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GENERAL

On the 19th February last, Mr. V.J. Patel, the President of the Legislative Assembly, invited the leaders of all the political parties and the leading members of the Government, including the Viceroy, to a tea-party. This was easily the most sensational event during the period under ~~the~~ report; for Mahatma Gandhi was then staying with President Patel, and it was well known that the party was arranged to enable Lord Irwin to meet Gandhi informally and discuss with him in a friendly way the present political situation. On account of the select nature of the party, and the significant fact that the tables were so arranged that Lord Irwin, Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Jinnah, the Mahomedan leader, and the Maharaja of Kashmir were seated more or less out of ear-shot of the other guests, it has not been possible to ascertain with any definiteness the general trend of the Irwin-Gandhi conversations. While, officially, the party was no more than a social function, politicians and newspapers attach importance to it, on account of the Gandhi resolution at the last Indian National Congress (see pages 7-8 of the Report for January 1929). Lord Irwin is leaving for England towards the end of April, and his acceptance of Mr. Patel's invitation is interpreted as signifying his desire to ascertain from Indian leaders (^{See} The Pioneer, Allahabad, Leading Article 27-2-1929) "the general feeling of the country and the irreducible minimum of compromise which will be accepted by Gandhi and his friends; and it is to be pointed out here that these gentlemen are in a much more reasonable frame of mind than even their best friends have hitherto suspected".

That nothing conclusive came out of these conversations may be inferred from the fact that the Congress Party has

recently been taking very active measures to strengthen their ranks, consolidate their organisation, collect funds and prepare a detailed programme for putting into effect the Gandhi resolutions of boycott and non-co-operation. According to the Pioneer of 21st February 1929, the All India Congress Committee has already decided upon the main lines to be pursued for furthering their policy of obstruction. An interesting sequel to all these political preparations was the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi at Calcutta on the 4th instant for lighting a bonfire of foreign cloths in a public ^{park} street, contrary to the express orders of the police authorities. He was, however, at once released on his own recognisance, and though the event has certainly given some fillip to the movement for boycott of foreign goods, it must be mentioned that no serious disturbances have followed in its wake. Mr. Gandhi is now in Burma, where he is receiving ovations from all municipalities and public bodies, the enthusiasm characterising which is in a certain measure the popular reply to his arrest. An important political conference held at Rohtak on the 9th instant reiterated the Congress resolutions, and in a speech yesterday (11-3-1929) in the Legislative Assembly, Pandit Motilal Nehru uttered a solemn warning, advising the Government to take heed in time of the Congress demand for Dominion Status, failing which the country would be plunged into disorder for which the moral responsibility will rest with the Government.

The Home Member's reply to Pandit Motilal Nehru was rather evasive, as he confined himself to repeating that Government could not take any action till the Simon Commission had presented its report to Parliament. Meanwhile, the Simon Commission itself appears to have been convinced of

the incomplete nature of its enquiry. The cooperation that it has been so far able to enlist has come from quarters which are more or less tainted by an exaggerated communalist feeling, for example, the Mohammedan die-hard~~s~~, or from avowedly sectional and particularist interests. In a speech at Ootacamund last week Sir John Simon is reported as having said that his part in shaping the constitutional future of India was a strictly limited one, and that suggestions for constitutional improvements emanating from the political leaders of India would be considered along with his own representations to parliament. This statement is being interpreted as another bid for cooperation from nationalist India, even though such cooperation may be forthcoming only after the termination of the Commission's investigation.

The Simon Commission will be coming to Delhi in the third week of March, but it will not include Lord Burnham, who has recently been ill and has been medically advised to leave for England. The lobby talk is that the Government ^{when it is normal then will have no work} are not anxious to dissolve the Legislature, and have a general election which will mainly be fought out on the Simon issue. The prolongation of the life of the sitting House, it is said, will be one of the points on which Sir John Simon's advice would be taken when he arrives in Delhi.

As if to mark their discontent with the existing system of dyarchy in the provinces, the legislative councils of Bengal and ^{the} Central Provinces have once again overthrown their ministries, with the result that what are known as the "transferred" subjects are now being administered by the Governors themselves.

There is nothing very much to report about the proceedings of the Indian Legislative Assembly. The general budget

was introduced on the 28th February and is on the whole a colourless one. The railway budget which was introduced a week earlier contained one or two proposals of interest to the I.L.O., and is, therefore, dealt with in a later part of this report.

The Hindustan Times of the 13th March publishes a forecast by its political correspondent of the personnel of the Whitley Commission. The Commission, according to him, will consist of the chairman, and eight members as follows:-

Mr. A. G. Clow, (Government of India, Department of Industries and Labour),
 Sir Victor Sassoon, Bart, a prominent European millowner of Bombay and the representative of the Bombay Millowners' Association in the Indian Legislative Assembly,
 Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla, another prominent Bombay industrialist and an ex-president of the Bombay Legislative Council,
 Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, late Agent General of the Government of India in South Africa,
 Mr. Kabir-ud-din Ahmed, member of the Legislative Assembly,
 Messrs. Joshi and Chaman Lall and
 an English lady who is likely to be a labour expert in the British Board of Trade.

Of the two secretaries Mr. S. Lall, I.C.S., Deputy Secretary to the Department of Industries and Labour, will be from India and the other will be from the India Office.

The same paper announces that the probable composition of the Delegation to the twelfth International Labour Conference will be as follows :-

Employers. Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Millowner, Ahmedabad and ex-member, Indian Legislative Assembly
 ----- Delegate.

Mr. P. Mukerji of the Upper India)
 Chamber of Commerce,)
 Mr. B. Das, M.L.A.,) Advisers.
 Mr. R.K. Shanmukham Chetty, M.L.A.,)
 and another)

<u>Workers.</u>	Mr. N. M. Joshi, M.L.A., ---	Delegate.
	Mr. B. Shiva Rao, President,) Textile Union, Madras,)	
	Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury, M.L.A.)	Advisers.
	Mr. Kelappa, of the All India) Railwaymen's Federation, &)	
	Mr. P. C. Bose, Secretary,) Indian Colliery Employees') Association, Jharia.)	

Mr. S. Saklatwalla, the Indian Communist M.P., has, according to a Free Press telegram, already commenced communist propaganda to boycott the Whitley Commission; and Mr. B.F. Bradley, the communist vice-president of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, writes to the press advocating boycott of the Commission on the ground that it is a device to slacken trade union activities. It is not, however, expected that Indian labour will take these suggestions seriously.

On the 31st January 1929 the President of the Indian Legislative Assembly announced the names of the members of the Standing Advisory Committee to the Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India. The composition of the Committee is as follows :-

Mr. Muhammad Rafique,
Maulvi Abdul Matin Chaudhury,
Sir Darcy Lindsay,
Mr. Mukhtar Singh,
Mr. N. M. Joshi,
Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarde,
Dr. B. S. Moonje,
Mr. Abdul Qadir Siddiqi,
Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan.

References to the I.L.O.

