 1936-37, reviewed above, was forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute D.1/ 16/8 /37 dated 16-12-1937). ✓+

The Madras Agriculturists' relief Bill, 1938. +

An Official Bill, called the Madras Agriculturists Relief Bill, 1938, to provide for the relief of indebted agriculturists in the province of Madras, is published at pages 1-12 of Part IV of the Fort St. George Gazette Extraordinary dated 1-12-1937. The object of the Bill is to rehabilitate agriculture which is the basic industry of the province.

Provisions of the Bill: It is pointed out that while, on the one hand, the agriculturists' income has diminished, the interest on his debt has been steadily accumulating, often at unconscionable rates. ^AThe predominant feature of the present agricultural distress is ~~due to~~ the burden of debt. It would not be right for the State to permit the hereditary skill of the agriculturist to ~~pass into~~ ^{waste away by} unemployment, ~~allowing~~ land to fall into the hands of people who are strangers to the calling of agriculture. Conciliation and other voluntary methods have failed and the adoption of the principle of compulsion has become necessary.

The Bill, therefore, provides that payment of the outstanding principal should discharge the debt. Interest will run from 1-10-1937 at a rate not exceeding 6 per cent per annum. In cases where interest exceeds the principal, payment of twice the principal is to have the effect of completely discharging the debtor from further liability. As far as possible, persons following occupations other than agriculture have been excluded from the benefit of the Bill. Dues to Government and local bodies and to co-operative and certain joint-stock banks have also been excluded from its scope.

The Bill also provides for the relief ~~to~~ tenants from the burden of old arrears of rent, without encouraging default in the payment of current dues. +

The Bihar Money-Lenders' Bill, 1937.

Attention is directed to pages 117-128 of Part V of the Bihar Gazette dated 8-12-1937, where is published the text of an Official Bill called the Bihar Money-Lenders Bill, 1937, to regulate money-lending transactions, and to grant relief to debtors in the Province of Bihar.

Provisions of the Bill: The Bill provides for the registration of money-lenders, and makes it obligatory on their part to keep full and accurate accounts of all transactions. With the object of checking the levying of excessive interest rates, it is provided that no court should give a decree on account of arrears of interest for any period exceeding three years ~~or~~ at rates exceeding 9 per cent per annum. The Bill makes all contracts between ~~the~~ money-lenders and ~~the~~ debtors, which provide for the payment of amount outside the province, ~~as~~ null and void. The practice of entering in the promisory note a sum greater than the actual loan amount is made an offence. +

Collective Farming for U. P.:

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's Scheme. +

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in a note to the Government of the United Provinces, has outlined a scheme for starting State and collective farming in the province. The main feature of the scheme is understood to be the development of barren and uncultivable 'Usar' lands in the province by the Government, and organization of State and collective farms over lands thus reclaimed. Pandit Nehru has suggested that, while this reclamation would increase the gross agricultural production of the province, it would also give the Government a chance to make an experiment in collective farming which would ultimately help them in making agriculture productive and profitable through the introduction of collective farming on a large scale and thus help the peasantry of the province. It is understood that he has suggested, in a general way, certain cheap processes for the reclamation of 'Usar' lands.

(The Leader, 26-12-1937.) +

Relief to Indebted Agriculturists in U. P.:

The Temporary Postponement of Execution of Decrees Act, 1937. +

Attention is directed to pages 1-3 of Part VII of the Government Gazette of the United Provinces dated 1-1-1938 where is published the final text of The Temporary Postponement of Execution of Decrees Act, 1937, as passed by the U.P. Legislature, and assented to by the Governor General on 20-12-1937. The Act

Provides for the temporary postponement, pending further legislation for granting relief from indebtedness to agriculturists, of the execution of certain decrees passed against agriculturists by civil courts.

The Act applies to agriculturists under which class are included agricultural labourers, general labourers, cowherds, goatherds, dairymen, blacksmiths, carpenters, fishers, hunters, boatmen, barbers, tanners and leather-workers, scavengers, basket makers, potters, midwives, watchmen, washermen, weavers, cartmen, dyers or other servants of the village community or any similar class of persons, whom the Local Government may, by notification in the Gazette, from time to time include in ~~the~~ this schedule.

The Act came in force on 20-12-1937 and it is provided that it shall remain in force for a period of six months. +

Maritime Affairs.Recruitment of Seamen: National Seamen's
Union Urges Abolition of Broker System.

An extra-ordinary general meeting of the National Seamen's Union of India was held at Bombay on 18-12-1937, Rao Bahadur R.S.Asavale presiding. Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, M.L.A., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Labour, Bombay, also attended the meeting.

