

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE  
INDIAN BRANCH

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Report for August 1937.

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

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References to the I. L. O.

The July 1937 issue of the Labour Gazette, Bombay, publishes the second instalment of its review of the Washington Textile Conference.

\* \* \*

"Commerce", Bombay, dated 21-8-1937 publishes a long article under the caption: "Textile Over-Production or Under-Consumption" contributed anonymously by Mr. S. Keshoram, a member of the staff of this Office. In the course of the article pointed attention is directed to the discussion at the Washington Textile Conference relating to the necessity for increasing the purchasing power of the masses as a measure of increasing textile consumption.

\* \* \*

The Hindustan Times dated 8-8-1937 publishes a picture of Mr. G.L.Mento, Adviser to the Indian Employers' delegate to the 23rd I.L.Conference.

\* \* \*

The Bombay Chronicle dated 1-8-1937 publishes a picture of Mr. W.V.R.Naidu in conversation with Mr. Staal of the I.L.O.

\* \* \*

The Indian Labour Journal dated 8-8-1937 publishes a picture of Mr. W.V.R.Naidu in conversation with the Secretary - General of the League of Nations.

\* \* \*

The Indian Labour Journal dated 8-8-1937 publishes a group photo of the Indian delegation to the 23rd I.L.Conference.

\* \* \*

The August 1937 issue of the Indian Post, Delhi, publishes the summary of a communique issued by this Office on 23.6-1937 on the speech of Mr. S.C.Sen in the course of the debate on the Director's Report at the 23rd I.L.Conference.

\* \* \*

The July 1937 issue of the Commercial Review, Alleppey,

publishes an article under the caption "Unemployment in India". The article refers to the recent announcement by the Government of India regarding the collection of unemployment statistics, and in this connection draws attention to the statistics of the unemployed published regularly by the I.L.O. The article also publishes extracts relating to unemployment in India from the speech of Mr. S.C.Sen in the course of the debate on the Director's Report to the last I.L.Conference.

\* \* \*

The July 1937 issue of the Commercial Review, Alleppey, publishes extracts from the speech of Sir H.F.Mody in the course of the debate on the Director's Report to this year's Conference.

\* \* \*

The Indian Labour Journal, dated 8-8-1937 publishes a communique issued by this Office on 15-7-1937 on the work of the 23rd session of the I.L.Conference.

\* \* \*

The Hindu dated 6-8-1937, the Bombay Chronicle dated 7-8-37, the Indian Labour Journal dated 8-8-1937 and the Statesman dated 10-8-1937 publish a news item to the effect that M. W.V.R.Naidu (Adviser to the Indian Workers' Delegate to the 23rd I.L.Conference) gave an interview to the press on his return from Geneva, in which he briefly dealt with the work of the Conference and expressed the hope that India will take early steps to ratify the Conventions adopted at the Conference.

\* \* \*

The Industrial Bulletin, issued by the Employers' Federation of India, dated 16-8-1937 publishes a note summarizing the work of the 23rd I.L.Conference.

\* \* \*

"Indian Finance", Calcutta, dated 21-8-1937 publishes a

review of the League publication "Review of World Trade, 1936" in the course of which reference is made to the remarks regarding the progress of world industrial recovery occurring in the Director's Report to this year's I.L.Conference.

\* \* \*

"Commerce and Industry", Delhi, dated 24-8-1937 reproduces the item: "Twenty-third Session of the International Labour Conference" from I.L.O. News Bulletin No.15 (July 1937).

\* \* \*

The same issue as above reproduces the item: "The Problem of Leisure" from I.L.O. News Bulletin No.15 (July 1937).

\* \* \*

The Times of India dated 11-8-1937, the Bombay Chronicle dated 12-8-1937 and the Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 13-8-1937 publish an interview given by Mr. R.K. Baknale, Indian workers' delegate to the Washington Textile Conference, on his return to India on the work of that Conference, ~~on his return~~ He expressed the hope that India would ratify the 40-hour week Convention regarding the textile industry. *In the course of the interview references were also made to the work \* of the Asiatic Labour Congress (Tokyo session).*

The Indian Labour Journal dated 22-8-1937 publishes a long article under the caption: "A 40-Hour Week for India: Encouraging Experiences of New Zealand" contributed by this Office.

\* \* \*

The July 1937 issue of the Bulletin of the National Council of Women in India publishes an editorial note under the caption: "A 40-Hour Week for Indian Labour." The note expresses the opinion that a 40-hour week is definitely unsuitable to India. The Note says: "Labour Legislation should follow local conditions and requirements rather than a vague idealism.....Whether longer hours mean more fatigue is a matter which depends upon the intensive nature of the work done. In India for instance intensive work is seldom

performed anywhere... It is now being urged that India should introduce the forty hour week. This will do a lot of harm to Indian factories by increasing costs of production and this, in its turn, would injure the interests of Indian Labour. In our opinion India should be cautious in imitating the West."

\* \* \*

The combined May and June 1937 issue of the Abstract of Proceedings of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce gives the views of the Chamber ~~of~~ regarding the I.L. Convention re. holidays with pay for seamen.

\* \* \*

The Leader dated 23.8-1937 publishes an article under the caption: "Holidays with Pay" contributed by Mr. N.V. Phadke of the Servants of India Society. The article refers to the I.L. Convention on the subject and makes a strong plea for legislative action by the Government of India to implement the Convention.

\* \* \*

The Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce during July 1937 publish the views of the Chamber on the question of holidays with pay. The Committee has expressed agreement with the principle of holidays with pay, but is not in favour of legislative action on the subject at this juncture.

\* \* \*

The August 1937 issue of the Journal of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, publishes the views of the Chamber on the subject of holidays with pay. The Chamber has expressed itself against any system of paid holidays for India.

\* \* \*

The Proceedings of the Meeting of the Indian Mining Association, Calcutta, held on 22-7-1937 contain the views of the Association on the question of holidays with pay. The Association has expressed the view that a system of paid holidays is impracti-

-cable

in India in view of the migratory character of Indian labour.

\* \* \*

The Bombay Chronicle dated 20-8-1937 publishes the views expressed by the S.I.F. Railway workers' Union, Bombay, on the question of holidays with pay. The Union regrets the decision of the Government of India not to ratify the Convention and emphasises the necessity for all-India legislation on the subject.

\* \* \*

The Hindu dated 2-9-1937 publishes a picture of Mr. H.B. Butler published in connection with the report of his projected visit to India.

\* \* \*

A communique re. the work of the Permanent Agricultural Committee (issued by this Office on 7-8-1937) is published by the following: the Hindustan Times dated 9-8-1937, "Commerce and Industry" dated 10-8-1937, the Leader dated 11-8-37.

\* \* \*

The Guardian, Madras, dated 12-8-1937 publishes an editorial note under the caption: "Agricultural Workers" commenting on ~~the~~ communique issued by this Office on 7-8-1937 regarding the work of the Permanent Agricultural Committee. The editorial note reviews the work of the I.L.O. towards the amelioration of the conditions of life and work of the agricultural labourer and expresses satisfaction at the efforts now being made by the I.L.O. to tackle the problems of agricultural workers.

\* \* \*

A communique re. the world unemployment situation during the second quarter of 1937 (issued by this Office on 6-8-1937) is published by the Hindustan Times and the National Call dated 7-8-1937, the Hindu dated 9-8-1937 and "Commerce and Industry" dated 10-8-1937.

\* \* \*

The May 1937 issue of the E. & O. Co-operative Journal publishes an article under the caption: "The Problem of Nutrition"



contributed by the Director of this Office. In the course of the article references are made to the great interest taken by the I.L.O. in the subject of nutrition.

\* \* \*

The April 1937 number of the Bulletin issued by the National Council of Women in India publishes an editorial note under the caption: "Women in Mines". Referring to the I.L. Convention on the subject, the note says: "From the cold blooded moral point of view perhaps unemployment and starvation do not constitute any transgression of the industrial moral code. The League of Nations and the International Labour Office are after purifying the industrial world of its sins. They would not evidently consider it any of their business to succour persons who starve and suffer outside the industrial leadership."

\* \* \*

The Leader dated 24-8-1937 publishes a review of: "I.L.O: The Unregarded Revolution" by Kathleen Gibberd.

\* \* \*

The Hindia dated 13-8-1937 and the Hindustan Times dated 17-8-1937 publish a news item to the effect that Mr. N.S. Ranga has been invited by the Governing Body of the I.L.O. to be a member of the Advisory Committee of Correspondents on Workers' Spare Time.

\* \* \*

The National Call dated 18-8-1937 publishes a short editorial note, inspired by this Office, on the above. The note emphasises the importance to India of spare time for workers.

\* \* \*

The Indian Labour Journal dated 22-8-1937 publishes an article under the caption: "Industrialisation of Afghanistan: Regulation of Conditions in Factories" contributed by this Office. The article is based on the note on the subject published in

"Industrial and Labour Information," dated 24-5-1937.

\* \* \*  
The Hindu dated 28-8-1937, the Statesman, the National Call, the Bombay Chronicle and the Hindustan Times dated 28-8-1937 and the Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 31-8-1937 publish an interview given to the Associated Press of India by Sir H.P. Mody on his return from Geneva on the work of the 23rd I.L. Conference. He said:

"The International Labour Organisation has done an enormous amount of good, but it strikes me as the young man in a hurry. Conventions are being forged without due regard to realities. The worst of it is that the pace is being set by countries which on account of internal difficulties have had to resort to very advanced labour legislation and which are seeking now to make a virtue of necessity. For obvious reasons, they want the rest of the world to follow them. No one is so blind as not to see that a great deal remains to be done in the domain of social legislation, but the pace must be regulated at every stage by the conditions of the times. Ambitious and ill-considered programmes can only end in frustration. To repeat the warning I uttered at Geneva, the I.L.O.— as the organisation is known— must take care that it does not degenerate into a Council of Industrial Medicine."

\* \* \*  
The National Call dated 30-8-1937 publishes a short editorial note under the caption: "Sir H.P. Mody falls foul of the I.L.O." The note criticises the attitude of Sir Hornasji towards the I.L.O. and upholds the usefulness of the Conventions hitherto adopted.

\* \* \*  
The following statement gives the list of Indian newspapers and periodicals which have published notes from the I.L.O. News Bulletin or commented on them (The list is compiled only from newspapers and periodicals received in this Office. In addition to these, copies of the News Bulletin are sent to over 140 addresses:

1. "Commerce and Industry", Delhi, dated 24-8-1937 reproduces the items: "Twenty-third Session of the International Labour Conference" and "The Problem of Leisure" from I.L.O. News Bulletin No. 15 (July 1937).

\* \* \*  
No message having reference to the I.L.O. and emanating from Reuters or other European news agencies and press correspondents was published in the Indian press during August 1937.

Ratifications.

Holidays with Pay for Seamen: Views of Bengal

Chamber of Commerce. +

Reference was made at pages 15-16 of our July 1937 report to the views of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, and the South Indian Chamber of Commerce, Madras, on the Government of India's circular letter inviting the views of the interests concerned on the question of ratification of the I.L. Convention re. holidays with pay for seamen. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce has replied stating:

"Like so many International Conventions, some countries may have supported this one at Geneva, but will probably make a feeble, if any, attempt to ratify it. Moreover, with many important maritime powers like Germany no longer members of the League of Nations, these countries outside the League would have a definite advantage over those who are parties to the Convention. Quite apart from these considerations, however, the Articles of the Draft Convention are not suitable to Indian conditions. The granting of holidays to seamen will be difficult to arrange in any country and to make the acceptance of such holidays compulsory will in many cases impose greater hardships than the benefits gained. In the case of Indian seamen this would certainly be true: they live long distances from the ports at which they sign on and like mill and other labourers in this country, when they ~~make~~ take a holiday it is usually of at least two months' duration. Moreover, their time on holiday is more or less spent profitably in cultivation."

The following comments have been made on the Articles of the Convention:

Article 2. Section 1(a) and (b).-The reference to "working days" may lead to confusion and the word "working" should definitely be omitted.

Section 2(a).- It is presumed that this refers to the period which may elapse between signing off and signing on articles on the same ship. Any other interpretation would be liable to abuse and very difficult to check.

Section 2(b) -Similarly this would lend itself to abuse. The condition which it intended to cover should be more clearly stated.

Section 3(c).- This is a dangerous provision which would be certain to lead to disputes.

Section 4(b).-The practice of cash payments in lieu of holidays is objectionable on many counts and this will surely defeat largely the whole idea of the Convention.

Article 3.- This article will lead to endless complications and if strictly adhered to might prove a definite hardship at times to employees.

Article 4.- The provision of a subsistence allowance in addition to the usual pay is surely unnecessary.

Article 5.- This makes the acceptance of a holiday compulsory which at times may be of great disadvantage to seamen.

Article 7.- This article in its application to Indians is wholly wrong in principle in view of the casual manner in which Indian seamen enter into and terminate their employment.

Article 8.- Would undoubtedly be necessary, but nevertheless will involve employers in a large amount of extra labour and expense.

With reference to the two points on which views are particularly invited, namely (1) that the Convention, if ratified by India, will apply only to officers, crew and others specified in section 1 of Article 1 and (2) that the great majority of these ships are believed to be engaged in home trade and the crew serving on them are on six months' articles, the Chamber agrees that these are very important points, as a very large proportion of the lascars employed on board ship are on vessels not registered in India and to them, therefore, the terms of the Convention would only apply if the countries in which these steamers are registered also ratify the Convention.

For the reasons set out above, the Chamber disapproves strongly of the Draft Convention and urges that the Government of India should not be a party thereto.

(Summarised from the Abstract of  
Proceedings of the Bengal Chamber of  
Commerce, Calcutta, for May and June  
1937). +

National Labour Legislation.

The Bengal Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937. †

Reference was made at page 8 of the report of this Office for January 1936 to the intention of the Government of Bengal to undertake legislation for making compulsory the grant of maternity benefits to women employed in the perennial factories of the Presidency, as also to a circular letter that was sent out in this connection by the Government to the industrial interests concerned. Attention is directed to pages 1-6 of Part IV A of the Calcutta Gazette, dated 19-8-1937, where is published the Bengal Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937, to regulate the employment of women in factories for certain periods before and after child-birth and to provide for the payment of maternity benefit to them. Following is the statement of objects and reasons <sup>Appended to</sup> of the Bill:-

In chapter XIV of their Report, the Royal Commission on Labour in India observed that "the time is ripe for the introduction of legislation throughout India making a maternity benefit scheme compulsory in respect of women permanently employed in industrial establishments on full-time processes" and suggested that a more general extension of the schemes already in operation in Bombay and Central Provinces should be made. In these schemes, the entire cost of the benefit is borne by the employers.

In 1932-33, Government examined the Central Provinces and Bombay Acts, but it was then thought advisable to defer the introduction of the scheme. In 1935, Government, however, decided to proceed with the scheme and ascertained the opinion of industries. It was found that there was a general consensus of opinion in favour of the scheme. In September, 1936, accordingly a Bill drafted on the lines of the Central Provinces and Bombay Acts was circulated for the opinion of the interests concerned. The present Bill embodies modifications and suggestions which Government have thought fit to make in the original Bill in view of the opinions received. †

11

The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill, 1937. +

The Hon. Sir Thomas Stewart, Member in Charge of the Department of Industries and Labour, Government of India, introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly on 23-8-1937 a Bill to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923. According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill, a number of ambiguities and minor defects have come to light in recent years in the course of the administration of the Workmen's Compensation Act. A Bill to deal with these was prepared in 1936 and provincial Governments were requested to give it wide publicity and to invite opinions on it. The views received by the Government of India were generally favourable, but certain modifications have been made to meet criticisms received and one of the proposals originally made has been omitted as it formed the subject of a separate Act which was passed during the last Delhi session of the Indian Legislature. The notes on clauses reproduced below explain the purpose of the present proposals in detail. The text of the Bill is published at pages 138-142 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 28-8-1937.

Notes on Clauses.

Clause 2.— The reference is to <sup>the</sup> dependents of a deceased workman and the changes are formal.

Clause 3.— See note on clause 13.

Clause 4.— The change is formal: section 5, as it stands, is not divided into sub-sections.

Clause 5(a).— The clause as it stands at present opens with the words "no proceedings for the recovery of compensation"

These are too wide as they can be read as covering not merely the original application but subsequent proceedings for recovering compensation under Section 31. Thus, for example, when an award for temporary disablement has been secured, the workman may, at a later stage, find it necessary to apply to the Commissioner because the employer has discontinued the payments. The period of limitation prescribed by this clause should be confined to the first application.

The revised clause omits the words "and before the workman has voluntarily left the employment in which he was injured". A workman cannot give notice earlier than is practicable and a second condition is unnecessary or unreasonable.

Finally, the redraft makes it clear that "instituted" refers to claims instituted before the Commissioner. The necessity of making the point clear has arisen as a result of a ruling given by the Calcutta High Court to the effect that "instituted" means instituted before the employer, which has the effect of enabling a workman who has once claimed compensation from an employer to bring a case before the Commissioner without any limitation of time.

(b) (1), (11).— The amendments are verbal and consequential.

(b) (111).— The amendment is desirable because the clause, as it stands, appears to cover only cases where the employer himself had knowledge of the accident. It thus excludes, for example, the case where a manager or other person competent to receive notice under section 10 (2) is aware of the accident.

(c) (1).— The amendment is verbal and consequential.

(c) (11).— The Bombay High Court has ruled that if the first six months' delay is satisfactorily explained no explanation of subsequent delay, however long, is necessary. It is unreasonable that a workman who has a satisfactory excuse for the first six months should thereby be enabled to claim without any limitation of time.