The Times of India of 12-2-29, the Statesman of 13-2-29, the Hindu of 12-2-29 give prominence to a communique issued by this office on the Report on Forced Labour published by the International Labour Office. The communique which runs into one column has been published in full in all the leading Indian papers (cuttings enclosed).

... ..

The Bombay Chronicle of 14-2-29 publishes a short editorial paragraph appreciating the I.L.O. report on "Forced Labour".

... ..

The Times of India of 16-2-29 publishes a review of Mr. F. Alexander's ~~work~~ recently published book "From Paris to Locarno". In the course of the review, the writer expresses the opinion that while the League has a good press, its subsidiary organisation the International Labour Office, has not been accorded the same facilities for publicity.

... ..

The Times of India of 19-2-29 publishes a news item to the effect that information has been received at Geneva that Japanese labour circles have approved an agreement which provides that an Asiatic Labour Conference is to be held annually in China, India, Japan or another eastern country in turn, some five or six weeks before the opening of the I.L. Conference each year. The news item is taken from "Industrial and Labour Information". It may here be mentioned that there does not appear to be much likelihood of such a conference being held this year.

... ..

The London correspondent of the Statesman discusses the growing expenditure of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office in the Statesman of 28-2-29 and says that Mr. Yusuf Ali, one of the substitute delegates of the last Assembly ~~xx~~ was especially outspoken in his demand at Geneva that the expenditure of the International Labour Office on conferences and on the creation of new posts should be brought under the control of the League Assembly and its subordinate committees instead, as now, of remaining in the hands of the Director of the I.L.O.

The paper says that Lord Lytton is reported to have accused the I.L.O. of showing "a conspicuous absence of any disposition to meet demands for economy in a reasonable spirit".

... ..

The Statesman of 3-3-29 is responsible for the statement that Mr. Kelkar will open the question of India's position in the League of Nations and the International Labour Office, during the discussion of the Indian budget in the Assembly.

... ..

The Hindustan Times of 8-3-29 has a two column article on "The International Labour Organisation - Its structure, aims and methods of work" contributed anonymously by the Deputy Director of this Office.

... ..

The same paper in its issue of the 13th March discusses the probable composition of the Indian Delegation to the twelfth I.L.Conference.

... ..

The February number of the Indian Labour Review publishes a note by the Director of this office entitled "The 1929 Geneva Conference". (Cutting not sent as the Review is being received at Geneva).

... ..

The All India Railwaymen's Federation Press Report No.4 issued on 15-11-28 is a document of nine pages dealing exhaustively with the Geneva and Washington Conventions and the Indian railways. It concludes with the statement that the "workers' delegates at the ensuing session of the I.L. Conference will have to strongly emphasise the long delay which the Government of India has been showing in observing its ratified conventions. If the present state of affairs continues, the All India Railwaymen's Federation will be compelled to invite the sympathetic attention of the I.L.O. to the failure of the Government of India to enforce the Washington Hours Convention and the Geneva Weekly Rest Convention.

... ..

The Government of India has published as No.41 in its series of bulletins of Indian Industries and Labour, the report of the Government delegates to the eleventh International Labour Conference, together, with the text of the speech delivered by Dr. R.P.Paranjpye regarding minimum wage fixing machinery, and of the Convention, Recommendation, Questionnaire regarding prevention of Industrial accidents and resolutions passed at the Conference.

... ..

Mr. R. W. Fulay, labour member of the Central Provinces Legislative Council, writes an article on "The Problem of Sickness Insurance for Indian Workers" emphasising the need for the ratification of the Geneva Convention (10th Conference) on the subject. The article appears as an annexe to the Annual Report of the Central Circle R.M.S. Union and the Press Employees' Association, Nagpur.

... ..

NATIONAL LABOUR LEGISLATION.

In this ^{Section} ~~connection~~ references are made to the efforts of the Government of India to effect a comprehensive revision of the Workmen's Compensation Act, and to two private bills introduced in the Central Provinces Legislative Council by Mr. R. W. Fulay, who represents Urban Factory Labourers in the Council. The notification of the Government of India for the gradual abolition of the underground work of women in mines is also being reproduced.

Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act.

The Workmen's Compensation Amendment Bill to which reference was made at page 9 of my February report has now been reported upon by the Select Committee. The Gazette of India, March 2, 1929, Part V, pages 17-20 publishes the full text of the Select Committee's report. But an even more comprehensive revision of the fundamental act is now contemplated by the Government of India and provincial governments have been circularised to forward their views on the subject to the Central Government before the 1st July 1929. In this letter the Central Government considers it desirable to re-examine the principles underlying the Act in view of the experience already obtained and the two most important questions to be considered will ~~be~~ be the definition of the workman to whom the Act applies and the scales of compensation payable. The present Act aimed at the inclusion only of persons employed in organised and hazardous industries. The great majority of workers in this class of industry have already come under the operation of the Act, and it is thought that the time has come to extend the Act to workers in other industries also. The Government of India is provisionally

of the view that an endeavour to ~~introduce~~ introduce any scheme of compulsory insurance in unorganised industries would be attended by serious administrative difficulties, but considers it desirable at the same time to bring further classes of workers within the scope of the Act. As regards the scales of compensation, the Government draws the attention of the provincial governments to the principles underlying the recommendation of the seventh International Labour Conference on minimum scales of compensation. If the scales of compensation are so framed as to provide an equivalent of two-thirds of the amounts which the workman would have earned had he not been killed or incapacitated, it would involve an enhancement of one-third in the rate of payment for the temporary incapacity, and would probably involve substantial enhancement of the amounts payable on account of death or permanent incapacity. On the basis of the present scales, the provisional view of the Government is that in respect of the more poorly paid workmen an enhancement would be justified and that in any case the minimum scales of compensation which resort from the application of Schedule 4 of the Act might suitably be raised. As for the waiting period the Government thinks that the possibility of "introducing" dating back provisions, as were at one time in force in England, deserves consideration. Another point on which opinion of the local governments is sought is the definition of "dependents" entitled to compensation. Suggestions are also sought for the fixation of liability of contractors and sub-contractors, the enforcement of the clause relating to returns prescribed by section 16 of the Act and on the provisions to be settled relating to procedure in fatal accidents.