Mr. Mohammad Ebrahim Serang, in a short speech detailed the grievances of seamen and urged the Government of Bombay to make a representation to the Government of India stressing the need for the immediate abolition of the broker system of recruitment of seamen. He further deplored the attitude of the Government of India in not taking action on the recommendations pertaining to seamen of the Clow Committee and the Whitley Commission, and in not ratifying the Conventions adopted by the I.L. Conference (Maritime Session) which have definitely held against the employment of brokers and ghat serangs. He also referred to the assurance given to the Indian workers' delegate by Sir Feroze Khan Noon at Geneva in 1936 to abolish the broker system without further loss of time.

Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda expressed the opinion that there was no reason why the Government of Bombay should not make a representation to the Government of India requesting the exclusion of middle men for recruiting crew, especially when the number of seamen offering themselves for work was greatly in excess of the jobs available.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 22-12-1937).

Recruitment of Indian Workers for Ceylon

Estates: State Council's Decision re. Franchise of Indian Workers.

Reference was made at pages 83 to 85 of our October 1937 report to the refusal of the Government of India to accord necessary permission for the recruitment of Indians to Ceylon estates until the Government of Ceylon had (1) conceded franchise rights to Indians for election of village committees, and (2) restored wages in mid and low country estates to the level prevailing between May 1931 and February 1932. The attitude of the Government of India was strongly supported by the Government of Madras, the province from which labour for Ceylon estates is recruited.

While the question of recruiting labourers from India is pending settlement, intensive efforts are being made in Ceylon to recruit local labour for the estates. On 11-11-1937, the Labour Controller, Ceylon, opened the first labour recruiting centre in the Island for recruiting Ceylonese. According to the scheme, Recruiting Officers are to tour villages registering the names of those willing to work. The officers will explain to them the conditions of work and the attendant advantages — free housing, wages not lower than those paid to Indian labourers, free medical treatment in case of illness, gift of rupees two on arrival at the estate and assurance of permanent employment. It has been decided that the Government will give a guarantee to bear the cost of transport and subsistence en route on first recruitment if such labourers do not stay for at least a fortnight. The ~~fx~~ gift of Rs. 2 to be made to each labourer to

meet his initial requirements will be made good by the Government to estates if the labourer leaves within a fortnight.

(The Hindu, 13-11-1937).

Franchise Rights of Indians.- The Standing Committee of the State Council considered on 17-11-1937 the question of the franchise of Indians for village committees and adopted an amendment to their original proposal of complete exclusion, extending franchise rights to all persons otherwise qualified who pay land-tax. This amendment does not improve the position since only a very small section of the Indian population in the Island would be enfranchised by this amendment. On 9-12-1937 the State Council adopted the Ordinance as amended by the Standing Committee without further modification. The Ordinance now awaits the assent of the Governor.

Restoration of 1931 Rates of Wages: As regards the Government of India's request for the restoration of the wages of Indian workers in mid and low country estates to the 1931 standard, the Ceylon Government pointed out that wage rates ~~mainly~~ were closely related to the cost of living and that the question whether present food prices justified the restoration of the cut would be referred to regional wage boards for determination. The Government of India suggested that it would prefer an immediate increase of wages, but would raise no objection to the question being referred, as contemplated by the Ceylon Government to regional wage boards. It is understood that the Wage Boards have started an enquiry into the question.

(The Hindu, 15-12-1937). +

General.C. P. Government's Labour Policy: InformalConference with Trade Union Leaders.

An informal conference between certain representatives of the C.P. Government and representatives of trade unions in the provinces was held at the Government secretariat at Nagpur on 10 and 11-12-1937 at which the various labour problems of the province were discussed. The conference was held at the instance of the Hon. Mr. Mehta, Minister for Labour and Industries. Amongst those who attended the Conference were the Hon. Mr. Mehta, the Director of Industries; the Secretary to Government, Commerce Department; the Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur; Mr. V.R. Kalappa, M.L.A., Mr. G.S. Page, M.L.A., Mr. R.S. Ruiker, President, Provincial Trade Union Congress; the President, and three representatives of the Nagpur Textile Union; and Mr. G.D. Karkare of the National Trade Union Federation. The Director of Industries read out extracts from his report on the various grievances submitted to the Government by the workers and after prolonged discussion, it is understood, the Hon. Mr. Mehta declared that the question of granting recognition to registered Trade Unions will be tackled first by the Government. The Minister is also reported to have said that if the employers were adamant and refused to recognise trade unions within a specified period, the Congress Ministry would introduce necessary legislation for the purpose of compelling them to do so. As regards ^{canceling} ~~restoration~~ ^{the} of wage-cuts in the textile industry, the Minister said that he would issue a questionnaire and gather necessary material before he could persuade the employers to ^{cancel} ~~restore~~ the wage-cuts or think of legislation for fixing minimum wages.

(The Indian Labour Journal, 12-12-1937).