Clause 6.— The object is to cover the case where the workman, although regularly visited by a medical practitioner, deliberately disregards his advice or instructions. Further, the word, "thereafter" is at present misplaced. The point is that the workman should not be penalised in respect of any conduct before the refusal or disregard takes place.

Clause 7.— The sub-section was designed to ensure that the shipowner (who is ordinarily liable under the Merchant Shipping Act for funeral expenses of a seaman) should not be subjected to a further payment<sup>out</sup> of compensation on this account. It is operative only where there are no dependants. In such cases, if the shipowner himself incurs the funeral expenses section 8 (4) protects him adequately; while if some other person incurs the funeral expenses, the sub-section operates to deprive that person of the ordinary right of recovery under section 8 (4).

Clause 8.— This is consequential on the enactment of the Factories Act, 1934.

Clause 9.— The sub-section, as it stands at present, prescribes as a condition for transfer that a party to the proceedings shall satisfy the Commissioner that transfer is proper. This causes difficulty where no parties are present, e.g., where the workman dies in one province and his dependants live in another. The amendment is designed to remove this difficulty.

Clause 10.— Persons other than legal practitioners appearing before the Commissioners under written authorities have victimised or attempted to victimise workers. The proposed change will render it necessary for persons who are not legal practitioners or officials of registered trade unions or officials of Insurance Companies, to obtain the Commissioners' permission before appearing.

Clause 11 (a).— It is doubtful if the clause, as it stands, covers lifts or vehicles propelled by steam or electricity. The amendment is designed to remove any ambiguity which may exist on the point and will bring it the wording in line with that in clause (vi) (a) of the Schedule.

(b).— This is consequential on the enactment of the Factories Act, 1934.

(c) and (d).— These clauses have already been brought within the scope of the Act by notifications. The amendment of the Act offers a suitable opportunity of including them in the Schedule.

Clause 12.— The substantive change proposed is the removal of the condition that a workman who contracts compressed air illness or poisoning by lead tetra-ethyl should have served for the preceding six months under the employer whom he served when the accident occurred. These diseases, unlike most industrial diseases, do not develop gradually and the condition is unreasonable in their case. The opportunity has been taken, in this clause and clause 3 of the Bill, to re-arrange the provisions regarding industrial disease in a more convenient form, and to add formally to Schedule III certain occupational diseases which have already been brought within the scope of the Act by Notification. †



14

The Trade Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1936:

Bill referred to Select Committee. +

Reference was made at pages 14-15 of our August 1936 report to the introduction of the Trade Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1936, in the Central Legislative Assembly on 21-8-1936. On 13-10-1936, the Assembly adopted a motion for circulation of the Bill to elicit opinion thereon (vide pages 7-8 of our October 1936 report). On 24-8-1937, Sir Thomas Stewart, Member in Charge of the Department of Industries and Labour, Government of India, moved in the Legislative Assembly the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee. In doing so, Sir Thomas referred to the volume of opinion which had resulted from the circulation of the Bill and said that the new Clause 6, giving the Governor-General-in-Council the power to declare any strike or lock-out illegal, had attracted the most attention. He admitted that the draft was capable of improvement, but asserted that none will dispute the desirability of provisions to assure a peaceful atmosphere in which to secure effective and prompt settlement of serious industrial disputes. The comparative lull in the industrial warfare in recent years had been rudely disturbed by widespread outbreaks of strikes in the Calcutta jute mills and the Cawnpore mills, which were reminders of the need for arming the Government with effective means of preventing unnecessary disputes.

Prof. N.G.Ranga demands Joint Conciliation Machinery.- Prof. Ranga thought that the Bill sought to deprive the workers of their inalienable right to strike, especially when trade unionism in India was so weak. What was the use of a conciliation board, he asked, when its decisions were not binding on the parties to the dispute? If industrial peace was to be enforced, the right course for the Government would be the establishment of a joint

machinery as suggested by the Whitley Commission or to appoint trade boards such as those existing in England and Australia on which both the employers and the employees were represented. He urged on the Government not to proceed with the select committee stage until January next so that the Government could in the meantime enable the new Provincial Governments to gain experience of conditions of labour in the light of which to make their suggestions.

Mr. Gadgil feared that if the Bill was passed, the power of the workers would be crushed and the Government's object of securing industrial peace would not also be achieved. He agreed that a strike should not be undertaken on petty issues, but even if such strikes occurred, a fully representative conciliation board to settle them was the best course. If as it was professed the intention of the Government was also to help labour then they should not start from the top, but from below.

Mr. Griffiths' Objections to Grant of Power to Executive.-  
Mr. F.J.Griffiths on behalf of the European Group opposed the Government measure as they believed that its provisions were fundamentally dangerous. A Government should not be armed with such powers except in emergencies and at present no such emergency arose. Firstly, the Bill proposed to empower the Government to declare a strike temporarily illegal; secondly, it proposed that a strike or lockout was declared no legal steps should be taken to have the claims of the parties investigated, and thirdly, a vague sort of conciliation machinery was sought to be set up through appointing conciliation officers. The European group radically opposed the first two principles, and as regards the third, they were sympathetic but believed that the objective could not be implemented through the Bill as proposed. He strongly objected to the transfer of power to the executive from courts of enquiry. Even in England where labour was well organised, a provision such as the one proposed was found necessary, but in India, where the workers were ill-organised, in actual practice the proposed provisions would prove most dangerous, and he at any rate believed that the right to strike should be preserved at all costs. In short Mr. Griffiths declared the Bill was a most dangerous one and the conciliation section did not adequately meet the situation.

Mr. N.M.Joshi's Criticism.- Mr. N.M.Joshi stood for industrial peace for all time, but the provisions of the Bill fell far short of the requirement in some respects and went much farther in some other respects. He was for Government's intervention with a view to settle industrial disputes, and it was not difficult to make a provision so as to enable the Government to interfere before actually a strike took place. The provision in the Bill did not throw responsibility on the Government to find out the causes of a likely strike before it actually happened. Only in such cases where a notice was not given should the Government interfere after a strike had commenced. It was no pleasure for the labour to go on strike and experience showed that the workers always suffered more than the employers. And it should

be the Government's aim to provide a machinery whereby justice might be done to all concerned.

Sir Thomas Stewart's Reply to Debate.- Sir Thomas Stewart replying to the debate said that as expected, the criticism was concentrated on section 8, giving the Governor-General-in Council the power to declare illegal for a period of two months any strike or lock-out which was causing prolonged injury or hardship to any section of the community and also on section 11 providing for the appointment of Conciliation Officers. He assured Prof. Ranga that nothing was further from the mind of the Government than the undermining of the Trade Union movement. The Government, as much as Prof. Ranga, realised that the best guarantee against wasteful trade disputes was the establishment of a healthy Trade Union Movement in the country. He appealed to the House to view the Bill as a whole and not to concentrate on provisions distasteful to individual members.

The motion for referring the Bill to the Select Committee was adopted by the Assembly on 25-8-1937.

(The Hindustan Times, 25 & 26-8-37)

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The Burma Code Bill: Labour Section. +

The Burma Government proposes introducing in the forthcoming session of the local Legislature a Bill to re-state the existing laws in Burma with amendments which do not affect the substance. The enactments specified in the Schedule to the Bill with the necessary amendments (indicated in the Bill itself) will become "The Burma Code" when the Bill is passed. The labour section of the "Code" will include Acts corresponding to the following Indian Acts: (1) The Apprentices Act (India Act XIX, 1850); (2) The Children (Pledging of Labour) Act (India Act II, 1933); (3) The Dock Labourers Act (India Act XIX, 1934); (4) The Factories Act (India Act XXV, 1934); (5) The Mines Act (India Act IV, 1923); (6) The Oilfields Act (Burma Act I, 1918); (7) The Payment of Wages Act (India Act IV, 1936); (8) The Workmen's Compensation Act (India Act VIII, 1923); (9) The Emigration Act (India Act VII, 1922); (10) The Trade Unions Act (India Act XVI, 1926); (11) The Trade Disputes Act (India Act VII, 1929).

(Pages 28 to 54 of Part III of  
the Burma Gazette dated 7-8-1937).

The Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Rules:  
Employers in C.P. and U.P. to furnish Particulars  
to Recruits.

The Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India has published at pages 1430-1431 of Part I of the Gazette of India dated 7-8-1937, two notifications (No.L-3030(1) and No. L-3030 (2) dated 30-7-1937) directing that the Rules made by the Governments of the Central Provinces and the United Provinces under the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act, 1932, should be amended so as to make it obligatory on employers to furnish the following details to emigrants:

- (a) the situation of the tea-estate, and the number of days' journey from the depot;
- (b) the nature of work to be done by the assisted emigrant;
- (c) the hours of work per day and the days of rest generally allowed;
- (d) the wages offered;
- (e) arrangements for housing;
- (f) the climatic conditions in terms such as "hot and damp", "temperate and fairly dry", or "dry and cold", for each season of the year;
- (g) the chief diseases from which labourers suffer, e.g., malaria, hook-worm, dysentery;
- (h) the medical facilities and concessions allowed, e.g., free treatment and medicine, allowances while on the sick list and before and after childbirth;
- (i) the estimated cost of living in the tea estate in question;
- (j) the conditions of repatriation with special reference to the definition of emigrant labourer in section 2 (h) of the Act;
- (k) whether there is any prospect of land being granted for cultivation temporarily or permanently."

The Delhi Maternity Benefit Rules, 1937. †

Reference was made at page 14 of our June 1937 report to the publication of the Draft Delhi Maternity Benefit Rules (vide pages 5-6 of our December 1936 report). At page 697 of Part II-A of the Gazette of India dated 14-8-1937 is published under Notification No. 10322 dated 10-8-1937 the final text of the Delhi Maternity Benefit Rules, as approved by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi. The rules stipulate particulars of the Muster Roll to be kept by factories, define the responsibilities of the factory Inspector and his powers, and lay down penalties for employers who contravene the provisions laid in the Rules.

Attention is also directed to Notification No. 10319 dated 10-8-1937 published at pages 675-696 of Part II-A of the Gazette of India dated 14-8-1937 which sets forth certain amendments to be made in Notification No. L-1844 dated 26-11-1936 of the Government of India in the Department of Industries and Labour (vide pages 5-6 of our December 1936 report), which extends the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act to Delhi. †

Repeal of Hazardous Occupations (Lead) Rules,  
1935, in British Baluchistan. †

Attention is directed to page 695 of Part II-A of the Gazette of India, dated 14-8-1937, where is published Notification No. A/51 (27)-Td-(R) 2528-G dated 9-8-1937 re. draft rules proposed by the Chief Commissioner, British Baluchistan, for rescinding the Hazardous Occupations (Lead) Rules, 1935.

Rules re. Utilisation of Fines levied under  
Payment of Wages Act: U. P. Govern-  
ment Notification.

Attention is directed to Notification No.2458-W/C III, dated 22-4-1937 issued by the Chief Inspector of Factories and Boilers, United Provinces, approving provision~~s~~ of medicines, medical attention, house accommodation, educational facilities, recreational facilities and any other welfare work as suitable purposes to which money realised from fines under the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, may be applied, provided that the proceeds shall not be used for the purpose of providing any requirements specified by the Factories Act or the Rules made there under.

(Extracted from page 42 of Part VIII  
of the U.P.Gazette dated 7-8-1937).+

Fineable Offences under Payment of Wages  
Act,1936: U.P.Government Notification. +

Attention is also directed to Notification No.2459-W/C III dated 22-4-1937 issued by the Chief Inspector of Factories and Boilers, U.P., approving the list of acts and omissions in respect of which fines may be imposed on persons employed in factories in the U.P. The list of acts and omissions includes late attendance, damage through neglect and careless conduct, failure to wear tight fitting clothing, breach of ~~n~~ rules, theft or dishonesty, sleeping on duty and smoking in prohibited places.

(Extracted from page 42 of Part VIII of  
the U.P.Gazette dated 7-8-1937). +

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Conditions of Labour.

Elimination of Women from Underground Work  
in Mines: Plea for Higher Wages for Male Workers. +

In the course of an editorial article under the caption: "Women in Mines" published in the April 1937 issue of the Bulletin of the National Council of Women in India attention is directed to the fact that great hardship will be occasioned to women excluded from underground work in mines. The article deplores the absence of practical schemes to ~~the~~ provide the excluded women with alternative forms of employment, so that they may not be made the helpless victims of a well-meant reform. It suggests that a way out of the difficulty is to increase the wages of the male miners. It says: "We have suggested before this, on more than one occasion, that a minimum wage law even at the cost of legally increasing the price of coal would help in this direction. The question is whether this would be approved of by the various interests concerned. During the B.N.Railway strike the majority of consumers had to pay a higher price for coal. To the best of our knowledge this did not cause either a financial crisis or a social upheaval. It may therefore be assumed that a slight compulsory addition to the price of coal, would be tolerated by the consumers. Salt, sugar or matches can stand such loading in price. Coal is equally a necessity with a fairly inelastic demand. Then why can we not load the price of coal? Surely revenue for the State is morally not a stronger justification than the demands of humanity!"



Basis of Payment of Weavers' Wages in  
Bombay Mills: Legalising Payment on "Nominal" Basis.

The attention of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, was drawn in June 1937 to the practice of calculating rates of payment for weaving on "nominal" weight instead of on "actual" weight prevalent in several mills and that it was probably illegal under the Payment of Wages Act. It was suggested, in this context, that matters might be set right by mills paying by the piece.

The suggestion was considered by the Labour and Technical Advisory (Managers) Sub-Committee, which felt that the system of payment per piece would be simpler than a per pound basis. The Sub-Committee was, however, not in favour of making a sudden change in the existing system, and therefore, suggested that mills paying on a per pound system might switch over to the per piece system, if, in their opinion, such a change was considered desirable. With regard to the question as to whether payment on the basis of "nominal" weight was illegal under the Payment of Wages Act or under the Bombay Weights and Measures Act, the Sub-Committee held that the position could be set right by making it clear in the rates-board that the wage rates were for "nominal" weight of the piece. Mills paying on a piece basis should, it was further thought, make it clear that the dimensions of the piece were only "nominal."

The Association agreed with the recommendations made by the Sub-Committee, and all members of the Association were advised to add the words "nominal weight" or "nominal measurement", as the case might be, on the rates-board posted in the Weaving Departments.

(Summarised from the Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Committee of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, during July 1937). +

Cawnpore Textile Strike: Settlement Arrived at. +

A big strike involving nearly 40,000 workers in the Cawnpore textile mills was in progress since the middle of July 1937 as a protest against recent cuts in wages of mill hands. Starting with the Juggilal Kamlapat Jute mills, Cawnpore, on

19-7-1937, the strike soon spread to other mills, the main demand of the workers being the restoration of the 1933 level of wages. Attempts were made by the Chief Minister and Minister in Charge of Industries and Labour, U.P. Government, to bring about a settlement of the dispute, but since the workers refused to agree to any settlement which did not restore the 1933 level of wages no solution could be reached.

A lengthy communique was issued by the Government of the United Provinces on 7-8-1937 reviewing the labour trouble at Cawnpore, and stating that the Government has decided to appoint a committee of enquiry to investigate and report on the relations of employers and labour and the conditions of labour in Cawnpore. The Government appealed to all concerned for cooperation, but felt that the committee cannot embark on investigations in an atmosphere surcharged with unrest and disturbance.

Mainly as a result of the intervention of Mr. Govind Ballabh Pant, the Chief Minister, however, a settlement was arrived at on 9-8-1937 on the following basis:

1. The Mazdoor Sabha shall be recognised by the mill-owners as a duly constituted organisation to represent the factory labour of Cawnpore.
2. There shall be no victimization of workers for ~~the~~ active participation in strike or in normal union activities.
3. The mill-owners shall take steps to stop bribery, maltreatment and dismissal by jobbers.
4. Wage rates shall be displayed in the mills and the rates for each variety and count shall be made known to each worker before he is required to begin work on that particular variety or count.
5. Each worker shall be supplied with a card showing the rates of wages for each variety and the total produce of the same to be stated indicating the total earning.
6. Wages shall be distributed to the workers one by one

and each worker shall be given opportunity to examine the coins and money received by him.

7. There shall be no overtime work without payment.

8. All workers joining work within five days of the opening of the mill shall be employed.

9. The existing practice, according to which wages are distributed in one or two days fortnightly, shall be maintained wherever it obtains at present, and as regards other mills wages will be paid up in not more than three consecutive days every fortnight.

10. All notices issued by the company shall be written and placed on its notice board.

11. There will be no work on Sundays during the pendency of the enquiry and the question ~~as to~~ whether Sundays should be observed as holidays after the completion of the inquiry, irrespective of any holiday in the week, shall also be referred to the committee of inquiry. In the meantime the question may be further discussed between the Millowners' Association and the Mazdoor Sabha and whenever they agree any mill may be worked on any Sunday even during the pendency of the inquiry. The provision that no work need be done on Sundays during the pendency of the inquiry should not prejudice the inquiry into the question for the future.

12. The question of short shifts and the proposal that every worker shall be continuously employed for ten hours with an interval of one hour shall also be referred to the committee of inquiry.

13. Workers dismissed during the last two months for participating in strikes or other trade union activities shall be reinstated in their original posts.

14. No wage cuts, direct or indirect, nor any further intensification shall take place pending the report of the committee of inquiry.

15. If any dispute arises regarding the execution of the terms of this agreement, it will be referred to a committee of inquiry to be appointed by the Government.

16. There shall be no strike without due notice and none during the pendency of inquiry.

17. The Mill-owners will not make any rule prejudicial to the general conditions of labour without reasonable notice to the Mazdoor Sabha.