To sum up the following are the main questions on which the Government of India are asking opinions from the provincial governments:-

- (1) To what fresh classes of employees, if any, should the Act be extended?
- (2) Should any provisions be introduced for securing workmen against possible loss by reason of the inability of their employer to pay any compensation that may be due?
- (3) To what extent, if any, should recurring payments be substituted for the lump sums at present payable under the Act?
- (4) Should the scales of compensation be enhanced either for the more poorly paid workmen or generally?
- (5) Should the waiting period be reduced either generally or in the case of those workmen who are disabled for more than ten days, and if so to what extent?
- (6) Should the list of relatives entitled to claim compensation be enlarged?
- (7) Should proof of dependence be required in order to enable a relative to claim compensation?
- (8) Should the compensation payable vary with the number of dependants and with the extent of their dependence on the deceased workmen?
- (9) Should section 12 of the Act be amended
 - (a) so as to place the ultimate liability for compensation on the person directly employing the workmen in every case, or
 - (b) so as to place the ultimate liability for compensation on the principal, or
 - (c) in any other manner?
- (10) Should any penalty be provided in the Act for failure to comply with the provisions of section 16?
- (11) Should employers be required to submit returns of accidents in respect of which compensation has not been paid, and if so, to what accidents should this provision apply?
- (12) Should a dependant claiming compensation be relieved of the necessity of approaching the employer for the settlement of his claim?
- (13) What steps, if any, should be taken to ensure that dependants who may have valid claims for compensation do not lose compensation through ignorance of their rights?
- (14) Should employers be required to maintain a register of relatives of their workmen?
- (15) Should Commissioners be empowered to call on employers depositing inadequate compensation for fatal accidents to make a further deposit?
- (16) Should provision be made for the suspension of distribution by the Commissioner pending the disposal of an appeal against his decision?

(Condensed from Letter no. L-1125 dated New Delhi, 20th Nov 1925
from the Secretary to the Dept. of Industries and Labour, to all
Local Governments)

The Central Provinces Government Gazette of the 2nd March 1929 publishes for general information, with a view to eliciting public opinion, the text of two legislative enactments dealing with workmen's welfare and maternity benefit. These ^{private} Bills were introduced in the Central Provinces Legislative Council on the 21st and 22nd ~~February~~ ^{January} 1929 respectively and opinions thereon are to be forwarded to the Government before the 31st of May 1929. Below are given the full text of both the Bills:-

CENTRAL PROVINCES BILL No. I OF 1929.

THE CENTRAL PROVINCES WORKMEN'S
WELFARE BILL, 1929.

An Act to make provision for the health and welfare in general of the factory workers and their infants by providing for the establishment of dining sheds, rest rooms, crèches or day nurseries for the infants of the female employees, etc.

WHEREAS it is expedient to make provision for the welfare of the employees in the factories of the Central Provinces employing more than 100 persons on an average per day, by the establishment of water rooms, provision for water taps or reservoirs for pure drinking water, dining sheds, rest rooms, crèches or day nurseries under the direction, superintendence and control of Welfare Committees to be formed in the manner herein-after laid down in this Act;

and

WHEREAS the previous sanction of the Governor General required by clause (f) of section 80-A(3) of the Government of India Act has been obtained to the

to the passing of this Act :

It is hereby enacted as follows :-

1.(a) This Act may be called the Central Provinces Workmen's Welfare Act, 192 .

(b) It extends to the whole of the Central Provinces and applies to all workmen or employees in factories employing more than 100 persons on any one day:

Provided that the Local Government may, unless otherwise directed by the Legislative Council by a resolution moved therein, by notification in the Gazette, ~~may~~ exempt any factory from the operation of the whole or any part of the Act for a period not exceeding one year at a time, on the ground of loss in business or trade depression.

(c) It shall come into force on such day as the Local Government may notify after the passing of the Act.

2. In this Act -

- (a) "Factory" means a factory as defined in the Indian Factories Act.
- (b) "Employee" means a worker or wage earner and includes a male as well as female worker in a factory.
- (c) "Child or infant" wherever used in the Act means an offspring of an employee, that cannot be conveniently left alone for a long time or is under five years of age.
- (d) "Union" means a union or association registered under the Indian Trades Union Act.
- (e) "Employer" includes an owner or occupier of a factory or a manager as defined in the Indian Factories Act.
- (f) "Qualified Medical Practitioner" means a qualified medical practitioner as defined in the Workmen's Compensation Act.
- (g) "Inspector" means an Inspector of Factories as defined in the Indian Factories Act.

3. (a) Every factory to which this Act applies shall be provided with the following welfare arrangements in accordance with the rules framed by the Local Government for

guidance of the Welfare Committees to be established as hereinafter provided :-

- (i) Provision of suitable rooms for drinking water, or provision of water taps or clean water reservoirs, so as to ensure a supply of pure drinking water inside the premises of the factory.
- (ii) Mess rooms or dining sheds and rest rooms in accordance with the recommendations and instructions of the Welfare Committee, where the employees can take their food and rest themselves during the interval, with due safeguard for their health.
- (iii) Such number of lavatories and urinals for all classes of employees as is prescribed by the Welfare Committee of the factory.
- (iv) Crèches or day nurseries for the children of the female employees in the premises of the factory to be looked after by nurses employed and paid by the factory.

4. (a) The Inspector of Factories shall issue a notice against the manager, owner or occupier of a factory to which the Act applies and wherein the welfare arrangements contemplated by sections 3(1), (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the Act do not exist or have ceased to exist, to make provision for the same within 4 months next after the receipt of the notice.

(b)(i) In case of wilful failure to comply with the said notice the manager, owner or occupier of such factory, shall be liable, on a complaint made by the Chief Inspector to the nearest First Class Magistrate having jurisdiction, to a prosecution for and conviction for disobedience of the order duly promulgated by a public servant as defined in the Indian Penal Code; and

(ii) shall also be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs.50 for each day of default in complying with the notice under section 4(a) of the Act.

5. Every employee shall be entitled as of right to the free use of the welfare arrangements contemplated by this Act subject to rules made under section 10 of the Act:

Provided that no employee unless a female shall be entitled to the use of crèches for children provided by section 3(iv) of the Act.

6. No employee shall be required to pay anything for the benefits enjoyed by him by reason of this Act either to the owner, occupier or manager of such factory or any nurse or qualified medical practitioner employed by the factory.

7. (a) For every factory to which this Act applies there shall be established by the Local Government or the Chief Inspector of Factories a Welfare Committee for a period not exceeding three years and the said Committee shall consist of -

- (i) 5 representatives of the employers or owners of the factory:
- (ii) 5 representatives of the union of the employees in the factory or if no union exists 5 representatives chosen by the employees in accordance with the rules framed under section 10 of the Act.
- (iii) 5 representatives nominated by the Local Government of whom at least 2 shall be qualified medical practitioners and one shall be the Sub-divisional or the District Magistrate.

(b) The aforesaid Committee shall elect a Chairman from amongst its members in accordance with the rules framed by the Local Government in this behalf.

8. The Welfare Committee shall, subject to rules made under this Act, be responsible for the direction, superintendence and control of the welfare arrangements provided by the Act, so as to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of proper health and safety of the employees or their children as the case may be.

9. (a) If the Welfare Committee finds that any arrangement provided by section 3 of the Act is not satisfactory or is insanitary, inconvenient or unsuited to the manners and customs of the employees or needs repairs or change of any kind it shall be lawful for such Committee

to make a written ~~xxx~~ complaint to the Inspector of Factories.

(b) On receipt of a report under section 9(a), the Chief Inspector of Factories shall call upon the owner, occupier or manager of such factory to construct, repair or improve the arrangements as nearly as possible in accordance with the recommendations of the Welfare Committee, by means of a notice in writing, within the time specified by him.

(c) On failure to comply with the said notice within the prescribed time every owner, occupier or manager of such factory shall be liable to the penalty contemplated by section 4(b)(ii) of the Act, on a complaint to the nearest First Class Magistrate having jurisdiction.

10.(i) Subject to the control of the Governor in Council, the Chief Inspector of Factories may, from time to time, make rules for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Act and may attach to the breach of any such rules a penalty which may extend to 100 rupees.

(ii) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power such rules may provide for -

- (a) election or nomination of the members of the Welfare Committee formed under section 7(a) of the Act:
- (b) the number, size, form, pattern or plan of the dining sheds or mess rooms, lavatories, urinals, drinking-water-rooms, water taps or reservoirs and crèches under section 3 of the Act:
- (c) the number of nurses required for any factory together with the qualifications and training necessary for such nurses:
- (d) forms of notices under sections 4 and 9 of the Act, and the manner of service of such notices:
- (e) regulations for the conduct of the business, meetings, etc., of the Welfare Committee and the mode by which they shall be dissolved or any casual vacancies filled up:
- (f) the form in which reports shall be made by such Committees:
- (g) regulations for the proper and sanitary upkeep and repairs of the welfare arrangements contemplated by the Act and for their periodical inspection by the Inspector of Factories.

11. Notwithstanding anything contained hereinbefore, the Welfare Committees' recommendations made from time to time with regard to the arrangements under section 3 of the Act shall be given effect to as nearly as possible by the Inspector of Factories by means of rules framed under section 10 aforesaid unless the Local Government otherwise directs.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

The death rate amongst the factory hands is abnormally high, and with the long working hours at present, it is not possible for the factory workers to go to their respective homes during the midday interval for meals; neither is it possible for the female employees to keep their babies at home for the whole day. Reports are not wanting to show that it is a common thing to see ~~in~~ tiny children playing on the dangerous gins or being nursed by their mothers. The atmosphere is full of dust, ^{and Cotton waste. Apart from the dangerous effects of such a practice, one and} and imagine the terrible effects of such conditions on the health of infants, and yet there is nothing in the Factory Act to prevent such children being nursed within the working department of the factory.

There are no facilities for mess rooms or rest rooms, and when the midday syren is sounded it is a common sight to see the operatives sitting on the stairs or in the corridors or by their machines - some eating while others are asleep, for no rest rooms are provided.

There are ^{only} few factories in the province which are no doubt doing their best in this direction but their number is negligible. The workers are not organised and neither do they get such high wages as to afford adequate arrangements contemplated by the Act at their own cost. The duty of maintaining the health of the operatives rests on the employers and on the Government primarily and it is very

necessary that there should be legislation in this matter if the workers are not intended to be dragged into a sort of conflict going all over the country.

The expenditure required of the factory owners would be comparatively negligible.

Welfare Committees would ensure the proper working of the Act and the penal clauses in the Act are merely to make it obligatory on all factory owners to give effect to the Act.

The Act does not apply to factories employing less than 100 persons in any one day.

R. W. Fulay
Member in charge

CENTRAL PROVINCES BILL No. VI OF 1929.

THE CENTRAL PROVINCES MATERNITY BENEFIT BILL, 1929.

A Bill to make provision for absence of work during advance state of pregnancy, and some time before and after confinement, and for the payment of maternity benefits to women-workers in the factories in the province during such periods.

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the welfare of the female-workers in the factories of the province, payment of maternity benefits some time before and after confinement; and

WHEREAS the previous sanction of the Governor General required by clause (f) of section 80-A(3) of the Government of India Act has been obtained to the passing of this Act;

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. (a) This Act may be called the Central Provinces Maternity Benefit Act, 192 .

(b) It extends to the whole of the Central Provinces and applies to factory-workers in all factories as defined in sections 2, 3(a) and (b) of the Indian Factories Act XII of 1911. Act.

(c) It shall come into force on such day as the Local Government may notify, after the passing of the Act.

2. In this Act -

(a) "Factory" means a factory as defined in the Indian Factories Act.

(b) "Qualified Medical Practitioner" means a qualified medical practitioner as defined in the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923.

(c) "Benefit" means benefit as provided by this Act.

(d) "Employer" includes an occupier of a factory as defined in the Indian Factories Act or the Act XII of 1911. "manager" of a factory.

(e) "Inspector of Factories" means an Inspector as defined by the Indian Factories Act.

3. In any factory, to which this Act applies, a woman -

(a) shall have the right to leave her work if she produces a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner stating that her confinement will probably take place within six weeks; and

(b) shall be entitled to be absent from work for six weeks from the date of her confinement; and

(c) shall, while she is absent from her work in pursuance of sub-sections (a) and (b) of this section, be paid ~~at~~ the full amount of wages she would have but for her absence received during such periods, in accordance with the rules framed by the Local Government in this behalf.

4. If a woman dies at her confinement or during the period for which she is entitled to benefits, the remaining sums due as maternity benefit shall be paid to the person who undertakes the care of the child in accordance with rules made by the Local Government.

5. The maternity benefit which shall in no case be less than the actual wages of the woman concerned for three months of work, shall be paid by the employer, through the Inspector of Factories having jurisdiction within 15 days from the date of demand.

6. When a woman is absent from work in accordance with sub-section (a) or (b) of section 3, it shall not be for her employer to give her notice of dismissal during such absence, or at such a time that notice would expire during such absence without the previous written permission of the Chief Inspector of Factories.

7. An employer contravening any provision of the Act or any rule made thereunder, shall be punishable for disobeying the orders of a public servant under the requisite section in Chapter IX of the Indian Penal Code.

8. The Local Government shall make rules -

(1) for determining the manner of payment of benefit to the person entitled to receive it and the mode of application for the benefits :

(2) for calculating the amount of actual benefit payable under the Act;

(3) for recovery of such benefits from employers concerned by coercive processes if necessary.

9. The Inspector of Factories or the Chief Inspector of Factories shall have and perform the same power and duties for the purpose of section 3, sub-sections (a), (b) and sections 5 and 6 of this Act, as they may have and perform for the purpose of the Indian Factories Act.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

The object of the Bill is twofold: firstly, to enable the female factory-workers of the province to leave their

work, six weeks before and after confinement, and to prevent them from being dismissed for absence during such periods. Secondly, during the periods of such absence a woman-worker should be provided, with at least her ordinary wages, which might be of use for the maintenance of the worker and her children.

The money necessary for this purpose is to be paid, through the Inspector of Factories having jurisdiction, by the employer from the funds of the factory. The Act provides that the amount of benefit shall be the wages the worker would have otherwise received during her period of advanced ~~stage~~ state of pregnancy and after confinement.

The Bill seeks to carry out practically the proposals contained in the draft Convention passed at the First International Labour Conference held at Washington in 1919. Mr. Joshi had tried to bring a somewhat similar measure in the 1924 session of the Legislative Assembly; the present Bill is based on it, though it has been considerably limited in its scope and operation because of the limited powers of the local legislature. There is no doubt that such a measure is necessary. If industrialism is to be an unmixed blessing to the working classes, timely provision must be made to counter-act the evils incidental to the system.