18. An Inquiry Committee consisting of one representative of the Mazdoor Sabha, one representative of the Employers and such number, not exceeding three, as may be nominated by Government shall be appointed to enquire into: -

- (a) The question of wage cuts,
- (b) The percentage of increase in wages in case the wage cut is established,
- (c) The question of increase in wages in case they are found to be too low irrespective of whether or not there has been a wage cut,
- (d) The schemes of intensification of labour introduced or intended to be introduced by the millowners and ways and means of safeguarding the rights of workers in this connection,
- (e) The general condition of labour in factories,
- (f) the working of the jobber system and the advisability or otherwise of abolishing the same,
- (g) the question of emergency leave with pay for fifteen days in a year.

(The committee to submit its report within two months of the date of appointment).

19. The strike will be called off and labourers shall return to work by Tuesday morning (Aug. 20).

20. The above agreement shall apply to all the mills and mill workers in Cawnpore.

The terms of reference to the committee of enquiry is to be settled by the Government and it will be open to them to refer any matter or matters besides those mentioned above to the said committee.

(The Leader, 9 & 13-8-1937)

The Enquiry Committee to inquire into the Cawnpore labour dispute, announced by the Prime Minister, U.P., on 7-8-1937, has since been appointed with Babu Rajendra Prasad (<sup>an</sup> ex-Congress President) as president and Sir Tracy Gavin Jones, President, Millowners' Association (employers' representative), and Pandit Harihar Nath Shastri, M.L.C., (labour representative) as members. The first informal meeting of the Committee was held at Lucknow on 30-8-1937 to consider the terms of reference of the Committee.

According to the Associated Press of India, the following, among others, are likely to be included in the terms of reference:

(1) Whether wage cuts have taken place directly or indirectly, and if so where and to what extent?

(2) In case any such wage cut is established whether there should be any increase in wages, and if so, what?

(3) How the present rates of wages in Cawnpore compare with those prevailing elsewhere in India, and whether, taking also into consideration the profits made by the mills and the cost of living in Cawnpore, they should be increased; if so to what extent?

(4) Is it desirable to prescribe any minimum rate of wages for any class of labour in Cawnpore, and if so, what should such rate be?

(5) What is the most suitable arrangement for shifts to enable a factory to continue working as long as it desires to do so without unduly inconveniencing the labourers?

(6) Whether schemes of rationalization and intensification of labour have been, are being or are intended to be introduced; if so, on what lines and what are the effects of such schemes on the labourers as regards their earnings, health, efficiency, etc.?

(7) What abuses, if any, are associated with the present system of supervision, recruiting, suspending and dismissing of labourers, and what steps should be taken to remove the same?

(8) What days, if any, should be observed as holidays in factories in addition to or in lieu of Sundays.

(9) On what terms should emergency leave be granted in the case of (a) piece workers and (b) time workers?

(10) Are the general conditions of labour in the factories satisfactory, and what, if any, improvements are needed?

(The Statesman and the Hindustan Times,  
31-8-1937.) +

Leave Rules in Ahmedabad Textile Mills:

Results of Bombay Labour Office Enquiry.

During 1936, the Labour Office, Bombay, conducted an inquiry into the system of granting leave to workers obtaining in the cotton textile mills in Ahmedabad city. The enquiry covered all the 75 cotton textile mills working in the city. A report of the findings of the enquiry is published at pages 865-868 of the Labour Gazette, Bombay, of July 1937.

The report deals with questions pertaining as leave with pay, authority that grants leave, lack of definite rules and uniformity in system of leave passes, reinstatement after leave without permission, penalties to be imposed on workers who quit service without notice, length of notice period and cuts in wages for unauthorised absence.

(Labour Gazette, Bombay, July 1937). +

Leave Rules for Workers in Bombay Textile Mills:

New System of Devised by Millowners' Association. +

The following information about the regular leave facilities made available to the textile mill operatives of Bombay is taken from a press summary of a Note on the subject issued by the Millowners Association, Bombay.

The note classifies operatives employed in Bombay textile mills in three main categories, *vide*, (a) those who have permanent homes in Bombay, (b) those who have a semi-permanent abode in Bombay and (c) pardeshis (foreigners) who have permanent houses in up country distant places. The first class of workers takes leave frequently for comparatively short periods of a few days upto two or three weeks. The second class of operatives takes leave slightly less frequently, but usually requires a month to

six weeks' holiday every year or every other year. The Pardeshis take leave far less frequently, but usually require two to three month's holiday at a time.

Regularisation Leave.- The Association, bearing in mind the recommendations of the Whitley Commission, has devised a leave procedure under which the reasonable requirements of workers are being met. Under this system, any worker going on authorised leave is enabled to retain a lien on his appointment during the period of his leave and is reinstated in his old post provided he returns in time. When a man goes on authorised leave, he is given a printed slip bearing his name and giving particulars as to the length of leave granted. The leave pass is now printed on white paper and the discharge pass on pink paper, with the result that even an illiterate worker at once realises whether ~~ix~~ he has been given the correct pass.

Standing Orders under Payment of Wages Act, 1936.- According to the new Standing Orders which meet the requirements of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, non-urgent leave for short periods may be given at any time, but where long leave of a non-urgent character is required the workman is required to give notice to the management two or three days in advance. Such notices from the workers are received only on specified days each week. This enables the management to decide from an examination of the worker's previous leave records whether the worker is entitled to leave and also enables satisfactory arrangements to be made regarding the worker's leave pay and the engagement of a substitute to act for him. In urgent cases, managers have been given full discretion to grant leave with the formality of previous notice. The leave procedure permits the manager of a mill to grant leave in excess of two months' time. This new procedure is really designed for the benefit of Pardeshis. Under the Standing Orders, Jobbers have no authority whatsoever to grant either oral or written leave.

Abolition of Oral Leave System.- New orders have abolished the system of oral leave. Various steps have been taken for impressing on the workers that they should not go on oral leave. The most important are those taken by the Government Labour Officer who issues printed cards at his ~~nightly~~ office, which among other things warn the workers about the danger of accepting oral leave, and by the Millowners' Association, which through the medium of its monthly Marathi magazine, "Girni Samachar", constantly brings to the notice of the operatives the cases in which the acceptance of oral leave has involved hardship and the correct procedure which should be followed when leave is required.

(Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Committee during the month of July 1937 and the Bombay Chronicle, 28-7-1937). +

Working of Maternity Benefits Act in Bombay Presidency,

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According to the Note on the working of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act in Bombay Presidency during 1936 appended to the Annual Factory Report for 1936 of the Presidency, maternity benefits returns were received from all, except two, of the factories amenable to the Act. Despite a decrease of 4,485 in the number of women employed, out of 44,171 women workers, 4,256 were paid maternity benefits for actual births, an increase of 465 in the number of claims paid. The rate per 100 women employed increased from 7.9 to 9.75. A sum of Rs. 103,931 was paid in benefits. The average benefits paid per claim was Rs. 25-14-9 in Bombay City and Rs. 25-9-6 in Ahmedabad. As the maximum that may be obtained is Rs. 28, which may be earned if a woman absents herself for four weeks before confinement, it is clear that most women are availing themselves of this, privilege, and that the slightly reduced amounts claimed are due more to bad estimating than to any other cause. The Act provides for the benefit to be paid in one of three ways, but the report points out that it is to the women workers' greater advantage that the privilege of taking four weeks' benefit when leaving work should be exercised by greater numbers of <sup>them</sup> ~~women workers~~. There was an increase of 133 in the number of women in Bombay who received benefit in this way, and a somewhat disappointing reduction of 57 in the number in Ahmedabad, where the absence of doctors in a number of mills prevents a wider use of the privilege. It is however alleged that the women there prefer to obtain a lump sum some time after the event. The system was introduced in a few districts where it was not formerly in use. Out of 4,296 who received maternity benefits, 1793 claimed and were paid pre-maternity benefits. +

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\*Annual Factory Report - Bombay Presidency, 1936 (including a Note on the Administration of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act. Bombay. Printed at the Government Central Press, 1937. Price - Annas 2 or 3 d. pp. 51



Holidays with pay for Workers:

Views of G. I. P. Union, Bombay. \*

The Government of India had circulated a letter on 14-6-1937 to Provincial Governments to elicit the views of industrial interests regarding the action the Government proposed to take on the Convention re. annual holidays with pay (vide page 52 of our July 1937 report). Below is given a summary of the views of the G.I.P. Railway Union, Bombay, on the subject.

"The Union regrets to note the inability of Government to ratify the Geneva Convention on the subject, not on grounds of fundamental principles, but on the administrative impracticability of the statutory application of its provisions.

While the actual provisions for leave in the Draft Convention do not go far enough and fall short of the provisions re. leave in Government offices and State railways, still their application is most necessary in the various undertakings mentioned in the Convention, specially those, which involve continuous processes and do not come under the provisions of the Factory Act for a weekly holiday, and also such other undertakings to which the Factory Act or any other statutory provisions do not apply, as in the case of building and road construction. Public services run by private enterprise also do not enjoy the privilege of leave with pay as in the case of the Bombay Electric Supply and Tramway Company employees, and it is therefore necessary to introduce a uniform statutory obligation on all employers to provide for a minimum annual leave with pay.

In order to have uniformity in the provision of rules throughout the country, the desirability of all-India legislation on the subject cannot be over-emphasised. The initiative in this matter has been with the Central Government, and if it enacts legislation on the lines of the Convention, even in the absence of ratification, it would go far towards bringing relief to workers which is much needed and long over-due.

The Union considers the provision of 6 days' annual holiday with pay, recommended by Article 2 of the Convention totally inadequate. The clerical staff in railways at present enjoy 10 days' casual leave and one month's privilege leave with full pay, and inferior staff enjoys leave with full pay ranging from 10 to 20 days every year, besides 17 public holidays in the workshops. The Union has, however, been all along demanding two months' privilege leave, besides casual leave, sick leave, bank holidays and Sundays. The Union is, therefore, of the opinion that this provision should be altered to suit the demands of the workers.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 20<sup>0</sup>-8-1937.) \*

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Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act  
in Bihar, 1936. +

According to the annual report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bihar during 1936, published by the Government of Bihar, there were 212 deaths, 111 cases of permanent disablement and 4,453 cases of temporary disablement in respect of which compensation was paid during the year, and a sum of Rs. 236,668-1-3 was paid as compensation to the dependants of deceased workmen and to workmen permanently and temporarily disabled. Out of this, a sum of Rs. 151,360-7-0 was paid through the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation, and a sum of Rs. 185,307-10-3 was paid by employers direct. Of the total amount of Rs. 236,668-1-3, a sum of Rs. 139,209-15-0 was paid as compensation for cases of death, a sum of Rs. 40,937-15-0 for cases of permanent disablement and Rs. 56,518-3-3 for cases of temporary disablement. There was no case in which minors were involved, as also, no case of occupational disease during the year under review.

28 compensation cases were pending at the commencement of the year, 243 cases were filed before the Commissioners and 50 were received for disposal from other Commissioners, thus bringing the total number of cases to be disposed to 321. Of this, 15 were transferred to other Commissioners for disposal, 270 cases were disposed of without notice to the other party and 36 were pending at the close of the year.

(Extracted from the review (Government of Bihar, Revenue Department, No.1061-Com.Dated 29-7-1937) of the report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bihar during the year ending 31-12-1936 submitted by the Offg. Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar to the Department of Industries and Labour, Government of India.)

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in  
Madras Presidency, 1936.\* +

Returns under Section 16.- In 1936 the number of establishments in the Madras Presidency in which were required to submit returns under Section 16 of the Act included 1,584 factories, 308 mines, 421 estates, 258 establishments producing

\* Government of Madras -Development Department -G.O.No1347 dated 15th June 1937 - Report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act 1923 for the year 1936. - pp.11.

and exhibiting cinema pictures, 50 establishments generating, transforming and supplying electrical energy and 17 other establishments. Returns were not received from 407 establishments.

Statistics of Accidents and Compensation.- Accidents were reported in 223 returns. 26 cases of death, 57 cases of permanent disablement and 1,301 cases of temporary disablement were reported in these 223 returns, as against 45 cases of death, 58 cases of permanent disablement and 1,090 cases of temporary disablement reported in the previous year. The compensation reported to have been paid in cases of death, permanent disablement and temporary disablement was Rs. 15,712, Rs. 16,473-12-6, and Rs. 15,746-10-4 respectively. The figures for the previous year were Rs. 25,280, Rs. 16,003-7-10 and Rs. 10,239-9-7 respectively. Compensation was not paid in 2 cases of death, 1 case of permanent disablement and 17 cases of temporary disablement. In one of the two cases of death, the accident to the workman did not arise out of his employment; in the other case, the compensation was deposited with this Court in 1937.

Number of Cases Filed.- The number of cases pending at the commencement of the year was 32. The total number of cases filed, and transferred to this Court for disposal by other Commissioners during the year was 190 as against 192 cases filed and transferred during the previous year. Of these 222 cases, 186 cases were disposed of during the year and 36 cases were pending at the close of the year. 28 of these pending cases have since been disposed of.

General.- The usual permission was given to the Calcutta Claims Bureau to submit returns on behalf of employers who had insured their liabilities with Insurance Companies who were members of the Bureau. The total number of employers, on behalf of whom the Insurance Companies which are members of the Bureau submitted returns, was 150.

(The working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in the Madras Presidency in 1935 was reviewed at pages 19-20 of our August 1936 report.) †

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bengal, 1936.\* †

General Remarks: The Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation in Bengal in his annual report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in the Province during 1936 states \*Government of Bengal, Commerce Department. Annual Report on the Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bengal during the year 1936. Superintendent, Government Printing, Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal, 1937. Price - Indian Annas 2; English 3d. pp.12

that the year under report was one of further expansion. The total number of applications filed under various sections during 1936 went up to 1,332, recording an increase of about 28 per cent. over the figure for 1935.

During the year under review, 227 reports under section 10A were received, in 158 of which, employers deposited compensation on being served with the statutory notice, while in the rest liability was denied on various grounds, the commonest being "accident due to added peril and not arising out of deceased's employment." Where the circumstances stated did not appear to warrant a denial of liability, steps were taken to trace the dependants of the deceased, who were advised as to their rights under the Act. It is pointed out that every employer liable to pay compensation to his workmen is not required to submit to the Commissioner reports of fatal accidents. Evasion in this respect is quite simple, particularly in the building trade.

A large number of applications were received during the year for compromises of cases formally pending. Approval was ~~is~~ accorded in all cases in which the settlement proposed did not appear to violate the principle laid down in section 17 which specifically forbids contracting out with a view to evade or reduce statutory liability.

Statistics of Accidents and Compensation: According to 1,954 returns received during the year, there were 696,240 adult workers and 16,999 minors employed in factories, railway workshops, tramways, ports and mines. During the year there were 328 accidents resulting in death, 357 in permanent disablement and 4,347 in temporary disablements (including 8 cases of minors) in respect of which compensation was paid. An amount of Rs.208,522 was paid in respect of deaths, Rs. 78,882 in respect of permanent disablement and Rs. 50,033 in respect of temporary disablement. A sum of Rs. 30 was paid in respect of 8 cases of temporary disablement of minors.

Cases Filed: 59 cases were pending at the commencement of the year and 668 cases were filed during the year. 2 cases were received from other Commissioners for disposal and 39 cases were transferred to other Commissioners for disposal. 461 cases were disposed of and 268 cases were pending at the close of the year.

Occupational Disease: The only occupational disease in respect of which claims were instituted pertained to "lead poisoning." The year opened with one such application pending from 1935, while two others were filed during the year. Of these three applications, compensation was awarded in two, one remaining pending at the close of the year. The report states that there is evidence that lead poisoning is far more common than these figures would suggest.

(The working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bengal in 1935 was reviewed at pages 22-23 of our August 1936 report.)

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act  
in C.P. and Berar, 1936\* +

Award of Compensation under Section 10.- The year opened with 25 pending applications, 15 of which related to fatal accidents, 9 to permanent disablement and 1 to temporary disablement. During the year 25 applications were filed, of which 13 related to fatal accidents, 11 to permanent disablement and 1 to temporary disablement. One was received by transfer. 4 were dismissed for non-appearance, 3 were summarily dismissed, 5 were admitted by the opposite party, 17 were allowed in full or in part after contest and 14 dismissed after contest. One was disposed of by transfer. 7 applications were pending at the close of the year.

Deposits under Section 8.- 6 proceedings were pending from the previous year, 30 were filed during the year under report and 2 were received from other Commissioners. 24 were disposed of and 14 remained pending. 2 applications for deposit under section 8(2) were filed and disposed of during the year.

Employers' Returns under Section 16.- According to the annual returns furnished by the employers, there were 282 cases of accidents for which compensation was paid during the year. Of these, 18 resulted in death, 52 in permanent disablement and 212 in temporary disablement. The compensation paid was Rs. 7,253-9-0 for fatal accidents, Rs. 5,449-0-3 for cases of permanent disablement and Rs. 4,797-3-2 for cases of temporary disablements. No minor was involved in accidents and no case of occupational disease was reported.

It is remarked that the working of the Act, is on the whole, satisfactory and that annual returns are not received punctually from the owners of factories and mines and are still incomplete. 7 returns were received from ~~the~~ Insurance Companies on behalf of their clients.

The working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in C. P. and Berar was reviewed at pages 15-16 of our July 1936 report.

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\* Report on the Administration of the Workmen's Compensation Act (VIII of 1923) in the Central Provinces and Berar during the calendar year 1936.-Nagpur: Govt. Printing, C.P. & Berar. 1937.- Price Annas five. -pp.9 +

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

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

Bombay.- The index number (Base: July 1914) of the cost of living for working classes in Bombay in May 1937 remained unchanged at 104. The average in the year 1936 was 102.

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

Sholapur.- The index number (Base: year ending January 1928) of the cost of living in Sholapur remained stationary at 73. The average for 1936 was 71.