As only a small proportion of women will be annually eligible for such benefits, the burden on the employers would be negligible. The average annual payment for such purpose amounts to about Rs. 3,200 in the Empress Mills, perhaps the only factory employing the largest number of women in the province.

The other provisions in the Bill are only incidental for the proper enforcement of the Act.

R. W. Fulay
Member in charge.

Regulations for prohibiting the employment
of women underground in Mines.

The Gazette of India, dated the 9th March 1929 publishes the following notification :-

No. M.-1055.- In exercise of the powers conferred by section 29 of the Indian Mines Act, 1923 (IV of 1923), the Governor General in Council is pleased to make the following regulations, the same having been previously published as required, by sub-section (1) of section 31 of the said Act, namely:-

Regulations for prohibiting the employment of
women underground in Mines.

1. These regulations shall have effect from the 1st day of July, 1929.
2. In these regulations -
 - (1) "exempted mine" means -
 - (a) coal mines in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the Central Provinces;
 - (b) salt mines in the Punjab; and
 - (2) "underground workings" means any part of a mine situated beneath the superjacent ground, and includes vertical shafts provided for access to, or for the ventilation of such part; but does not include tunnels made and used only for convenience in disposing of spoil.
3. No woman shall be permitted to enter or remain in the underground workings of any mine other than an exempted mine, unless she is authorised in that behalf in writing by the Chief Inspector.
4. In an exempted mine -
 - (1) up to and including the 30th day of June, 1939,-

- (a) no woman shall be permitted to enter or remain in the underground workings of the mine unless -
- (i) she is employed to work therein in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (b), or
 - (ii) she is authorised in that behalf in writing by the Chief Inspector, and
- (b) the total number of women employed to work in the underground workings of the mine on any day in any year specified in column 1 of the Schedule shall not be a greater percentage of the total number of persons, both women and men, so employed in the mine on that day than the percentage specified against that year, in the case of exempted coal mines, in column 2 and in the case of exempted salt mines, in column 3 of the Schedule; and
- (2) on and after the 1st day of July, 1939, no woman shall be permitted to enter or remain in the underground workings of the mine, unless she is authorised in that behalf in writing by the Chief Inspector.

--- SCHEDULE ---

Year.	Percentage of the total number of persons, both men and women, employed underground.	
	Exempted coal mines.	Exempted salt mines.
1.	2.	3.
1st July 1929 to 30th June 1930.	29	40
1st July 1930 to 30th June 1931.	26	36
1st July 1931 to 30th June 1932.	23	32
1st July 1932 to 30th June 1933.	20	28
1st July 1933 to 30th June 1934.	17	24
1st July 1934 to 30th June 1935.	14	20
1st July 1935 to 30th June 1936.	11	16
1st July 1936 to 30th June 1937.	8	12
1st July 1937 to 30th June 1938.	5	8
1st July 1938 to 30th June 1939.	2	4

(sd) A. e. M. *Mazumdar*
Secretary to Govt. of India

CONDITIONS OF LABOURRailway Budget and Labour Welfare.

On the 19th February Sir George Rainy, Member for Railways and Commerce, presented the Railway Budget for the year 1929-30 in the Indian Legislative Assembly. The year 1928-29 had been reasonably prosperous from the railway point of view and the final result is estimated to be a gain of Rs. 10,71,00,000 on the working of the commercial lines. Even after making allowances for the loss on the working of the strategic lines, the closed accounts for the year are expected to show a net surplus of Rs. 90,00,000. In the estimates for 1929-30 there is expected a gross surplus of Rs. 11,50,00,000.

From the labour point of view the most important feature ~~part~~ of the budget is the addition of a new member to the Railway Board to look after establishment and staff questions. In dealing with the amelioration of the lot of the railway employees in the lower ranks, Sir George said that the Government were considering ways and means to remove legitimate grievances and to better the conditions of service, especially of the lowest paid men: "We shall set on foot a systematic examination of the service conditions of our lower paid employees in order to ascertain what are the measures which are most urgently called for in order to bring about an improvement. That will cover not only rates of pay and wages, but also reductions of working hours which would of course involve the employment of additional staff, the extension of provident fund benefits to classes who do not at present enjoy them, improvements in the housing conditions and so on We do not anticipate that the

schemes likely to be sanctioned in 1929-30 will cost more than Rs. 50,00,000 in a full year, and, of course, the expenditure in the first year will be smaller. On that basis we have included in the budget a sum of Rs. 2.8 millions and we have also provided a sum of Rs. 3 millions under capital for the building of additional quarters where they are found necessary..... What I have said leads up to what in my view is the most important proposal included in the present budget, I mean the addition~~nt~~ of a new member to the Railway Board..... specially charged with responsibility for all establishment questions and for the welfare of labour and of the staff generally". Elaborating the same idea, Sir George continued "In India we have to deal with a permanent change in the conditions under which industries and commerce must be carried on, and we must be ready to deal with problems which are impending as well as those which have already presented themselves for solution. Here it may suffice to give only one or two illustrations of the kind of questions which, under our existing organisation, it is almost impossible to handle adequately or expeditiously". The first illustration he gave dealt with the methods of handling labour disputes on the railways and the relations of the railway managements with the trade unions. Sir George argued that in these matters he should have the assistance of an officer of not lower rank than a member of the Board. The other illustration he gave referred to the obligations the Government of India have incurred under the Washington and Geneva Conventions for the sixty hour week and the weekly day of rest. "We have not yet succeeded in fully carrying out these obligations and it is clearly a matter of urgent public importance that there should be no further delay. But I do

not hesitate to say that if we have had in the past a member of the Board who would give his whole time to staff questions, we should have solved our difficulties at least 18 months ago".

The proposal to appoint the fifth member of the Railway Board was carried by a majority of 53 against 43, and it has now been announced that Mr. A. M. Hayman would be appointed to the post. The opposition, it may be remarked, was largely due to the fact that Mr. Hayman is an Anglo-Indian and has still now been in the Railway Finance department, thus having had no opportunities to develop labour sympathies. The Pioneer in its leading article of 21st February 1929 considers "that Sir George is just tinkering with the real problem" and ^{Complains} says "Geneva cannot be implemented, but Simla must".

All India Railwaymen's Federation.

The All India Railwaymen's Federation has submitted a memorandum of grievances to the Government of India and the Railway Board, and Sir George Rainy, has agreed to receive a deputation from the Federation some time next April to discuss the points raised in the memorandum which deal with such questions as wages, promotions, allowance scales, hours of attendance, off-days and holidays, housing and medical aid, leave, provident fund, fines and debits, victimisation, racial discrimination, etc. In a preliminary discussion which Sir George had with Mr. Giri, the General Secretary of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, on 22nd February 1929, he indicated that, in view of his announcement in the Railway budget speech about setting on foot a systematic enquiry into the conditions of service of the lower paid railway employees, it would not be possible for him to give any definite reply to the deputation. He hoped, however, to

ascertain from the deputation the relative importance and urgency of the grievances outlined in the memorandum. While he agreed that the Federation was a body whose views he might reasonably hear, he could not for a moment subscribe to the view that the questions discussed in the memorandum could become the subject of negotiations between the Federation on the one hand and the Government on the other. After the agents of the various railways had worked out their schemes of labour reform, Sir George thought that an opportunity for consultation with the representatives of labour might perhaps be taken.

Madras Labour and Simon Commission.

On 21st February 1929, the Simon Commission recorded the evidence of Mr. S. H. Slater, Madras Government Labour Commissioner. ~~According to him~~ ^{He said that} the total industrial labour population, according to the 1921 census, was two-and-a-half millions in the Madras Presidency. This included women and children. In Madras City the number of actual workers was 40,000 and there were another 100,000 in unorganised industries. There was no standardization of wages or standardization of work but, roughly speaking, a skilled artisan earned between Rs. 22-8 to Rs. 25 per month and an unskilled labourer about ten to twelve annas per day in the Madras City.

In rural areas the standard of wages of skilled labour was much the same. It may be between Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 per month, but in the case of unskilled labour it varied from four to eight annas per day. He estimated the total population of labourers and depressed classes taken jointly at about thirteen millions. He said that the really organized labouring class numbered only about 40,000 in the whole of

the Presidency and it was not worth while giving them ~~any~~ special separate representation. With regard to the unorganized labouring class and the depressed classes, he thought the best way to provide representation for them would be to lower the franchise qualification and thus bring in a large number of these.

He told Viscount Burnham that part of his work was done under the local Government and part under the Central. He thought it was a satisfactory arrangement and did not interfere in any way with the discharge of his duties. He was also in charge of immigration of labour to Ceylon. He could not say if immigrants to these places met with good treatment as he was not in charge of that. He was in touch with the Labour Commissioners of the two Governments concerned in Madras who recruited labour for immigration to those parts.

He did not think that provincial autonomy would interfere with the division of work of the Labour Commissioner under the Central and Provincial Governments.

Major Attlee was informed that the same rules as applied in regard to Ceylon and Malaya did not apply to Burma, to which place immigration was purely voluntary.

Replying to Sir A.P. Patro, witness said that he would have indirect elections for labouring classes through Labour Unions.

(Statesman, 23-3-'29; Times of India, 23-2-'29 and all papers).

MATERNITY BENEFITSIN THE TATA IRON AND STEEL COMPANY, LIMITED, JAMSHEDPUR.

1. From January 1st 1929 the Company will pay as Maternity benefit to weekly paid female employees of the Company the equivalent of six weeks' wages following confinement providing that

- (a) The woman shall have been in the continuous employ of the Company for not less than 12 months prior to the date of confinement;
- (b) The woman undertakes during the period of six weeks following confinement not to do any work outside her own home;
- (c) That notification of birth is made to the Company main Hospital within three days of its occurrence.

2. Employees who wish to take advantage of this benefit must register their claim at the Employment Bureau. The Employment Bureau will arrange for the woman to be examined at the Hospital who will state the probable date of birth. If the claim is in order the Employment Bureau will issue a leave of absence permit for 6 weeks and payment will then be made of three weeks wages.

3. On receipt of notification of birth, the Chief Medical Officer will arrange for varification noting the date on the certificate issued by him.

4. The certificate will be handed in at the Employment Bureau who will make the necessary endorsement on it after which payment of the other three weeks wages will be made.

5. Before resuming work,, the woman must report at the Employment Bureau when a fresh weekly ticket will be issued.

(Information taken from a press communique issued by
the Co.)

Strikes in British India in 1928.

According to a press communique issued by the Government of India, the total number of strikes during the year ended 31st December 1928 was 203, and the total number of men involved was 506,851, as compared with 129 strikes involving 131,655 men during 1927. The total number of working days lost during the year was 31,647,404 which is even greater than the total number of working days lost in the five preceding years taken together. The corresponding figure for 1927 was only 2,019,970. In the 60 disputes in Bengal, 126,575 men were involved, and 3,940,457 working days lost; in the 111 disputes in Bombay, 318,531 men were involved and 24,629,715 working days lost; in Bihar and Orissa there were 8 disputes involving 30,288 men and costing 2,523,994 working days; and Madras had 7 disputes involving 19,778 men and costing 291,284 working days. In comparison with the Bombay, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Madras disputes, the industrial troubles in the other provinces were of much smaller account. Nearly every prominent industry suffered from the prevailing discontent; the Jute Mills of Calcutta, the Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur, the railway workshops at Lillooah and Lallaguda; and the Textile Mills of Bombay were all the scenes of prolonged stoppages of work. The general strike in the Bombay mills alone accounted for a loss of 22,347,620 working days. There were in the cotton and woollen mill industry as a whole 110 disputes involving 323,484 men and the lost time was 24,851,274 days; the 19 disputes in the Jute Mills involved 64,524 men and the time lost was 1,556,808 working days; there were 11 strikes in engineering workshops, (37,688 men; 3,148,706 working days lost) and 9 strikes in Railways and Railway Workshops (49,400 men, 1,874,313 working days lost).

The causes of the disputes may be thus analysed:- disputes over wages, 109: Bonus, 1: personnel, 44: leave and hours, 6: miscellaneous, 43. The workers were successful in 27, and partially successful in 41 disputes; in 128 disputes they were completely unsuccessful, and 7 disputes were still in progress at the beginning of 1929.

Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee.

The Strike Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay to conduct an examination into the main points ~~of~~ at issue in the dispute between the textile workers and mill-owners of Bombay concluded its labours in the third week of February, after a final summing up regarding the standardization scheme by the representatives of the workers as well as employers. While an agreement appears to have been reached on the details of the scheme, no understanding has yet been arrived on the point whether a cut in the weavers' wages of 7½% of their present earnings is justifiable or not. In the course of their summing up, the millowners' representatives declared it was not the intention of the Millowners' Association to introduce standardisation before the 1st October 1929. The Committee would, of course, give its decision in regard to the seventeen demands put forward by the labour representatives (see ~~November~~ ^{December} report) as also the standing orders proposed by the Millowners' Association. It is expected that the Enquiry Committee will make its report to the Government of Bombay before the end of this month.

(Pioneer, 25-2-1929 and all papers).

Sir Pheroze Sethna summarised the result of the recent Bombay strikes at the annual general meeting of the Central

Bank of India, and according to him, "the six months of stoppage of work by the spinning and weaving mills of Bombay involved the country in a loss of five crores of rupees, besides facilitating large imports of foreign textile goods to the detriment of the country's trade".

Ahmedabad Labour Dispute.