Nagpur.- The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in May 1937 fell by 1 point to 62.

Jubbulpore.- The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in Jubbulpore in May 1937 rose by 1 point to 60.

(Extracted from the May 1937 issue  
of the Monthly Survey of Business  
Conditions in India). ↓

Wages in Bombay Mills: Efforts of Millowners'  
Association to Standardise Earnings.

The Millowners' Association, Bombay, in the course of a statement issued to the press on 22-7-1937 states that, in the middle of 1934, it fixed minimum wages which member mills were compelled to pay for the more important time-work occupations. As regards piece-workers, a minimum dear food allowance was fixed, and provision was also made to prevent any interference in a downward direction with basic rates. In addition, steps were taken to deal with the situation which would arise after the

introduction of the shorter working week which had the effect of ensuring a continuance of the same level of earnings for time workers as were then in force for the 60-hour week.

It is pointed out that there are still differences in the earnings of particular classes of <sup>workers</sup> ~~workers~~ from mill to mill owing to a variety of technical causes and differences in individual efficiency, but it is the policy of the Association to reduce the disparity by increasing the earnings in those mills in which wages are below the general average. The Association has, however, been unable to devise measures which would compel non-member mills to fall in line with member mills. The result is that in the few non-member mills which remain in Bombay the earnings of the workers are considerably below the average wages paid in member mills.

(The Times of India, 22-7-37). †

Working Conditions in Ceylon: Report of

Controller of Labour, 1936.\* †

The Administration Report of the Controller of Labour, Ceylon, for 1935, is divided into two parts; the first contains a general review of working conditions in Ceylon and the second deals with the conditions of life and work of Indian immigrant

\* Part I - Civil (O) - Administration Report of the Controller of Labour for 1936.-August, 1937.-Printed on the Orders of Government. -To be purchased at the Govt. Record Office, Colombo- Price 50 cents. 1937. - pp.0 44.

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labour in the island.

Labour Legislation.- A preliminary draft of a Bill to make provision for the safety and welfare of workers in factories, workshops, and mines was considered by the Executive Committee during the year. Various amendments were decided ~~on~~ and these are being incorporated in a new draft Bill. The Committee was assisted in its deliberations by the advice of a technical advisory committee, consisting of the Factory Engineer, the Harbour Engineer, and the Mechanical Engineer, Ceylon Government Railway.

Ordinance re. Employment of Women in Underground Work.- A new draft Ordinance embodying the provisions of the convention concerning the employment of women on underground works in mines was approved by the Executive Committee and introduced into the State Council. Proposals contained in the Report of the Joint Committee on the employment of women and children, issued as Sessional Paper II of 1935, were considered and it was agreed that with certain amendments the recommendations should be followed.

Appointment of Conciliation Officer.- A proposal to amend ~~the~~ Ordinance No. 3 of 1931 so as to give the Controller of Labour power to appoint any suitable person as conciliation officer for the purpose of inquiring into and, if possible, settling industrial disputes in their early stages was approved by the Executive Committee.

Unemployment Relief.- The sum of Rs. 300,000 provided in the 1935-36 for Unemployment Relief Works was found to be insufficient and a supplementary sum of Rs. 45,000 was obtained. (For fuller details about unemployment relief activities see pages 71 - 71(c) of section "Employment and Unemployment" of this report).

Industrial Disputes.- 3 minor industrial disputes, involving about 1,300 odd workers, occurred during the period under review. No strikes or lockouts were reported from Government departments employing large forces of labour. Personal relations between planters and labourers continued to be good and no strikes or lockouts were reported. Contractual relations between planters and Indian labourers continued to be good. Desertions were very few.

Trade Unions.- Under the Trade Unions Ordinance of 1-11-35, 28 unions were registered during the year under review. A proposal to amend the Ordinance so as to prohibit any union from taking part in a strike during the three months allowed for registration was approved by the Executive Committee.



Workmen's Compensation.- During the year under review there was a considerable increase in the number of cases coming before the Commissioner. The larger employers, the Colombo agency firms and insurance companies showed themselves ready to meet their obligations and generally to assist in carrying out the provisions of the Ordinance. Two Trade unions took a keen interest in the settlement of workmen's compensation cases, and it would appear from the number of petitions for compensation from injured workmen, that the latter are becoming increasingly aware of the benefits provided by the Ordinance. There is still abundant opportunity for Trade Union officials and social workers to acquaint the more ignorant and illiterate workmen with the rights to compensation.

Returns furnished by employers showed that 1,622 returns were received of which 1,045 were "nil" returns. The total number of accidents shown in the returns was 2,963 of which 71 resulted in death, 68 in permanent disablement, and 2,824 in temporary disablement. The amounts of compensation paid in respect of these accidents were Rs. 60,102.28, Rs. 20,013.74, and Rs. 39,262.12, respectively.

Indian Immigrant Labour.- Part II of the report deals with the conditions of life and work of Indian immigrant labour. The subjects dealt with are the activities of the Board of Indian Immigrant Labour, Statistics relating to immigration of Indian labourers, ~~to and from Ceylon~~, issue of recruiting licences, repatriation and conditions of labour in Ceylon estates under the heads of health and vital statistics, education, liquor consumption, crime, savings, estates of deceased Indians and inspection.

Figures re. Migration of Indians to Ceylon.- The number of arrivals in 1936 was 137,961 (97,158 unassisted immigrants and 40,803 assisted estate labourers) as compared with 147,447 (104,429 unassisted immigrants and 43,018 asx assisted estate labourers) during the last year. The decrease in the number of assisted labourers arriving in Ceylon in 1936 was due to poor demand for labour by the tea and rubber industries.

Emigration of Indians from Ceylon.- During 1936, the number of Indians who left Ceylon for India was 145,289 (39,747 estate labourers and 105,542 others) as against 152,755 (43,036 estate labourers and 107,719 others) in 1935. The numbers of Indians repatriated under Ordinance No.1 of 1923 and the scheme of 1924 at public expense during 1936 <sup>was</sup> 5,396 as against 6,252 in 1935.

Special Scheme of 1935. - The number of Indian labourers repatriated under the special scheme of 1935 was 902 during the year under report. As it became apparent at the end of the year that there was a considerable surplus of labour on tea estates due chiefly to the closure or partial closure of estates which had sold their coupons and the surplus seemed to be increasing, steps were taken at the end of the year to close the 1935

scheme and substitute a fresh scheme offering repatriation at the expense of the Immigration Fund to any labourers reported by a Superintendent of a tea estate to be surplus to his requirements; this was to be known as the 1937 scheme.

Population and Vital Statistics.- According to the half-yearly returns furnished by Superintendents of estates, the mean population of Indian labourers on estates was 665,000 in 1936, as against 679,201 in the previous year. At the beginning of 1936, the population was 673,686 consisting of 214,097 men, 204,658 women, and 254,931 children. This fell by the middle of the year to 662,242 (207,842 men, 201,082 women, and 253,318 children) and by the end to 658,982 (206,405 men, 199,439 women, and 253,138 children). Thus a fall of 11,444 was experienced during the first half of the year and a further fall of 3,260 during the second half, the population at the end of the year being 14,704 below that at the beginning.

The births registered during the year numbered 25,181 (12,764 male and 12,417 female), as against 25,759 in 1935, the decrease being 2.2 per cent. The birth rate for the year was approximately 37.9 per 1,000 of the mean population being the same as the rate for the previous year. The birth rate among the total population of the Island for the year 1936 was 34.1. During the year 12,891 deaths (6,316 of males and 6,575 of females) were registered among the Indian labourers on estates, as against 18,133 in 1935. The decrease in mortality during the year was, therefore, 5,242, or 28.9 per cent. As in previous years the number of deaths among females was greater than among males. The death rate for the year was approximately 19.4 per 1,000 of the mean population, as against 26.7 in the previous year and 21.8, the rate for the entire population of Ceylon in 1936. ~~The~~ noteworthy feature of the death rate among Indian labourers on estates for 1936 was its close proximity to the low rates of 1932 and 1933 which were disturbed in the two subsequent years by the epidemic of malaria. In recent years this rate has fallen below the Island rate, showing better conditions of health on estates than elsewhere in Ceylon.

Medical Facilities.- There are 70 Government Hospitals in the planting districts, including 4 infectious disease hospitals at Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Galle, and Badulla, and 107 dispensaries where Indian immigrant labour is employed. There are 53 midwives employed in these hospitals and 56 under Health Units situated in the planting districts. There are 85 estate hospitals and 733 estate dispensaries.

Wages.- At the beginning of the year 1936 the legal minimum rates of wages applicable for a working day of 9 hours including time not exceeding 1 hour taken for the midday meal were as follows:

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Children</u>
	A. P.	A. P.	A. P.
Up-country -	7 10	6 3	4 8
Mid-country -	6 11	5 7	4 0
Low-country -	6 7	5 3	3 10

with the issue price of rice at a rate not exceeding Rs. 4.80 per bushel. These rates are still in force.

Education.— The total number of registered Estate Schools at the end of September, 1936, was 653, as compared with 608 at the end of September, 1935. The total number of estate children of school-going age for 1936 was 72,858 (males 41,882, females 30,976) of whom 39,647 (males 28,407, females 11,240) were attending school — a percentage of 54.42. The corresponding figures for 1935 were 72,924 (males 42,159, females 30,765) of whom 37,958 (males 27,283, females 10,675) were attending school — a percentage of 52.19. 53 schools which satisfied the required conditions were registered for grant during the year. Five schools were closed and 3 schools were classified as ordinary Vernacular Schools.

Housing.— The following return illustrates the position of estate housing for 1936 in the various planting districts as regards tea, rubber, cacao, cardamoms, and coconut estates employing Indian labourers:

Number of estates employing Indian labourers	..	1,585
1. Number of estates for which statistics have been secured.	..	1,561
2. Number of Indian labourers employed and resident on these estates.	..	462,546
3. Number of Indian labourers employed by these estates but not resident thereon	..	1,573
4. Number of unemployed young and aged dependants of Indian labourers on these estates.	..	200,772
5. Number of non-Indian labourers employed by and resident on these estates.	..	24,120
6. Number of non-Indian labourers employed by these estates but not resident thereon.	..	32,427
7. Number of unemployed young and aged dependants of non-Indian labourers on these estates.	..	10,461
8. Number of permanently built labourers' rooms on these estates.	..	214,296
9. Number of permanently built labourers' rooms on these estates constructed or fully reconstructed after January 1, 1922.	..	185,565
10. (a) Cost or present value of all the permanently built labourers' rooms on these estates.	Rs	79,017,123
(b) Cost or present value of the permanently built labourers' rooms constructed or fully reconstructed after January 1, 1922, on these estates.	Rs	69,967,372
(c) Cost of rooms built during 1936 on these estates.	Rs	901,191 +

(The Administration Report of the Controller of Labour for 1935 was reviewed at Pages 29-34 of our July 1936 Report.)

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Demands of Bombay Workers:

Comprehensive Social Legislation Urged.

A meeting of labourers and peasants of Bombay was held at Bombay on 15-8-1937, Mr. N. M. Joshi, M.L.A., presiding. The meeting was held under the joint auspices of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress, the Bombay Kisan Propaganda Committee, the Committee of the National Federation of Trade Unions and the Bombay Students' Federation with a view to formulate the demands of the workers and peasants, and to present them to the Congress Ministry, as also to demand the restoration of full civil liberties from the Ministry. The meeting was addressed among others by Shrimati Maniben Mulji and Messrs. R. R. Bakhale, J. Bukhari and Maulana Abdul Bari.

The following omnibus resolution was adopted by the meeting:

"This meeting congratulates the Bombay Ministry upon its action in removing the restrictions on some of the printing presses, newspapers, organisations, individuals and the release of some of the prisoners, but the meeting regrets to find that the restrictions on all of them have not yet been removed, and all prisoners who have been convicted of political and labour activities have not been released. The meeting hopes that the Ministry does not intend to make discrimination on the ground of class or creed. This meeting, therefore, urges the Ministry to take immediate steps to remove the restrictions placed upon the presses, individuals, organisations and literature on the ground of their political and labour activities and opinions. This meeting also urges the repeal of all repressive legislation passed by the local legislatures and cessation of action being taken on central repressive legislation."

Legislation for Industrial Workers: The meeting urged upon the Ministry the necessity of introducing legislation to secure for industrial workers:

- (A) Social insurance providing protection against (a) sickness, (b) old age, (c) invalidity, (d) death, and (e) unemployment;
- (B) Reduction of hours of work to 48 a week;
- (C) Minimum wage legislation;

- (D) Provision of housing by Government and local bodies;
- (E) Holidays with pay.

Peasants' Demands: The necessity was also emphasised of introducing legislation to secure for peasants: (a) Remission of arrears of land revenue of small peasant proprietors and arrears or rent of small tenants, (b) Moratorium of debts of small peasants, tenants and agricultural labourers till effective steps are taken for final liquidation and settlement of debts, (c) Freedom from attachment of property of small peasants, tenants and agricultural labourers upto the value of Rs. 2,000 and (d) Abolition of all objectionable systems of land tenures.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 17-8-1937.) +

Plight of Shop Assistants in Ahmedabad:

Demands Presented to Bombay Ministry. +

The Gumasta Hitwardhak Sabha (Association of Shop Assistants), Ahmedabad, in a representation to the Bombay Ministry, in the first week of August 1937 points out that the condition of shop assistants in centres like Bombay, Ahmedabad and Surat is highly deplorable. In the absence of regulations, merchants vie with one another in early opening and late closing of shops. Shop assistants, as a result, have to attend at 7 a.m. and keep on working till 11 p.m., or even later, without a reasonable interval for meals.

Charter of Demands: The Sabha, in the course of the representation, demands that the following concessions, namely, one holiday per week, observance of shop hours from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. only, one month's notice before discharge from service, one month's pay as bonus in the year, regular annual increments in pay, prohibition of child labour and provision for provident fund, should be embodied

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in a Bill regulating conditions of work of shop assistants  
and that it should be introduced at an early stage in the  
Legislature.

(The Times of India, 11-8-1937.) †

Enforcement of Conventions.

Factory Administration in Madras Presidency, 1936.\*

Statistics of Factories.- According to the report on the Factories Act, 1934, in the Madras Presidency during 1936, the year opened with 1,560 factories under the operation of the Act. 142 factories were brought on the register during the year. 65 factories were struck off the registers during the year. The number of factories on the register at the end of the year was 1,651. Of these, 1,584 were in commission during the year as against 1,491 in 1935, the remaining 67 being closed for various reasons. Of the 1,584 factories in commission, 1,032 were perennial and 552 seasonal.

Number of Operatives.- The average daily number of operatives employed in the 1,584 factories during the year was 170,800 as against 162,745 in 1935. Of these 5,416 operatives (5,408 in perennial and 8 in seasonal) were employed in Government and Local Fund factories and the rest in private factories. 57,356 operatives were engaged in the cotton spinning and weaving industry during the year and 5,970 were employed in jute spinning and weaving mills.

Number of Women, Adolescents and Children.- 44,115 women, 7,584 adolescents and 5,257 children were employed in the registered factories during the year. Practically every adolescent worker was declared fit for adult's work. It is pointed out that the necessity for the classification: "adolescents" is not very great in the light of the fact.

Certification of Children and Adolescents.- The number of certificates issued during the year was 19,977 as against 34,949 in 1935.

Inspections.- Out of the commissioned factories, 347 were inspected once, 744 twice, 333 thrice and 114 more than three times. The total number of inspections by all Inspectors including 713 made by Additional Inspectors was 3,316 as against 3,137 in the previous year. 46 out of 1,584 factories in commission were not inspected during the year.

Wages.- A comparison of the rate of wages for 1935 and 1936 shows that in respect of skilled labour there has been a slight increase in the case of firemen, turners, machinists, blacksmiths, compositors, weavers and spinners in cotton and

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\* Report on the working of the Factories Act in the Madras Presidency for the year 1936 - Madras: Supdt., Govt. Press. 1937 - Price 8 annas.-pp.32

jute mills and decrease in the case of engine drivers, oilmen, fitters, riveters, boiler-smiths, moulders and carpenters. For unskilled labour the wages of both male and female coolies in jute and cotton presses, those of female agricultural labourers, the wages of male and female coolies in ginning factories and the wages of female coolies in rice mills, all show a fall.

Health, Welfare and Education.- During the year under report the health of operatives was generally good and no epidemic was reported from any of the factories during the year. Cleanliness of factory premises and their surroundings was fairly well maintained. 18 houses for Europeans and Anglo-Indians were constructed in the Locomotive Running Shed, Saltair. In Madras jute mills most buildings with thatched roofs were converted into tiled roof buildings, and 41 new buildings to house 700 workers were constructed, 200 quarters were built for accommodating the workers in the Trichinopoly Mills, Ltd.

Educational facilities were continued during the year. In the elementary schools more accommodation was provided for pupils.

Besides the usual medical facilities in tea estates and large industrial concerns, tiffin sheds were provided in one cotton mill, creches were provided in three coffee factories, while in one tea factory children were fed free of cost every day.

Hours of Employment. -(i) Rest Interval. - The rest interval of one hour prescribed by section 37(a) of the Act was observed by 1,472 factories. 3 factories in Madras, 1 in Malabar, 3 in the Nilgiris, and 1 in Trichinopoly district availed themselves of the provisions of section 37 (b) of the Act. Exemption from section 37 applicable to the majority of operatives was availed of by 32 factories on the usual condition that sufficient time though not a fixed period, was allowed for meals. Returns were not received from 72 factories.

(ii) Weekly Holiday.- Sundays were observed as holidays in the case of ~~28~~ 698 factories. Substituted holidays were granted in 781 factories in lieu of Sundays worked. Exemption from section 35 had been availed of in 33 factories subject to the condition that no person would be allowed to work for more than 13 days without a holiday for a whole day. Returns were not received from 72 factories.