The Ahmedabad labour dispute about the question of increased wages for mill workers is still dragging on. The sub-committee appointed by the Millowners' Association to consider the Labour Union's demand for increased wages held a joint discussion with the representatives of the Union on the 22nd February (Hindu, 23-2-'29). The summary of the profits, dividends and reserve funds of the mills prepared by the millowners showed that profits were dwindling down steadily year after year since 1926. The Labour Union therefore has changed its demand from increase in wages to at least restoration of the cuts in wages effected in 1923. At a meeting of the Millowners' Association held on the 24th February, it was resolved that the Labour Union's demand for restoration of the cuts of 1923 was not justified by the present state of the textile industry, but that the Association was prepared to refer the question to the Arbitrative Board. The millowners are preparing their statement to be placed before the arbitrators.

(Pioneer, 27-2-1929).

On the 16th February 1929 a meeting of the textile workers of Nagpur was held under the auspices of their Union to formulate their minimum demands. Their principal demands are:-

- (1) grant of maternity allowance,
- (2) minimum wage for every worker to be fixed at Rs. 30 per mensem,
- (3) recognition of the Nagpur Textile Union, and
- (4) abolition of the double khada system (deduction of two days' wages for one day's absence.)

(Times of India, 18-2-1929).

On the 22nd February 1929 there was a serious labour clash between two groups of workers of the Tata Steel Works at Jamshedpur. According to the Times of India of 25th February 1929, the incident is the outcome of the long standing tension arising out of the existence of two rival labour bodies, one under Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose (a swarajist leader of Calcutta), and the other under Mr. Manek Homi (a Parsi lawyer of Bombay). As a result of the clash the offices of the Jamshedpur Labour Association were wrecked and cash to the extent of Rs. 1,000 was looted.

(Pioneer, 25-2-1929).

The Colombo Tram Strike.

Serious disturbances took place in Colombo in the latter half of January and February because of considerable labour unrest in the city. The Ceylon Labour Union, which has been only very recently started, was the first attempt to organise the labour population of the city. With the organisation of the Union, Ceylon labour had become conscious of its rights and had developed "grievances" against what it asserted to be the general low standards of wages obtaining in the city. The simmering discontent found its first active expression in the strike of the Colombo Motormen and Conductors in the employ of the Tramways and Lighting Co., Ltd. The strike

began on 21-1-1929 and continued till the 5th of the next month and had as its starting point the suspension of a tramway conductor, and the refusal of the administration to reinstate him in spite of a request to that effect made by Mr. Goonesinghe, president of the Union. To this was soon added a demand for 50 per cent increase in wages. The tramway administration offered an increase from Rs. 1 cents 20 to Rs. 1 cents 35 per day for probationers and explained that the wages were based on a rising scale under which after 18 years' service a conductor or driver will be drawing Rs.2.80 cents per day. The union not being prepared to accept these terms, the strike continued, accompanied by labour boycott measures in the other industrial activities of the local agents of the tramway company and occasional clashes with the police, which culminated in the Maradana riots of 5-2-29, when the police and the military had to open fire on the crowd resulting in four casualties and injuries to 300 persons. The strike came to an end the same day, the terms of settlement being understood to be that all strikers should be re-engaged without penalisation and that the wages question should be submitted for arbitration. According to the Times of Ceylon of 5-2-29, the strike riots paled into insignificance even the communal riots of 1915" and the same paper in its issue of the 7th February refers to a statement by the Colonial Secretary foreshadowing the passing of stringent labour legislation to regulate the activities of labour unions.

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION.

Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

The Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta held its annual general meeting on February 15th, under the presidentship of Mr. Fai³ulla Gangjee, a leading merchant of Calcutta. In his presidential speech, Mr. Gangjee made a review of the trade conditions of India during 1928, and said that the year was a very unfavourable one for India. He referred to the anaemic condition of Indian agriculture, and laid the blame for it on the Government's insistence on a 1s.6d. ratio against the best opinion of the country. According to him, trade conditions in India were at present particularly depressing. The jute industry of Bengal was in a very sad plight, equally dismal was the outlook for Bombay's cotton industry, while the condition of rice in Burma was even sadder. Mr. Gangjee estimated that the total loss of foreign trade in rice alone for 1928 amounted to Rs. 10 crores, and said that the problem does not concern Burma alone, but should be treated as an all-India one. Mr. Gangjee advocated vigorous governmental action for the protection of Indian industrial and trade interests, and said that the Banking Enquiry announced recently by Sir George Schuster, should be expedited with a view to the speedy righting of the grave wrong inflicted by the present 1s.6d. ratio.

(Hindustan Times, 18-2-1929).

The Upper India Chamber of Commerce.

At the 41st annual general meeting of the Upper India Chamber of Commerce held at Cawnpore on the 22nd February, considerable attention was devoted to the present labour situation in India. Referring to the phenomenally large

number of strikes in 1928, Mr. A. L. Carnegie, the president said that "the demands put forward by the strikers in several instances had been so palpably absurd or so redolent of the doctrines of communism, as to make it apparent that there was some sinister organisation bent upon using the workers to further its own aims". According to Mr. Carnegie this was the result of the "forcing on India of premature labour legislation in the shape of the Trade Unions Act", at a time when Indian Trade Unions were not able to protect themselves against designing outside exploiters. Discussing the provisions of the Trades Disputes Bill, Mr. Carnegie said that he strongly objected to the infliction of Boards of Conciliation on parties who were unwilling to submit to arbitration, and to the provision investing the Boards of Conciliation with powers to compel the production of evidence and the attendance of witnesses. He hoped that the Whitley Commission would conduct a most searching inquiry into the subject.

Speaking at the same meeting Mr. S.H. Taylor, a member of the Chamber advocated that "in view of labour troubles and the state of labour legislation, a Federation or Association of Employers should be formed" to express the employers' point of view on labour questions.

(Pioneer, 24-2-1929).

Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

The annual General meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce was held on the 22nd February in the Royal Exchange at Calcutta under the presidentship of Sir George Godfrey. Several speakers expressed apprehension at the recurring labour troubles in India, and stressed the need for arming the police with greater powers to check lawlessness during

labour disputes. Sir George Godfrey pointed out that it often happened that during strikes, the strikers and their pickets overshadowed the police. He referred to the recent Bombay riots, and the report of the Red International and said that Europeans wanted whole-heartedly to co-operate with Indians, to save India from the disasters similar to that of Russia.

(Times of India, 25-2-1929)

U. P. Chamber of Commerce.

The 15th annual general meeting of the U.P. Chamber of Commerce was held on the 25th February, under the presidency of Mr. W. C. De Noronha. Referring to the Trades Disputes Bill, Mr. Noronha said, "it would have been much better if the Government had confined the Bill to its first part which would have ensured its safe passage through the legislature. Controversial provisions could be embodied in a separate Bill or their consideration postponed pending the enquiry into labour conditions by the Whitley Commission".

(Hindustan Times, 28-2-1929).

Indian Mining Federation.

The annual general meeting of the Indian Mining Federation was held at Calcutta on the 27th February under the presidency of Mr. A.L.Ojha, M.L.C., who suggested the constitution of an Indian Economic Council on the lines of the German Federal Economic Council for the better adjustment of the new and rapidly changing economic life of India. Referring to labour troubles, he said that the position in the coal-fields has been satisfactory, but entered a strong protest against all attempts to bring labour conditions in India up

the social standards in richer countries, and asked "Can India yet carry out all the recommendations of Washington and Geneva? The fact is that one cannot aim at A 1 labouring conditions in C 3 industries of limited means, as the bulk of the enterprises in India are at present.