(iii) Weekly Hours. (a) Perennial Factories.- The number of perennial factories in which the normal weekly hours were not above 42 was 71 for men and 118 for women; above 42 and not above 48 was 153 for men and 50 for women; above 48 was 765 for men and 574 for women. The 30-hour week for children was observed in 271 factories.

(b) Seasonal Factories.- The number of seasonal factories



in which the normal weekly hours were not above 48 was 34 for men and 64 for women; above 48 and not above 54 was 98 for men and 88 for women; above 54 was 391 for men and 295 for women. The 30-hour week for children was observed in 9 factories.

Accidents.- The total number of accidents reported during the year showed an increase from 1,605 to 1,861 mainly due to the increase of minor accidents in the railway workshops and an increase in serious accidents in miscellaneous factories. All serious accidents were carefully enquired into by the Inspectors of Factories. In textile mills, workers continued to take risks with moving machinery in spite of all warnings. Of the 1,861 accidents, 11 were fatal, 499 were serious accidents and 1,351 were minor accidents.

(The report on the working of the Factories Act in the Madras Presidency for 1935 was reviewed at pages 36-39 of our August 1936 report).

#### Factory Administration in Bombay, 1936.\*

According to the Annual Report on the working of the Factories Act in the Bombay Presidency during 1936, the figures relating to Sind have been excluded from the statistics for the year under report, as Sind was separated from the Bombay Presidency from 1-4-1936. They have also generally been excluded from the figures for 1935 where comparisons have been made.

Number of Factories: Factories subject to the control of the Factories Act increased from 1,743 to 1,879. 186 factories were added to the Register whilst 50 were removed. The number of factories that actually worked was 1,611 compared with 1,499 (excluding Sind) in the previous year. Of these 952 were perennial and 659 were seasonal. 237 of the perennial and 582 of the seasonal concerns were connected with the cotton industry.

\*Annual Factory Report - Bombay Presidency, 1936 (including a Note on the Administration of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act. Bombay - Printed at the Government Central Press, 1937. Price - Annas 2 or 3d. pp. 51

Number of Operatives: The number of operatives employed in all industries based on the annual returns received from the factories, and including an average of the operatives working on night shifts in the textile factories, was 391,771 compared with 399,919, (excluding Sind), last year. There was a decrease in the number employed on the day shifts in the Ahmedabad mills owing to the stopping of a few mills, but this was more than compensated by an increase of night shift working. There was a decrease in Bombay on both day and night shifts and a decrease in the mofussil mills owing to a cessation of night shift working, but there has been an increase in employment in the textile industry recently. The employment figures for the textile industry showed that 80,280,279 adult shifts were worked compared with 84,419,004 last year.

Employment of Women and Children: The following table gives information regarding the women and children employed in the last five years:-

Year.	Women.			Children.		
	Bombay.	Mofussil.	Total.	Bombay.	Mofussil.	Total.
1932 ..	29,916	44,061	73,977	114	2,678	2,792
1933 ..	22,456	43,702	66,158	62	2,050	2,112
1934 ..	22,195	43,748	65,943	44	2,103	2,147
1935 (excluding Sind)	26,378	40,136	66,514	69	1,396	1,465
1936 ..	23,990	38,662	62,652	38	884	922

689 female adolescents, not included in the above, were employed in factories.

Inspections: Of the 952 perennial factories which were in commission, 173 were inspected once, 288 twice, 175 thrice and 281 more than three times while 35 were not inspected. Of the 659 seasonal factories, 363 were inspected once, 212 twice, 49 thrice and 12 more than three times, while 23 were not inspected.

Accidents: During 1936, 7,043 accidents were reported (43 fatal, 1,680 serious and 5,320 minor) as against 6,825 in

the previous year (36 fatal, 1,689 serious and 5,100 minor). The rate per 100 persons employed rose from 1.62 to 1.79.

Housing: The Corporation of Bombay has sanctioned, as a part of the slum improvement scheme, the construction of 150 semi permanent rooms at a cost of Rs. 75,000. These rooms will shortly be built and will house those at present living in insanitary rooms belonging to the Municipality or to private parties on Municipal lands. About 120 factory hands and labourers in tanneries will directly benefit. The Municipality have also recently constructed 550 semi-permanent rooms and propose to construct a further 150 to replace old corrugated iron sheds in course of demolition. The cost of this scheme will be nearly Rs. 300,000 and will very materially improve the housing of the working classes in the north of the island where the need has been greatly felt. Some of the tenements erected by the Millowners' Housing Society in Ahmedabad are still unoccupied.

Crèches: A detailed enquiry was undertaken in Bombay as a result of a resolution in the Municipality requesting Government to apply compulsion in the matter. Despite the expenditure of a great deal of time, thought, and money, the response from factory women has not been altogether encouraging, and a lot of the time of the Inspectress has, from the start of her engagement, been devoted to overcoming prejudices. The enquiry incidentally revealed that a high percentage of the women workers in the mills in Bombay are widows whilst the fact, noted in connection with the payment of maternity benefits, that the birth rate amongst textile women in Bombay is comparatively low was confirmed.

(The Annual Factory Report of the Bombay Presidency for 1935 is reviewed at pages 44-46 of our July 1936 report). +

Industrial Organisations.Employers' Organisations.44th U. P. A. S. I. Conference, Coonoor, 1937. +

The 44th annual general meeting of the United Planters' Association of Southern India was held at Coonoor on 5 and 6-8-1937 under the presidentship of Mr. A.W.F.Mills, Chairman of the U.P.A.S.I. The Conference was attended in addition to members of the Association by His Excellency the Governor of Madras, ~~and~~ The Hon. Mr. V.I.Muniswami Pillay, Minister in Charge of Agriculture with the Madras Government, both of whom addressed the Conference.

Presidential Address.- Conditions in the tea, rubber and coffee industries were the principal subjects dealt with by Mr. Mills in the course of his presidential address.

Importance of Agriculture.- Stressing the importance of agriculture to the province, Mr. Mills said that agriculture is the world's largest industry, and if all agricultural interests would act in concert for peace and security, no evil influence would or could withstand it. Nothing of this nature can be obtained easily; it must start small and grow. He suggested that they can start by affiliating themselves to all agricultural associations in South India which work for the good of agriculture in whatever form it may take. Their real interests are identical, and such a combination, growing gradually as similar industrial organisations have grown, will wield such power in its own province that it would take its rightful place in influencing the whole trend of local government, and so, eventually, of the government of the whole country.

until 1940, it was not likely the Government of India would do anything in the nature of a breach of that agreement. The position had yet to be put before the International Rubber Regulation Committee for their judgment. Without that judgment, any agitation with the Government of India appeared ill-founded and likely to defeat its own object.

The Hon. Mr. V.I. Muniswami Pillay, in the course of his speech, appealed to the planters to ameliorate the conditions of the workers.

He said:

"It is a fact that, some twenty-five years ago, the position of labourers was appalling, but today, I know, due to the sympathetic treatment on the part of the planters themselves, the conditions under which their labourers live and work have been vastly improved, and all the complaints we heard of twenty-five years ago have vanished. Still, I appeal to planters that what yet remains to be done in the way of giving further facilities to their labour will be attended to, as well as to the estates' staffs, that is to say, those other than labourers."

Resolutions were passed making certain amendments to the Articles of Association of the U.P.A.S.I. and empowering the Executive Committee to establish a Labour Department of the Association.

Labour Department Meeting.— A meeting of the subscribers to the present Labour Department of the United Planters' Association of Southern India was held at Coonoor, on 5-8-1937 with Mr. S. Thomson, in the Chair. The meeting was held to discuss the expansion of the present Department and to decide the basis of the cess in order to run the Department.

The Chairman explained that the object of the meeting was to consider the future working of the Labour Department on the basis of the replies received to a questionnaire which had been sent out, and invited the opinion of the members present. Mr. E.H. Francis pointed out that an efficient Labour Department was more necessary now than ever. He said: "We foresee a shortage of labour in the near future. The labour market, like all other markets, is subject to fluctuations and we have reasons to believe that there are difficult times not far ahead. Again, considering the political aspect under the new Constitution, it is possible that we shall have to combat hostile propaganda and we shall need a Department if this condition arises. It is highly desirable that we should be

The Tea Industry.- Reviewing the position of the Indian tea industry, Mr. Mills said that the Indian Tea Control Act for 1938-43 was of such importance to the industry, and to large and small growers alike, that anything which might prevent its becoming law would be most serious. He hoped they would continue to receive all the support previously given to them by the Madras Government and from the States of Travancore, Mysore and Cochin. Another serious problem to be faced was the continuation, or failure, of some form of control over the sale of tea in India. The increase in the consumption of tea in India during the last five years was so satisfactory that to risk its ordered progress seemed to be unwarranted. But adherents of the present scheme could not be expected to continue their sacrifice unless support was almost unanimous. Two of the great obstacles to this support were the fear that control, ~~in~~ whatever form it took, would not be flexible enough, and that the transfer and sale of quotas, as carried out at present, led to practices that were harmful to the industry.

The Coffee Industry.- Coffee, he said, was in a precarious position and planters were seriously concerned over ways and means for ~~future~~ further scientific work, especially on quality, and also for its propaganda campaign. Discussions were now in progress which hoped to overcome these difficulties, but the active support of those Governments chiefly concerned was very necessary and essential.

The Rubber Industry.- The free imports of raw rubber from Burma into India was certain to produce conflicting views. In view of the Trade Agreement between India and Burma being in force

able to assure Government that we have an efficient organisation to look after the welfare of the labourers on their way to and from the villages."

Mr. Mills said that he was of the opinion that labour problems were going to be difficult. He asked whether the Labour Department could take up some other work in the way of ascertaining the economic conditions of the cooly in the villages, and what were the attractions offered in Ceylon and Malaya. There was going to be counter propaganda in the villages. It was necessary to find out if the local zamindars or others were opposed to labour going up from the villages, and it was essential for estates to advertise what they had to offer in order to attract labour. If the economic conditions in the villages were such that the present pay and conditions on estates were not attractive to the cooly, then he would refuse to go to the estates. Mr. Mills suggested that the Labour Department should give such services, which he thought would be of very much value to the industry at large, rather than the great deal of individual work that was being carried out now.

Mr. Langley said that from a political aspect a Labour Department was indispensable. "You will realise that within the next one month or two, when once the new Government in all Provinces in India and particularly in our own Province at Madras have got to work, we may be startled at some of the proposals which will inevitably be put forward by the Madras Government in view of the advanced views on the subject of labour which are held by a certain member of the new Madras Cabinet. They have actually appeared in the Legislative Assembly and have shown their general attitude towards the political problems of today. As it is, from the political aspect alone, the Labour Department would be absolutely essential, in fact the only justification of the existence of the U.P.A.S.I."

(The Hindu, 5-8-1937 and the Planters' Chronicle dated 21-8-1937). +

Employers' Association of Northern India:

New Organisation formed at Cawnpore. +

Representatives of 22 industrial concerns of Cawnpore met at Cawnpore on 2-8-1937 and formed an Employers' Association of Northern India, there being "ample scope for such an Association not only in Cawnpore but throughout the whole of Northern India." The newly-formed Association will interest itself mostly with labour problems as they affect the employer. According to a Press Note issued by the Secretary of the Association, the affairs of the Association will be conducted by a managing committee consisting of representatives of the Juggilal Kamlapat group of mills, the British India Corporation, Begg, Sutherland and Company, the Swadeshi Cotton Mills, the Mair Mills, Atherton, West and Company, the New Victoria Mills and smaller industries. The committee was duly elected at the meeting and given full powers to deal with all matters connected with labour conditions. Mr. H.W.Morgan has been appointed secretary to the Association.

At a meeting of the managing committee held immediately after its formation, Sir Tracy Gavin Jones, representative for smaller industries, was elected to be its chairman. Cotton and jute textile sub-committees were appointed to deal promptly with questions affecting labour in textile mills.

(The Statesman, 4-8-1937). +



Workers' Organisations.

The Andhra Provincial Agricultural Labourers'

Conference, Nellore, 1-8-1937. ←

An Andhra Provincial Agricultural Labourers' Conference was held at Nellore on 1-8-1937 with Mr. M. N. Roy as president. Mr. V. Raghaviah, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of his speech, advised agricultural workers and peasants to join the Congress as the peasants' and labourers' organisations in the country were not yet strong enough to make much headway in the national struggle without the support of the Congress. Mr. Raghaviah also said that the relationship between the peasants' associations and those of <sup>agricultural</sup> labourers was a thorny subject on which they had to concentrate. It was high time that <sup>agricultural</sup> the labourers organised themselves effectively.

In the course of his presidential address Mr. Roy said that the problems that confronted ~~the~~ agricultural labourers could not be solved unless the general problem of land ownership in the country was approached from the proper stand-point and solved. That was the task of the peasant movement that was fast developing in all the provinces. The problem before the organisers of the peasant movements, he said, was no doubt the struggle between the peasant on the one side and the land-lord on the other. But the peasantry as a whole was not a homogeneous unit. While being exploited by the landlords, the peasant masses were themselves divided into various groups mutually antagonistic and have ~~mutually~~ diverse interests. Should a movement demanding

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~~rent and a~~ reduction in rent and revenue be started, the ryots would enthusiastically join it, while should they be asked in return to deal humanely by the labourers under them, they would not join the organisers. He said that this was a short-sighted policy and emphasised the necessity for small peasant proprietors and agricultural labourers to work in concert and to organise themselves into strong unions.

The Conference adopted six resolutions unanimously. One appealed to all labourers to join the fight for national independence under the banner of the Congress. Another affirmed that it was necessary and desirable to bring about association of and concerted working between the petty peasants, tenants and agricultural labourers. A third demanded fixity of tenure, the liquidation of agricultural debts, the setting up of cultivating peasants' committees for regulating the supply of water, the adoption of collective farming with interest-free capital and with free seed and manure supplied by the State, the adoption of various measures of relief and the abolition of various inequitable laws and rules. Still another resolution urged the Ministers to conduct an enquiry into the conditions of the agricultural labourers. Other resolutions related to the immediate local needs of the labourers.

(The Hindu, 4-8-1937.) +

Progress of Trade Unionism in India, 1935-36\* ←

Registered and Unregistered Trade Unions.- As in previous years the statistics accompanying this note relate only to trade unions which (a) are registered under the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, and (b) have submitted returns. Registration under the Act is not compulsory and the number of unregistered unions is large. According to the Bombay Labour Gazette for February 1937, there were, in Bombay (excluding Sind) on 1-12-1936, 99 unions with a membership of 88,191, of which only 43 with a membership of 75,084 were registered.

The report states that the Registrars of trade unions experienced difficulties in collecting the returns.

Statistics of Unions and Membership.- The number of registered unions increased from 213 in 1934-35 to 236 in 1935-36, of which 205 (against 183 in the previous year) submitted returns. The number of registered trade unions increased in Bengal, Bombay, Burma, the Central Provinces, Delhi, and the United Provinces. There was no change in Ajmer-Merwara, Bihar and Orissa, Madras and the Punjab. As in previous years, the group containing the largest number of unions was that with a membership of 100 to 299.

The total membership of the unions which submitted returns was 268,326 as against 284,918 in the previous year. This represents an average membership of 1,309 per union during 1935-36, as against 1,557 during the previous year. There were decreases in recorded membership in Bengal, Bombay, Madras and the Punjab. In Bengal, the decrease in membership was due to the decision of several unions to enforce the payment of subscriptions and to remove habitual defaulters. The fall in the Punjab was primarily due to a decrease of 13,679 in the two biggest unions, viz., the North-Western Railway Union and the North-Western Railway Industrial Workers' Union. In Bombay, decreases occurred in the membership of unions under the heads "Railways and Transports other than Tramways", "Docks and Port Trusts" and "Seamen".

Organisation of Women Workers.- The number of women who are members of registered trade unions increased during the year under report from 4,837 in 1934-35 to 7,309. The figures for 1935-36 amount to 2.7 per cent of the total membership of those trade unions which submitted returns as compared with 1.4 per cent for the previous year.

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\* Note on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926 during the year 1935-36 with comparative statistics for 1934-35 and 1935-36.-Published by the Manager of Publications, Delhi. 1937.-Price Annas 8 or 10d.

General and Political Funds.- The total income and the balances in hand rose from Rs. 528,697 to ~~528~~ Rs. 528,712 and from Rs. 569,981 to Rs. 587,092 respectively. The average income for 1935-36 was Rs. 2,591 per union and Rs. 2-2-9 per member, as compared with Rs. 2,920 and Rs. 1-13-8 respectively in 1934-35. As in the previous year, the disparity between the actual income from subscriptions and that which would have accrued on the basis of the prescribed membership rates was very marked in some cases. In the Punjab, the income from membership fees, etc., of the North-Western Industrial Workers' Union, Lahore, with 23,852 members was only Rs. 373, and the income derived from 35,227 members of the North-Western Railway Union was Rs. 5,874. In Bombay, the figures of "unpaid subscriptions due" to the Bombay Girni Kamgar Union (Red Flag), Bombay, and the National Seamen's Union of India, Bombay, are particularly striking. The total assets of the former union were almost equal to the unpaid subscriptions due, while out of Rs. ~~Rs.~~105,000 which represented the assets of the latter union Rs. 103,000 were stated to be unpaid subscriptions. Some unions had either deficits or a nil balance (4 in Bombay, 9 in Bengal and 6 in the Punjab).

In Bombay, the National Union of Railwaymen of India and Burma was the only union to maintain a political fund and had a balance of Rs. 37. Among the Federations, the Punjab Labour Board, Lahore, and the Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad (Bombay), maintained political funds with a balance of Rs. 150 and Rs. 21,714 respectively.

Withdrawals and Cancellations.- 33 unions ceased to exist or dissolved or had their certificates of registration cancelled during the year-6 in Bengal, 14 in Bombay, 4 in Madras, 6 in Punjab and one each in the United Provinces, Central Provinces and Delhi.

General Remarks. -The Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, remained unchanged during the year. In Bengal, an appeal under section 11 of the Act against the refusal of the Registrar to register the Inland Steam Navigation Workers' Union was preferred in the Calcutta High Court. The Registrar held that the union was really the "Rivers Steam Navigation and India General Navigation and Railway Companies Workers' " registered Union seeking registration under a different name after it had been declared an unlawful association and refused to register the union. In compliance with the directions of the High Court the application of the union was reconsidered and the union was registered.

(A copy of the "Note on the Working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, during the year 1935-36" was forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute D.1/956 /37 dated 19-9-1937).

(The Note on the Working of the Indian Trade Unions Act during 1934-35 was reviewed at pages 54-57 of our July 1936 report)

Intellectual Workers.

Salaries of Non-Gazetted Officers in Madras:

Memorandum submitted to Prime Minister.

A deputation on behalf of the Non-Gazetted Government Officers' Association, Madras, led by Mr. A. Hameed Hasan, waited on the Prime Minister, Government of Madras, on 20-8-1937.

Memorandum Submitted: The memorandum presented by the deputation to the Prime Minister pointed out that the non-gazetted officers, who form 98 per cent of the public servants, are distributed among three grades: (1) those receiving Rs. 100 or more per month—10,000 or 9.6 per cent of the total number of non-gazetted officers; (2) those receiving less than Rs. 100 but not less than Rs. 35 per month—29,000 or 27.9 per cent of the total number of non-gazetted officers; (3) those receiving less than Rs. 35 per month—65,000 or 62.5 per cent of the total number of non-gazetted officers. It was pointed out that 90.4 per cent of the non-gazetted officers draw a pay which is less than Rs. 100 per month. Even those 10,000 officers who draw a pay of more than Rs. 100 per month have secured their present salary after long years of waiting, toil and service.

Demands Formulated: The memorandum demanded (1) the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the constitution, scales of pay, etc. of the subordinate services; (2) the replacement of the existing pension system by a suitable provident fund system; and (3) the provision of adequate safeguards against avoidable injustice to the members of the sub-ordinate services.

Prime Minister's Reply: The Prime Minister in his reply stated that he had no cut and dried scheme on the subject at present, and that his Cabinet was considering the desirability of suggesting to the Services a voluntary surrender of a portion of their pay. On the subject of pension versus provident fund, the Prime Minister declared that he was not very much in favour of replacing the system of pension by a provident fund.

(The Hindu, 20-8-1937.) +

Economic Conditions.

Help for U. P. Cottage Industries:

Report of the Inquiry Committee Published. +

The Inquiry Committee, which was appointed in pursuance of a resolution of Khan Bahadur Maulvi Fasihuddin, adopted by the United Provinces Legislative Council in April, 1934 (vide page 65 of our April 1934 report), to draw up a practical scheme for the development on co-operative lines of cottage industries, such as, cotton, silk and dhurrie weaving and leather manufacture in rural areas, submitted its report in the middle of July 1937. The salient features of the report are summarised below:

State Aid to Selected Cottage Industries.- The Committee has advocated direct State aid to selected cottage industries for (i) developing production, i.e., improving the technique of manufacture, use of improved appliances and the introduction of new and better designs, (ii) the supply of raw material (iii) finance and (iv) the marketing of the finished product. It has selected the following cottage industries for intensive assistance: Textiles, leather, glass, brassware, locks, toys, basket-making, oil-pressing, and ghee making.

Cottage Industries Board.- In the opinion of the Committee, the cohesion and public spirit required for co-operative production would grow only after experience and, to begin with, there should be no hesitation in making a start with groups of individual workmen and in arranging for their technical guidance and marketing of products. For this purpose, the Committee has recommended the constitution of a small body called Cottage Industries ~~Board~~ Board to be composed of the Director of Industries and Commerce, as chairman, with the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, a nominee of the Government to represent cottage industries, a nominee of the U.P.Co-operative Societies, a nominee of the U.P.Co-operative Union, a member of the Legislative Council (to be nominated by the Government) and a nominee of the Board of Industries, U.P., as members.

The Committee has expressed its inability to submit a detailed scheme for the development of cottage industries on co-operative lines. Such schemes, in the opinion of the Committee, would best be prepared by departmental officials, specially deputed for surveying the industries concerned. They can be examined by the proposed Cottage Industries Board.

(The Statesman, 20-7-1937) +

Bombay Budget Proposals for 1937-38:

Nationalisation of Public Utility Services Contemplated\*.

The Hon. Mr. A.B.Latthe, the Finance Minister of the Bombay Government, placed before the Bombay Provincial Assembly on 17-8-1937 his budget proposals for 1937-38; this is the first budget of the Province since the introduction of provincial autonomy. Below is given the budget at a glance:

Budget for 1937-38.

Revenue Receipts	...	...	Rs. 119,955,000	
Revenue Expenditure	...	...	Rs. 121,722,000	
		Revenue Deficit	...	Rs. 1,767,000
<hr/>				
Capital and Debt Head Receipt	...	...	Rs. 141,807,000	
Capital and Debt Head Expenditure	...	...	Rs. 145,357,000	
		Capital and Dead Heads Deficit	...	Rs. 3,550,000
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Main Features of Proposals.—The main features of the budget proposals are as follow:

- (a) Deficit of Rs. 1.7 millions.
- (b) No additional taxation.
- (c) Immediate relief to ryots by: (1) Rs. 1 million for water supply in villages; (2) Land revenue remission to the extent of Rs.500,000; (3) Reduction in land revenue assessment to the extent of Rs. 500,000; (4) Abolition of grazing fees (Rs.500,000); (5) Rs.150,000 for development of cottage industries.
- (d) Rs.40,000 for education of Harijans (depressed classes);
- (e) Drastic retrenchment: Rs. 1 million cut in expenditure on contingencies and allowances including over Rs.100,000 in Ministers' salaries, etc.
- (f) Government to purchase for their requirements only products of village industries.
- (g) Spinning to be introduced in jails.
- (h) Future plans:- (1) More drastic retrenchment. (2) Total prohibition. Rs. 200,000 for preparing for it in three typical areas. (3) Complete overhaul of education system. (4) Nationalisation of public utilities, including electricity and motor transport. (5) Exemption of uneconomic holdings from land revenue. (6) Graded tax on larger agricultural incomes. (7) Tax on incomes from alienated lands. (8) Tax on the rich. (9) Turf Clubs not to be

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\*Speech of the Hon. A.B.Latthe, Finance Minister, introducing the Budget Estimates for 1937-38 of the Government of Bombay in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, the 17th August 1937.



permitted to exploit love of betting in India for benefit of horse-breeding and jockeying in England, Australia or Arabia.

Cottage Industries.— The Finance Minister, in the course of his speech remarked that hand-spinning and hand-weaving as cottage industries are only next in importance to agriculture, but that there are other industries as well which have fair prospects in the villages. The Government has already been taking steps so that as far as possible, the stores which its Departments have to purchase shall be Swadeshi (Indian made) preferably manufactured in villages, and that the cloth required shall be hand-spun Khadar. Government also proposes to introduce hand-spinning in the Jails. Purchases of stores like cloth, paper, etc., by the Government amount annually to about Rs. 900,000 and the decision to confine these purchases to the products of cottage industries may reasonably be expected to stimulate these industries to some extent.

Plans for introducing improved methods of extracting vegetable oils and for making bangles, for tanning, and for several other schemes are under consideration by the Government.

Nationalisation of Utility Services.— "There is one other direction" Mr. Latthe said, "in which Government's activities must be extended for the purpose of augmenting its resources. There are many public utility services which are at present being utilised for the benefit of a few at the cost of the community as a whole. There is no reason why the State should not nationalise these activities and appropriate the profits for the good of the community as a whole. The supply of electricity, for instance, to the public is carried on at present by private agencies under the protection which Government alone can give on behalf of the public. There is no valid reason why the profits of this public utility activity should not return to the pockets of the public as a whole through its accredited agency, the Government. Nothing has been hitherto done in this direction. Many other potential sources of income which could fairly be taken up by Government remain unutilised or are allowed to be exploited for the benefit of a few. There is a large field which we must explore, to which State activities could be extended, and Government will look forward with confidence to activities of this nature as possible sources of public benefit."

Future Policy re. Taxation.— As regards fresh taxation as a source of additional income, the Finance Minister said that the first step to be taken is to make the necessary adjustments in the incidence of the existing taxes. As regards the land tax, for example, the ultimate object is to cease taxing the uneconomic holdings in which the land is at present divided. To begin with, however, it is thought necessary to introduce a graded tax on the large agricultural incomes. Through a process of the expropriation of the actual cultivator, a considerable portion of the

lands has passed into the hands of non-cultivating, rent-receiving, absentee landlords. The question is, are their incomes, large or small, to be treated in respect of immunity from or reduction of taxation in the same way as the actual cultivator of the soil? Then there is a large class of incomes derived from alienated lands. These incomes are putting this province to an annual loss of Rs. 7 millions nearly. Such resources as will become available by the adoption of a policy of higher taxation on landed incomes which could bear the burdens should, it is thought, be largely utilised for making the burden of land tax easily bearable by the actual tillers of the soil and for making their lives better. Inquiries regarding the result of a graded tax on higher and equitably taxable agricultural incomes have already been set afoot.

#### Bihar Budget Proposals for 1937-38.

The Hon'ble Mr. Anugraha Narayan Sinha, the Finance Member, Bihar Ministry, presented in the Bihar Legislative Assembly on 23-8-1937 the budget proposals of the Government of Bihar for the year 1937-38. The main features of the budget are (1) a total estimated revenue for 1937-38 of Rs. 50.6 millions (2) a total expenditure of Rs. 50.334 millions. It is proposed to impose an entertainment tax which, together with enhancements of rates of non-judicial stamps, is expected to yield Rs. 400,000. Increased taxation of agricultural incomes is expected to yield from Rs. 3 to 4 millions.

Rural Indebtedness and Land Reforms.- In the course of his budget speech, the Finance Minister, referring to the prevalence of unemployment and indebtedness, said that in the fore-front of all problems which confront the country today is the problem of the appalling poverty, unemployment and indebtedness of the peasantry who form the mass of the Indian population. While the final solution of this as of many other problems can come only after the attainment of independence by the people, immediate

relief is urgently called for. The Ministry is earnestly devoting itself to the formulation of schemes and devising of ways and means to give the relief needed and in time these measures and schemes will be duly placed before the House. The problem is a vast and many-sided one and an easy and complete solution is not possible in the course of a few days or even months. Much of the trouble of the peasantry is due to an antiquated system of land tenure and a radical treatment must proceed on the basis of a thorough overhauling of the existing system. There are too many intermediaries and very often he who labours has little or no interest in the land that he tills. As things go in Bihar, the product of the soil is divided in unequal proportions among those who live on it and neither the State nor the actual cultivator profits by it to the extent they deserve. There are many holdings which are really uneconomic and yet rent is realised in full. There are others which leave no margin to the cultivator who has consequently to live by borrowing and his debt goes on accumulating from year to year without any prospect of this debt being liquidated even in distant future.

Unemployment.- Mr. Sinha also drew the attention of the House to the question of unemployment which he said is assuming serious proportions of late. There is chronic unemployment among large numbers in the rural areas. That problem was serious enough. The new problem of unemployment among the educated classes is complicating matters and making the situation worse. There is a close relationship between the educated and the uneducated unemployed and the two questions can only be solved together and not separately. The unemployment in the rural areas is really a consequence of the absence of village and cottage industries. If these industries can be started and developed, a whole army of educated men would be required to organise them and to train up the workers as also for the proper marketing of articles manufactured in the rural areas. As a matter of fact, every measure for improvement of rural conditions will also be a measure for relieving unemployment among the educated classes. Increase of educational facilities, development of works of public welfare, e.g., sanitation, co-operation, communication, irrigation, etc., all these will absorb an increasing number of educated men. That will be the only effective way of solving the question of unemployment among the educated classes. It is a regrettable fact that as a rule very few children of the soil get any employment either in the general line or on technical side in the industrial concerns of the province. Steps have already been taken in the past to induce the owners or managers of these concerns to give employment to the young men of Bihar province and a number of them have also got employment as a result of these efforts. The Ministry intends to pursue this policy with greater vigour. Difficulties have often arisen in the past in the way of employment of Bihar educated young men due to the absence of technically qualified men among them. Such difficulties must be removed and the Ministry are closely considering the question of training young men for employment in various departments where technical qualifications are required,

by the grant of stipends. Various comprehensive schemes for achieving this object are under consideration and examination in consultation with experts.

Vocational Education.- The whole system of education, general as well as technical and vocational, the Minister declared, requires thorough remodelling so as to fit in with the present day requirements and the ideas and aspirations of the people. A good deal of waste is at present taking place. Bihar, specially, cannot afford it, as the province is poor in material resources. The health of the students must be improved, they must be intellectually fitted to engage in beneficial activities — beneficial to themselves and to their fellowmen in the province and outside. Above all, suitable opportunities must be found for them to usefully employ their talents, whether for earning their own livelihood or for advancing the country's good.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika,  
24-8-1937) +

Educated Unemployment in the Punjab:Economic Enquiry Board to Collect Statistics. +

A press note dated 9-8-1937 issued by the Punjab Government states that the Board of Economic Enquiry, Punjab, (vide page 67 of our April 1937 report) is about to commence an investigation to ascertain what percentage of village youths who have passed the Matriculation, School Leaving Certificate and higher examinations (a) live in villages (i) with definite employment, and (ii) without employment; and (b) live in towns (i) with employment, and (ii) without employment.

It is pointed out that in the first instance, enquiries will be confined to the districts of Lyallpur and Hoshiarpur. The investigators will first ascertain the facts relating to 30 to 40 individuals typical of each year from 1926 to 1936. Next, villages will be selected at random in each of the two districts and information taken from each person living there who has passed at least the matriculation examination.

(The Hindustan Times, 11-8-1937)+

Collection of Statistics of Employment:Views of Millowners' Association, Bombay. +

At pages 42-44 of the report of this Office for May 1937 reference was made to the circular letter issued by the Government of India to all provincial Governments on the subject of collecting statistics bearing on middle-class employment. The

Committee of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, was recently requested to express its views on the following points: (a) whether it was desirable to collect the statistics suggested, and (b) whether central legislation should be introduced for this purpose.

The Committee in its reply stated that it had no serious objections to urge against the proposal to introduce legislation on an all-India basis, but it definitely considered that the statistics, if collected, would serve no useful purpose. In its opinion, it was not theoretical qualification alone which determined suitability for employment; very often, young men with practical experience in mills had been found to be more capable from the point of view of mills than people with theoretical experience only. So far as the collection of statistics from the cotton mill industry was concerned, it was pointed out that cotton mills were at present compelled to furnish more detailed information than any other industrial undertakings. The Committee, therefore, emphasised the desirability of any enquiry which might be undertaken by Government in future being made as simple as possible involving very little clerical work.

( Summarised from the Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Committee of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, during July 1937). +

Unemployment among Lawyers :

Suggestion for Provident Fund Scheme. +

The Bar Association, Kumbakonam, Madras Presidency, has referred the question of finding ways and means to ameliorate the general condition of the members of the Bar and combat unemployment and under-employment among them to a select committee.

Twenty members of the Bar had asked the Secretary of the Association to convene a meeting of the general body to consider the present deplorable condition of Indian lawyers, and to suggest ways and means to improve their lot. It was suggested that a representation should be made to the Madras High Court and the Government of Madras to open provident fund accounts in the names of the lawyers and contribute for the same the stamp duty on vakalats (briefs in law suits) filed by the individual lawyers. It was held that there could not be any serious objection to this and the amount accruing, though small, could be made available to the legal representative or nominees of lawyers who die or to the lawyer himself on retirement. The requisitionists put this forward as one of the proposals and urged the general body to go into the question of ameliorating the lot of lawyers thoroughly and formulate concrete proposals.

The Bar Association met on 24-7-1937 and referred the whole question to a committee for investigation and report. The report is to be submitted before the end of August 1937.

(The Hindu, 28-7-1937) +

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Harnessing Educated Youths to Industry:

Bombay University to start Technical Diploma Course. †

The University of Bombay is contemplating the taking of a number of steps designed to reduce the pressure of unemployment among the educated youths of the Presidency. The University has forwarded certain proposals, regarding the introduction of diploma courses for technical education, to the Government of Bombay for final sanction.

Eleven Diploma Courses: In case the scheme is sanctioned, the Presidency will have eleven diploma courses, including those for paints and varnishes, soap making, printing and lithography, practical electrical engineering, and leather tanning. Only matriculates will be admitted for a two years' course conducted by certain industrial institutions to be approved by the University authorities.

Educational Reform: The University is also introducing reforms in the educational system. The first year college course has been bifurcated in arts and science, while from 1938 the bifurcation scheme for the commerce course of the University will also come into force. Under the scheme, matriculates of the University will have to decide immediately the course of study they wish to take, instead of spending one year at an arts college. A committee consisting of Fellows of the Senate and industrialists, Indians and Europeans, has also been appointed to suggest means for greater co-operation between the University and the commercial community, and also to ascertain how a commerce graduate could be made more useful to the business world.

Technological Department: The University has recently started a technological department. All the products of the department are well employed and the University office has received still more inquiries for technologists from several industrial concerns in the city. A feature of the department is the close co-operation it is able to establish with industrialists in Bombay and outside. Manufacturers send their problems to the department for investigation and the cost is usually defrayed by them. The students of the department get the advantage of doing research work, which later on is published in book form. The Bombay University spends about Rs. 200,000 per year on this department. It is stated that the University finances do not permit further extension of activities of this department. In case endowments towards development of this department are obtained, the University has a definite plan to extend its activities.



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U. P. Unemployment Report under consideration: The University, at the request of the Education Department, Bombay, has appointed a Committee to consider the Sapru report on Unemployment in the United Provinces and to suggest suitable plans for the remodelling of educational courses. It is understood that, among the questions to be decided, attention will be focussed on the advisability of restricting admission to the University, vocational training and altering the syllabus of courses of studies with a view to making them useful for the practical needs of its products.

(The Times of India, 19-7-1937.) +

The Bengal Relief to the Poor and Unemployed

Bill, 1937. +

Attention is directed to pages 35-37 of the Part IV B of the Calcutta Gazette dated 26-8-1937, where is published the text of the Bengal Relief to the Poor and Unemployed Bill, 1937. The Bill was introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council by a non-official member on 12-8-1937. The Bill seeks to make provision for relieving the poor and the unemployed. The Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill points out that "in most parts of Bengal at least 25 per cent of the people do not get even one meal a day during certain parts of the year when no employment is available on agricultural works. The agricultural labourers, as well as the poorer agriculturists, lead a miserable life during such slack season, and the indigents who live on alms or who have to depend entirely on others have also to starve during such time. It is the duty of the state to help the labourers and poorer agriculturists with short-term loans, and

the indigent with doles for tiding over those temporary difficulties. Provision is made in this Bill, therefore, for granting of short-term loans with no interest, but with penalty for default, to agricultural labourers and poorer agriculturists for subsistence purpose on joint bond system. Provision is also made for granting gratuitous relief to the indigents to a very limited extent. All civilised countries of Europe have got poor laws of an extensive character necessitating a huge provision in the Budget. In Bengal a start should at least be given to such poor laws by making a modest provision for protecting the people of rural areas from starvation."

Relief in Unemployment in Ceylon, 1936."

The following information about the activities of the Government of Ceylon in connection with the relief of unemployment in the Island during 1936 is taken from the Administration Report of the Controller of Labour, Ceylon for the year 1936.

Nature of Relief Operations.- The Ceylon Government's budget for 1935-36 contained a provision of Rs. 300,000 for relief of unemployment, but as this was found insufficient an additional provision of Rs. 45,000 was subsequently made. The relief works undertaken consisted principally of excavations for extension of the Colombo docks, reclamation and drainage of certain swamps in Colombo and flood protection works and opening of parks and roads in the provinces; these provided employment for about 900 men.

The Firewood Depot.- The Government also made arrangements for maintaining a firewood depot ~~to provide employment as~~ an unemployment relief measure. The statement of sales prepared at the end of the year showed that the experiment had not ~~hitherto~~  
 \* Part I-Civil (C).-Administration Report of the Controller of Labour for 1936. -August, 1937.-Printed on the Orders of Government.-Printed at the Ceylon Govt. Press, Colombo.-1937.-pp.44.

been a great success, but it was decided to continue it for the following reasons:- (1) a number of men are being trained in work at which they should eventually be able to earn a living on their own account. (2) it is hoped eventually to effect a saving to Government either by making a profit on the working of the depot or by supplying firewood to Government departments at a cheaper rate than they can obtain it from contractors.

Separation Allowance.- In order to compensate those labourers for whom work was provided at a long distance from their homes, for the extra expense thus involved, it was decided to pay a separation allowance to their dependants. The men themselves were paid 60 cents (instead of the usual rate of 70 cents paid to the Colombo unemployed) and an extra 40 cents was paid to their dependants (Re.1=cents 100). This latter payment was made directly to the dependants once a fortnight.

Unemployment Committee.- A small informal Committee was appointed by the Hon. the Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce to investigate the problem of unemployment in Ceylon, and if possible to suggest remedies for it. The report of the Committee was submitted to the Hon. the Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce in October, 1936, and was published as a Sessional Paper in April, 1937. (For summary of this report vide pages 58-63 of our April 1937 report).

Employment of Sinhalese Labour on Estates.- A detailed inquiry was conducted by the Labour Department with a view to the introduction of legislation to regulate conditions of employment of Sinhalese on estates. The inquiry revealed that these conditions are often unsatisfactory and that the following points in particular require attention: Wages - (a) Men. - While these are fairly adequate on the whole it seems desirable to introduce some degree of uniformity so as to bring all wages to the level of those paid by the "good employers".

(b) Women. - There seems to be a general tendency to underpay women.

Payment of wages is reported to be in many cases irregular. Payment in kind or by orders on a shop owned by the estate proprietor is said to be fairly common. Overtime is not paid to time workers except in factories. It is proposed to introduce a Minimum Wage Ordinance covering this and other classes of labour.

Social Conditions.

Criminal Tribes in Bombay Presidency: Working  
of the Settlements, 1936-37\*.

Population.- According to the report on the working of settlements established under the Criminal Tribes Act in the Bombay Presidency, during the year ending 31-3-1936, the total settler population as it stood on 31-3-1937 was 8,231 as against 8,183 last year. During the year, 112 registered persons with 219 dependents were interned in settlements on the recommendation of the Police. 35 dependents of settlers, living in settlements and free colonies, were registered and interned under section 16 of the Criminal Tribes Act (together with their 52 dependents) as they had proved by their conduct that it was unsafe to release them from settlements or to allow them to reside in free colonies. During the year 100 registered persons with 253 dependents were released on license to free colonies, and 56 registered persons with 138 dependents were released on license to villages. 205 persons including dependents were recalled from license to settlements, either from free colonies attached to settlements or from villages, for breach of the conditions of their licenses. The population of the free colonies on 31-3-1937 was 7,212 as against 7,099 last year.

Employment.- According to the report, 2,233 men, 727 women, and 104 half timers were industrially employed in spinning and weaving mills, railway workshops and factories. Other settlers were employed on road making, metal breaking, lumbering, field work and casual labour.

Health, Housing and Sanitation.- It is pointed out that although the majority of settlers still live in huts constructed by themselves, it is noteworthy that the practice of building substantial dwellings in settlements and free colonies is increasing. In Ahmedabad, for instance, the Settlement Manager has devised a type of dwelling, with burnt brick walls and tiled roof, which costs only Rs. 36.

The health of settlers and of free colonies was good. There was no serious epidemics, except for an out-break of malaria in Hubli town and settlement which occasioned heavy medical expenditure. The treatment of malaria with atebryn in chronic cases in all settlements was remarkably successful.

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\* Annual Administration Report on the Working of the Criminal Tribes Act in the Bombay Presidency for the year ending 31st March 1937.-Part I.-Supdt., Govt. Printing and Stationery, Bombay.- Price Anna 1 or 2 Id. -pp.27.

During the year there were 367 births and 196 deaths in settlements and 318 births and 143 deaths in free colonies. The infant welfare centres and the clinics for school children in Sholapur and Hubli settlements continued to do good work.

Education - General and Vocational. - Education in settlements is compulsory. Out of the total population of 8,231 in settlements proper, the number of children attending day and night schools were 1,924 and 228 respectively and out of the total population of 7,212 in free colonies the corresponding numbers were 1,336 and 210. Thus the number of children attending schools, per thousand of the population was 261.3 for settlements and 214.4 for free colonies. In addition 344 children from the settlements and free colonies attended outside vernacular schools and 15 children attended English schools. 257 non-criminal tribe children and 31 children belonging to criminal tribes from outside, attended settlement schools. School work in general was satisfactory throughout the year.

83 boys were apprenticed to various trades, viz., carpentry-51, tailoring-2, weaving-24, motor driving-2, chappal making-3, and printing-1. Training in agriculture was given to 19 boys in agricultural settlements and free colonies. There were 302 children in the manual training classes in settlement schools. During the year 18 boys passed the examination in carpentry and drawing and 9 the examination in weaving.

Co-operation.- The Co-operative Credit and Producers' Societies in the settlements progressed satisfactorily during the year. To avoid the risk of bad debts special caution was taken in advancing loans and as a result the societies were all in a sound condition. The amount of deposits was Rs. 40,866-13-3 on 31-3-1937, as compared with Rs. 36,847-12-8 in the previous year. Efforts were made to secure deposits from the settlers to enable them to buy plots for building houses on the free colonies or elsewhere, or to buy lands after their release from the settlements. The share capital of the societies increased from Rs. 17,875-6-0 to Rs. 18,644-2-0.

Discharge from Settlements.- During the year 100 registered persons with 253 dependents were discharged on license from settlements to free colonies attached to settlements. 56 registered persons with 138 dependents were allowed to return on license to their villages. Thus the total number of persons discharged from settlements was 547 of whom 156 were registered persons and the rest were dependents. As against this 205 persons in all, were recalled to settlements for violation of the terms of the conditions of their license. The total number of ex-settlers who were being supervised on license at the end of the year was 1,160 registered persons with 3,802 dependents. The percentage of recalls of registered persons works out at 5.3.

Free Colonies.- The development of free colonies as residential areas made good progress. Sales of plots with a condition of building good houses thereon, have been reported to <sup>be</sup> satisfactory at Hubli, Gadag, Barsi and Undirgaon. Difficulty in pushing on the sale of plots seemed to be particularly great in Sholapur, probably on account of the counter-attractions of the numerous neighbouring wastis. The release of wandering tribes people continued to be strongly discouraged, in order to save them from reverting to their former wandering and criminal habits. They were as far as possible persuaded to build decent houses on the free colonies. It is reported that the steady rise in the population of the free colonies, the great increase in the number of decent houses built by the colonists and the increase in the actual number of free colonies are a sure indication of the measure of success attained in the progress towards reclamation.

Special Institutions.- The Women's Home attached to Hubli <sup>Re</sup> Settlement for troublesome and immoral women of all settlements did well. 19 women were newly admitted into the Home during the year and 21 were discharged leaving 12 residents at the close of the year. The Women's Home attached to Bijapur settlement ended with 13 women in residence. These were as a rule older women not suited for mixing with the younger group of women who are in the Hubli Home. Children's Homes at Hubli, Sholapur and Baramati closed the year with 99 inmates, 20 children were discharged and 31 newly admitted during the year. One child died. Children who were neglected by their parents or showed a tendency to crime, or who were truants or uncontrollable by their parents or were children of irreclaimable criminals, were brought up in these Homes. The Children's Homes at Hubli and Sholapur were certified by Government under the Bombay Children Act.

(The working of the Criminal Tribes Act in the Bombay Presidency during 1935-36 was reviewed at pages 48-51 of our September 1936 report) ⇨

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Co-operation.

Progress of Co-operation in U.P. in 1935-36. \*

According to the annual report on the working of Co-operative Societies in the United Provinces for the year ending 30-6-1936, the number of societies increased during the year from 6,712 to 7,459, membership from 190,528 (of which 6,299 were societies) to 225,951 (of which 7,268 were societies), and working capital from Rs. 23,507,403 to Rs. 25,670,746. Of the 7459 societies, 73 were central banks (12,185 members) 41 non-credit central societies (6,991 members) 6,924 agricultural primary societies (163,662 members) and 421 non-agricultural primary societies (43,113 members). The number and working capital of non-credit central societies have doubled during the year. The number of primary non-credit societies has also increased considerably, thus correcting to some extent the tendency of developing credit societies alone.

Agricultural Societies.— (The figures within brackets refer to 1934-35). There were 6,924 agricultural societies of all classes in the Province during 1935-36 (6,253) with 163,662 members (136,997 members), ~~THESE~~ with a working capital of Rs. 10,762,760 (Rs.10,118,401). The net profit of these societies for the year under report was Rs. 250,201 (Rs.371,182). Of these 6,924 societies, 5 were limited credit societies, 6,004 unlimited credit societies (125,716 members), 411 purchases

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\*Annual Report on the working of Co-operative Societies in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh for the year 1935-36.-Allahabad: Superintendent, Printing and Stationery, U.P., India, 1937. Price Rs.0-14-0 - pp. iv+15+19A.

and sales limited credit societies and 503 others.

Non-Agricultural Societies.- There were 421 non-agricultural societies in 1935-36 (369 in 1934-35) with 45,113 members (40548 members) and a working capital of Rs. 4,496,073/-. Of these 421 societies, 298 were credit societies, 24 purchases and sales societies, 19 production and sale societies and 80 other societies.

Industrial Societies.- One of the difficulties of weavers is their inability to wait for a better market. To meet this, the Tanda Weavers' Co-operative Store stocked the members' goods and advanced them up to 75 per cent of their value to help them continue their work till they secured a good sale of the pledged goods. The rate of interest was fairly low and the turn-over was rapid. Rs. 92,418 were advanced altogether. The net profits were Rs. 315. Arrangements have also been made for the introduction of improved designs and patterns and for the supply of fast dyes, yarn and accessories.

Rural Development Societies.- There were 82 societies for consolidation of holdings in Saharanpur, Bijnor and Moradabad Districts. In Bijnor 23,000 plots have been consolidated into 1,700. Similarly in Saharanpur and Moradabad 9,000 and 3,200 plots have been reduced to 1,200 and 600 respectively. The whole work from beginning to end is done by persuasion alone. The benefits of consolidation are appreciated by the members and lack of staff alone prevents expansion of this useful work. +



Co-operation in Mysore: Government Orders on  
Enquiry Committee's Report.

The Government of Mysore has recently passed orders on the recommendations of the Co-operative Enquiry Committee (vide pages 67-69 of our July 1936 report) relating to the problems of primary Credit Co-operative Societies. Below is given a summary of the Government orders.

Rural Societies.- The Government has accepted the principle of the Committee that membership in rural societies should be confined to the inhabitants of a single village if sufficiently large, or of one village and its hamlets, or of a number of villages within a radius of about 3 miles. As a rule there should be only one bank or other specific type of society for the same compact area. But where the area was too large to be adequately served by a single institution, separate societies might be permitted to be formed with different jurisdiction. The Government has accepted the Committee's suggestion regarding division of societies on the lines of section 13 of the Madras Act.

Multiple Membership.- In regard to multiple membership, the Committee recommended that no member of a credit society with unlimited liability should be admitted into a second similar society until he has withdrawn his membership in the former: and no person should be allowed to pledge his unlimited liability in more societies than one. The Government has accepted the recommendation, and has also directed that steps be taken as early as possible to remove the provision said to be found in the bye-laws of some societies restricting the loan granted to a member to twice the share capital paid up by him.

Limit to Membership.- A majority of the Committee recommended that where the membership of an urban Bank exceeds a general limit of 1,500 (or with the special permission of the Registrar 2,000) further admission must be stopped, the needs of the new applicants being served by the formation of an additional bank, and the sphere of operations of the two institutions defined so as to avoid overlapping. The Government generally agrees to the principle underlying the recommendation. It feels, however, that it would be difficult to place a numerical limit on the expansion of urban societies where they serve a compact area. While, therefore, it is not in favour of fixing such a limit, it thinks it necessary that the Registrar should be empowered to stop further admissions to any particular institution where the membership becomes unwieldy and to direct the formation of an additional institution for the area.

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Women and Children.

Half-yearly meeting of Standing Committee of A.I.W.C.:  
Comprehensive Legislative Programme.

The half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference was held at Phaltan (an Indian State in the Bombay Presidency) on 31-7-1937 and 1 and 2-8-1937. Social and economic problems such as compulsory primary education of boys and girls, publication of brochures on important social and educational questions — the illegitimate child, maternity and child welfare, the adoption of a common language, the beggar problem, medical inspection in schools and traffic in women and children — were discussed.

Demand for Legislation: A comprehensive legislative programme was also drawn up to be submitted to the Prime Ministers and women legislators of the various provinces, seeking their co-operation in the matter of bringing up Bills bearing on social and educational reform in their respective Legislatures. The legislative programme deals also with problems relating to reform in jails, better facilities for marketing goods produced in villages and position of women workers in mines.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 24-8-1937.)

The Bengal Primary Education Amendment Bill, 1937.

At pages 38-41 of ~~the~~ Part IV B of the Calcutta Gazette dated 26-8-1937 is published the text of the Bengal Primary Education Amendment Bill, 1937. The Bill was introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council on 12-8-1937 by a non official member. The Bill seeks to amend the Bengal Primary Education Act of 1919 (Bengal Act No. IV of 1919). The Statement of Objects and Reasons attached to the Bill is given below:

It is universally admitted that there is a necessity of a great improvement in the condition of primary education in Bengal.

There is a great demand for free and compulsory primary education which is the foundation stone of the progress of life, and it is thought the only remedy for the removal of mass illiteracy. To remedy this state of affairs the Primary Education Act, of which Mr. Surendra Nath Roy was the author, was passed in 1919 and though more than 16 years have passed, it has produced very little effect. Out of 128 municipalities only one municipality, viz., Chittagong, has introduced free and compulsory primary education, and that also for boys only, because the option in the matter was left to the discretion of local bodies. Similarly, the scheme prepared by Mr. Biss under which Government undertakes to pay half the cost, both capital and recurring, of primary education in any town has made little headway, and because local bodies have proved reluctant to find even half the necessary funds. So it is necessary that more effective steps should be taken to compel the municipalities to introduce free and compulsory primary education in the course of 5 years.

The main objects of this amending Bill are—

- (1) To provide compulsory attendance at school of all children of ages between 6 to 11 years within the course of five years.
- (2) To make provision for religious instruction in primary schools. +

Protecting Bengal Fishermen:

The Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1937.

In Bengal, where fish is a very popular item in the dietary of the people, quite a large number of workers, earn their living as fishermen. They live mostly in the rural areas, and in addition to fishing, they carry on also agricultural occupations to ~~in~~ supplement their earnings. These rural workers, who combine agriculture with fishing, are at present being subjected to various kinds of exactions by landlords who lease fisheries in their estates to them. To prevent such exactions, Mr. S. C. Chakravarti, a non-official member of the Bengal Legislative Council, has introduced a Bill, called the Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1937, in the Bengal Legislative Council on 12-8-1937. The Bill seeks to regulate the settlement of fisheries and to define and protect the rights of fishermen. The following is the Statement of Objects and Reasons attached to the Bill:

The rights of cultivators as against their landlords have been safeguarded by the Bengal Tenancy Act, but there is no law safeguarding the rights and interests of fishermen who form a considerable part of the rural population of this Presidency. In consequence of this, the fishermen are subjected to various exactions at the hands of their immediate landlords, but more particularly from those of the middlemen. It is the general practice in all large fisheries that the proprietor in making settlement with fishermen stipulates that the catches should be sold to his nominee only and to no one else. This nominee also pays a heavy rent or present for the privilege. There are also innumerable exactions in various parts of the country under different names. This system has reduced the fishermen to extreme poverty and their condition in every district is most pitiable. This short Bill is introduced in order to ameliorate the condition of this worthy class of workers, to save them from payment of exorbitant rates of interest ranging from 75 to 150 per cent. and to increase the fish supply, which is considered a part of the staple food of Bengal.

(The text of the Bill is published at pages 42-44 of Part IV B of the Calcutta Gazette dated 26-8-1937.)

Migration.

Indian Labour in Malaya, 1936: Report of  
Controller of Labour, Malaya.

The following details regarding Indians in Malaya given in the Annual Report of the Controller of Labour, Malaya, for the year 1936, are taken from a press summary of the Report published in the Hindu dated 3-8-1937. +

Jurisdiction of Malayan Labour Department.- The Malayan Labour Department exercises jurisdiction over the three political groups that constitute Malaya: (1) The crown colony of the Straits Settlements founded in the year 1867, before which the settlements of Singapore, Penang and Malacca were part of British India. (2) The Federated Malay States of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang, a group of protected states in Malay Peninsula which were formed into a federation in the year 1895. (3) The Unfederated States of Johore, Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Trengganu in the Peninsula and Brunei in Borneo, which have come at various times under British protection.

Its operations over the country are governed in the colony by the Labour Ordinance, in the Federated Malay States by the Labour Code, and in each of the Unfederated Malay States by the local Labour Code or Labour Enactment. Though differing in points of details, the various laws provide for identical working conditions in all essential matters and the main principles underlying all these laws are the same. Uniform application of a common labour policy is ensured by the Controller of Labour, Malaya, who is the responsible head of the Labour Department in each political unit. The local Labour Officers regularly report to him on their activities. Adequate and proper standards are maintained regarding wages, housing, sanitation hospitals and medical attention, water-supply, labour agreements and general conditions on places of employment in Malaya. The maintenance of equal standards everywhere is of prime importance to the worker and employer alike and the organisation of the Department is now such that the experience and knowledge acquired in any area is available almost at once for the whole country.

History of Indian Immigration to Malaya.- To understand the present organisation regarding immigration, the foundations and the main structure of which were constructed in 1907, a short note on general working conditions in Malaya for the past 50 years is appended. Prior to the advent of rubber, the main plantation enterprise in British Malaya was the sugar industry, largely localised in the North of Perak and in the adjoining

Nebong Tebal District of the Province of Wellesley. The labour supply was mainly South Indian under indenture. These workers were imported by individual employers at their direct expense under written contracts to work for three years. The cost of importation was high, the only assistance given by Government being (a) the provision in 1890 by the Straits Settlements Government of a Depot at Negapatam in the Madras Presidency where recruits were housed pending shipment; and (b) over a limited number of years the grant of a steamship subsidy from Negapatam and the gift to planting organisations of a number of free tickets.

Apart from the indentured workers free labourers on a month to month agreement were imported also at the expense of individual employers. The advent of rubber and the rapid opening up of a large tracts of country for its development created for the investor and the administrator a labour problem of the first magnitude. Labourers, whether indentured or free, who were imported at considerable expense for a particular plantation were enticed away by the promise of higher wages. Disaffection with the labour situation was general and when a proposal was made in 1906 that all employers of Indian labour be taxed and the proceeds pooled in a fund to be expended solely on importing Indian labour, the feeling in its favour was so unanimous that the Indian Immigration Fund was constituted in 1907, and over 29 years experience has proved it to be an unqualified success. The new system gave such good results that importations under the indenture system ceased for Indians as from June 1910. In 1914 the system was abolished for Chinese labour. The Japanese indenture system was abolished in 1932. In 1932, when the Indian legislature examined the system of assisted emigration from India, the methods which had proved so successful in the case of Malaya were made obligatory in other countries.

Indian immigration to Malaya takes two distinct forms: (1) Unassisted and (2) Assisted from the Indian Immigration Fund. The unassisted flow consists of people who pay their expenses across to Malaya. In former times, it was composed almost exclusively of members of commercial classes, traders, money-lenders and clerks, to whom fund assistance was unavailable. Recent years have shown a considerable change in its composition. An increasing percentage of genuine labourers is now a feature of this immigration. With regard to assisted immigration, this in turn takes two forms: (a) recruited by the Kanganies, and (b) non-recruited.

Emigration Statistics for 1936.— The number of immigrants from South India that arrived at Penang, the first port of call for immigrants for Malaya, was 43,191 in 1936 as against 65,191 in 1935. The number of deck passengers who sailed from Penang to South India in 1936 was 40,075 as against 38,392 in 1935. The total Indian population in Malaya at the end of the year 1936 is estimated to be 656,517. Less than half of the total Indian population finds work on estates and little more than

half of the South Indian population is so employed. The Indian community has struck root into all sides of Malayan life between which there are close relations and inter-dependencies.

Wages.- Standard rates of wages for South Indian labourers are prescribed by law in certain key districts and these rates tend in practice to regulate the rate of wage earned in other districts and by ~~x~~ labourers of other races. The present key districts are Province Wellesley, the Selangor districts of Klang, Kuala Selangor and Kuala Langat; the Pahang districts of Lipis, Raub, Bentong and Temerloh and the Kelantan district of Ulu Kelantan. In Province Wellesley and Selangor key districts the prescribed rates were 40 cents a day for an able-bodied adult male labourer and 32 cents for an able-bodied adult female labourer. For other remaining key districts the corresponding rates were 47 and 37 cents respectively. There was no change in standard rates during the year.

General.- All labour employed throughout Malaya is free. Labourers are landed free of debt and are at liberty to leave their employment at any time on giving a month's notice or on paying a month's wages in lieu thereof. No immigrant may enter into any written contract to serve as a labourer, though under certain circumstances skilled workmen may do so before leaving British India for Malaya.

Few complaints of drunkenness amongst estate labourers were brought to the notice of the Labour Department during the year. Estate provision shops are visited and prices checked by the officers of the Labour Department when inspecting estates. These shops are maintained under permit from the Department which can withdraw the permit and enforce the closing of the shop. It is interesting to record that on one estate ~~is~~ a system is in force whereby a labourer who spends one dollar at the estate shop receives a coupon. Every six months the nett profits of the shop are distributed among the coupon holders.

(The Hindu, 3-8-1937) +

General.

Bombay Ministry's Labour Programme.

The following information regarding the Bombay Ministry's labour policy is taken from a statement on the subject issued by the Bombay Government recently. The present Ministry in Bombay is a Congress Ministry, and the labour programme enunciated by it may be taken, with variations to suit local conditions, as typical of the action that is likely to be initiated in the labour and social sphere by Congress Ministries which at present hold office in five other provinces, Madras, the Central Provinces, the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa.

The statement recalls that the Indian National Congress has envisaged in its election manifesto a policy and a programme in respect of industrial workers, which constitute an undertaking to "secure to them a decent standard of living; hours of work and conditions of labour in conformity, as far as the economic conditions in the country permit, with international standards; suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen; protection against the economic consequence of old-age, sickness and unemployment and the right of workers to form unions and to strike for the protection of their interests." The earliest resolution of Congress on fundamental rights generally states in addition that "the State shall safeguard the interests of industrial workers" and makes special reference to women workers and children.

It is the endeavour of the Government to work out this programme using all the means at their disposal. Government will try to adjust the social and economic mechanism in such a way as to assure to the worker, the satisfaction of his minimum human needs, security of service, provision of alternative occupations in periods of inevitable unemployment and maintenance during periods of unavoidable incapacity for work. It is also an acknowledged obligation of the Government to secure working and living conditions which are favourable to the worker's physical and moral health and to ensure for him opportunities for the advancement of his status and a full measure of freedom of action consistently with his obligations to industry and society.

Better Living Conditions.- The pace at which a programme to achieve these ends can be prosecuted, it is remarked, will depend upon various factors, foremost among them being the co-operation of the working classes and of the employers, the



state of the industries concerned, and economic conditions generally. The Government is examining the possibility of devising measures for setting up minimum wage fixing machinery to meet special requirements; for promoting the provision of better housing conditions; and for control of house rent in cities and for the relief and avoidance of working class indebtedness. With regard to industries and industrial centres which fail to provide a living wage to the employees, the Government have decided to institute exhaustive enquiries with a view to determining how far wages in these cases fall short of the minimum budgetary needs of the workers, to discover what circumstances are responsible for the inadequacy and to ascertain the ways and means for improving wages to a satisfactory level.

Social Insurance Legislation.- For the protection of the industrial population, Government visualises the development of a comprehensive system of social insurance. The requisite statistical and actuarial basis for the various forms of social insurance are totally lacking at present. The Government has already set in motion the machinery of the Labour Department for the collection of material which, within a reasonable distance of time, should enable the Government to decide what can be done to frame sound and workable schemes conforming to Indian conditions. The Government has under its consideration the feasibility of legislation for leave with pay during periods of sickness. It is hoped that the action taken in this direction would pave the way for a scheme of sickness insurance.

In the matter of unemployment relief, the Government proposes to explore the possibilities of alternative employment in home industries and with that end in view are considering a scheme for extensive training of the employed and the unemployed for the pursuit of secondary occupations. Collection of statistics of unemployment and registration of the employed as well as the unemployed will soon be undertaken, and it is expected that the arrangement would facilitate the setting up of employment exchanges in important industrial centres.

Extension of Factories Act.- The Government contemplates an immediate extension and improvement of the Factories Act in several directions. Provisions of the Act relating to the weekly holiday, the interval of rest and spread-over of the hours need amendment. ~~\*\*\*~~ Satisfactory arrangements for taking meals and adequate medical aid will be made a legal obligation. The position regarding the maximum hours of work will be reviewed. Government find that some regulation of night-shift work in general will have soon to be considered.

Industrial Disputes.- With regard to trade disputes, the Government is determined to pursue an active policy with a view to maintaining industrial peace in the Presidency, endeavouring all the time to see that the workers obtain a fair deal. It is

the intention of the Government to promote legislation aiming at the prevention of strikes and lock-outs as far as possible. The basis of this legislation will be the requirement that no reduction in wages or other change in conditions of employment to the disadvantage of the workers should take effect till they have had sufficient time and opportunity for having the facts and merits of the proposed change examined and all avenues of peaceful settlement of the dispute explored, either through the channel of voluntary negotiation, conciliation or arbitration, or by the machinery of the law.

A corresponding obligation will rest on the workers in respect of demands on their behalf.

Standardisation of Wages by Collective Agreements.- Government is also considering the practicability of legislation enabling the general application in any centre of industry of suitable standards of pay and other conditions of work regarding which there is found to be agreement between a substantial and representative section of the employers and the employees of a particular centre. As a step in this direction, it will be necessary to provide for the registration of collective agreements.

Encouragement of Trade Unionism. - While Government proposes to do all that is practicable for the amelioration of the conditions of the working class, it is convinced that no legislative programme can be a substitute for the organised strength of the working classes and that till organisation of workers, run on genuine trade union lines, ~~and~~ grow up in the various fields of employment, no lasting good can accrue. Government is therefore anxious to assist in removing real hindrances in the way of the growth of <sup>workers</sup> the organisation and to promote collective bargaining between the employers and the employees. Means will be devised to discourage victimization of workers for connection with a labour organisation and participation in legitimate trade union activity.

Education of Working Classes.- In the sphere of education, Government realises that the working class has its special needs and that ~~the~~ illiteracy in its case constitutes a very serious handicap to itself and a grave danger to society. The educational policy of the Government will, therefore, be designed to meet these special requirements.

Prohibition in Mill Areas.- Government's policy of prohibition has also a special bearing on the well-being of the industrial community and it is the Government's intention to select important industrial towns for the early application of the policy.

Collection of Labour Statistics.- Government has in mind the need and utility of statistical and other information for the proper discharge of their functions in these and other matters. The Government Labour Office is well equipped for the purpose. Government is considering the advisability of extending the scope of the work of the Labour Office and of facilitating the work of collection of statistics by suitable legislation. *A copy of the Communiqué issued by the Government of Bombay in this connection was forwarded to Geneva with The Times of India, 18-8-1937. This Office's minute 21/998/3704 2-9-1937.*

National Reconstruction and Social Planning:

Resolution adopted by Congress Working Committee. +

At the meeting of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress held at Wardha on 15, 16 and 17-8-1937, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru Presiding, the following resolution regarding national reconstruction and social planning moved by the President, was adopted:

Committees of Experts to consider vital problems.—

The Working Committee recommends to Congress Ministries the appointment of committees of experts to consider urgent vital problems, the solution of which is necessary, for any scheme of national reconstruction and social planning. Such solution will require extensive surveys, collection of data, as well as a clearly defined social objective. Many of these problems cannot be dealt effectively on a provincial basis and the interests of adjoining provinces are interlinked.

Comprehensive River Surveys.— Comprehensive river surveys are necessary for the formulation of a policy to prevent disastrous floods and utilize water for purposes of irrigation, to consider the problem of soil erosion, to eradicate malaria and for the development of hydro-electric and other schemes. For this purpose the whole <sup>valley</sup> of each principal river valley will have to be surveyed and investigated and large scale state planning resorted to. The development and control of industries require also joint co-ordinated action on the part of several provinces.

Inter-Provincial Committees of Experts.— The Working Committee advises, therefore, that to begin with an inter-provincial committee of experts be appointed to consider the general nature of the problems to be faced and to suggest how and in what order these should be tackled. This expert committee may suggest the formation of a special committee or boards to consider each of such problems separately and to advise the provincial Governments concerned as to joint action to be undertaken.

Labour and Social Programme.— A memorandum prepared by Mr. Gulzari Lal Nanda, Secretary, Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Chief Minister of the Bombay Government, on the labour policy to be followed by Congress Governments in the six Congress provinces, was also adopted by the Working Committee. The principal points in the memorandum are summarised at pages ~~84-86~~ of the Section: "General" of this report.

(The Leader, 18-8-1937.) +

Congress Policy re. Socialist Programme:

Babu Rajendra Prasad's Statement.

The following information about the attitude of the Indian National Congress with regard to socialism is taken from an interview given to the press on 28-8-1937 by Babu Rajendra Prasad, an ex-President of the Congress, a member of the Congress Working Committee and one of the three members of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee which has been entrusted with the task of co-ordinating Congress activities in the various provinces and directing the policies of the several Congress Ministries.

The interview was given principally with a view to answer criticisms emanating from certain quarters to the effect that the programmes of the Congress Ministries amount only to a tinkering with the problems of the masses. While approving to a great extent the socialist programme, Babu Rajendra Prasad points out that, owing to the constitutional limitations imposed on the present Congress Ministries by the Reforms Act, they have to proceed slowly and warily, refrain for the present from the initiation of radical policies and avoid class conflicts. He, however, gives the assurance that, after the achievement of complete power, the Congress will consider the socialist programme in its entirety and decide what line of action should be adopted. The main points of the interview are given below:

Constitutional Handicaps: Need to go slow.— The Congress Ministries are powerless to do anything more than introduce ameliorative measures. The present India Act allows of nothing more, but it cannot be denied that even ~~though~~ these measures some relief will be afforded to the masses. So long as the Congress is not in full power, it must adopt the line of working

ameliorative programmes by way of bettering the condition of the masses. To embark on a radical programme till that power is achieved is hazardous. It will introduce class conflicts which would be harmful to the national movement in more ways than one. For one thing, the third party in India will take advantage of these conflicts, even as it is already exploiting the communal differences.

Congress not opposed to Socialism.— The Congress was not averse to any radical measures, but the above considerations deter it from adopting them at the present stage. The time for consideration as to what radical measures must be adopted for the substantial uplift and prosperity of the masses will come when complete power is achieved. And when that power is achieved, the adoption of national programme will depend not on one individual or one organization, but on the people as a whole. As for the socialistic programme, there was much in it which could be adopted, but it could be adopted only when the proper time comes.

Emphasis on Materialist point of view deplored.— Giving expression to his personal views on socialism, Babu Rajendra Brasad said that he did not agree with the fundamental tenet of socialism, namely, that our social, mental and spiritual outlook depends wholly on the question of material wants. Citing the example of India's national movement, he said that many of the present day leaders ~~are~~ are quite comfortably off from a material point of view, and that, if material wants were to be the only consideration, then there was no reason why they should be parties to the struggle. Economic considerations there may be, but the prime factor which inspires the fight for freedom is the feeling of national humiliation at the thought of being ruled by a foreign power. Barring this fundamental difference, so far as the question of putting the socialist programme into actual practice was concerned, Babu Rajendra Prasad said that he could go to a great extent with the socialists.

(The Hindustan Times, 29-8-1937.)