(Statesman, 1-3-1929).

ECONOMIC CONDITIONSBudget for 1929-30

Sir George Schuster, Finance Member of the Government of India, presented to the Indian Legislative Assembly on 28-2-29 the budget for 1929-30. The estimates of revenue and expenditure are Rs. 1331.6 and Rs. 1340.6 millions respectively, leaving a deficit of Rs. 9 millions which is to be met from the ^{Revenue} Reserve Fund which now stands at Rs. 10.4 millions. Sir Basil Blackett's principle of balancing current expenditure with current revenue is here deviated from: but Sir George did not think it justifiable to impose new taxation until he was convinced that there was a permanent need for it. The Finance Member also announced that Government would require a total new loan of Rs. 180 millions: and while his predecessor's loan policy was to raise all available money from India, Sir George Schuster sees no objection to borrowing abroad, though no decision on this point has yet been taken. An important feature of the Budget is the setting up of a Road Fund, for feeding which import and excise duties on motor spirit are raised from 4 to 6 annas per gallon. As for the "ratio" controversy, ^{Sir George} he advised Indian publicists to accept the 1s.6d to the rupee rate as a chose jugée, and warned them that stability would suffer if attempts are once again made to alter it.

... ..

Banking Enquiry.

A Government press communiqué of the 17th February announces that the Finance Member, in consultation with the representatives of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and

the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce who have been demanding an enquiry into Indian banking, has agreed that the object should be to enquire into existing conditions of banking in India, and to make recommendations for the expansion of indigenous banking, both stock and "shroffi", with special reference to agriculture, commerce and industry. A further discussion with the representatives of Indian commercial and industrial interests will be held before the final inauguration of the enquiry.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.Madras Presidency.

The Madras Legislative Council has appointed a Committee of seven non-official members of the house to enquire into the economic condition of the districts of Kistna, Godaveri East and Godaveri West and to report to Government by the 1st October 1929. In explaining to the House the motion for electing the Committee, Sir Norman Marjoribanks said that a resolution on this subject was accepted by the House on 28th November 1928, as members were desirous that the information collected by the Settlement Officers in the course of their duties should be checked and supplemented by those chiefly interested in the matter. The Government will keep an open mind on the subject, and give their best consideration to the Committee's Report before making any alterations in the existing rates of assessment.

(Madras Legislative Council proceedings of 30-1-29).

Economic Survey of Hyderabad.

This Office Report for December 1928 referred at page 30 to the economic survey which the Government of the State had just then ordered. According to information now available the original plan was to intensively examine four average-sized villages at random in every district in the State. But it has now been ordered that as a beginning, the special officer appointed for the purpose should take up twelve villages in the Nanded District in order to obtain a fair idea of the conditions prevalent therein. This enquiry will be concluded with inspection of all the marketing facilities of the district. Though the Special Officer considered it too early to give a ^{final} ~~considered~~ opinion, he, nevertheless,

felt confident that correct and complete information on economic matters could be obtained from the villagers without much difficulty.

(Pioneer, 22-2-1929).

Bardoli Committee's Report.

Some time ago, the inhabitants of Bardoli in Gujrat (Bombay Presidency) alleged that they were being overtaxed by the land revenue authorities, and by an organised campaign of non-payment of taxes, in which the district was actively assisted by Gandhi and Vallabhai Patel, compelled the Government to modify the old assessment rates. In July last year, a small non-official committee was appointed by the Nationalist Party of the Bombay legislature ~~to~~ to look into the question, and its report, which is ~~published~~ ^{based} mainly on the evidence of Mr. Vallabhai ^{by} ~~and~~ Patel and his associates, (the Government of Bombay not having given any response to Committee's overtures) has now been published. According to newspaper reports, the Committee, where it deals with the hardship inflicted upon the people of Bardoli, makes out a restrained and moderate case for the people, and suggests in its recommendations a complete change in the land revenue policy of the Presidency. It further emphasises the need for defining more precisely the relations between Government and the people and limiting the powers of the Executive. According to the leading article of the Pioneer in its issue of the 10th March "there can be few who would not maintain that there is a distinct need for the "principle of assessment" to be brought into line with the civilised notions of land tax prevailing in the West", and there ~~can~~ must be fewer still, who will deny that there should be universal

appeal to civil courts, where the assessment is alleged to be unsatisfactory." It therefore recommends a thorough investigation into ~~the state of~~ land revenue policy as it is worked at the present day. In Bombay, legislation has not yet been passed, as it has been in the Punjab and the United Provinces, in accordance with the important recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the Government of India Bill, 1919, that there should be embodied in the law the main principles by which land revenue is determined; and the Bombay Bill which is now under consideration is regarded as extremely unsatisfactory.

(A copy of the report will be forwarded when it is available in this office).

Land Revenue Law Reform in the Punjab.

The Punjab Land Revenue (Amendment) Bill No.2 of 1927 as passed by the Legislative Council on May 11, 1928, has now been assented to by the Viceroy. Its purpose is to rectify the defects of the earlier Act of 1887. Former discussions on land law reform laid greater emphasis on the duration of assessment than on the ratio of enhancements. The Report of the Joint Select Committee of the House of Commons which considered the Government of India Bill of 1919 shed additional light on the problem and recommended that there should be definite statutory provision for the various processes of land revenue assessment. The following quotation of the relevant passages of the Report explains the position in the Punjab (and elsewhere) before the New Act.

"The Committee are impressed by the objections raised by many witnesses to the manner in which certain classes of taxation can be laid upon the people of India by executive action without, in some cases, any statutory limitation of

of the rates and, in other cases, any adequate prescription by statute of the methods of assessment. They consider that the imposition of new burdens should be gradually brought more within the purview of the Legislature. And in particular, without expressing any judgment on the question whether the land revenue is a rent or tax, they advise that the process of revising the land revenue assessments ought to be brought under closer regulation by statute as soon as possible.

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(basis for charging revenue on the

"At present the statutory land varies in different provinces: but in some at least the pitch of assessment is entirely at the discretion of the executive Government. No branch of the administration is regulated with ~~the~~ greater elaboration or care: but the people who are most affected have no voice in the shaping of the system, and the rules are often obscure and imperfectly understood by those who pay the revenue. The Committee ~~is~~ are of opinion that the time has come to embody in the law the main principles by which the land revenue is determined, the methods of valuation the pitch of assessment, the periods of revision, the graduation of enhancements and the other chief processes which touch the well-being of the revenue payers".

By introducing the original amending Bill of March, 1927 the Punjab Government was the first Government to take up the implementing of the Joint Select Committee's recommendation quoted above: the Punjab Legislative Council was the first Council to pass a Bill of the nature effecting the alteration popularly desired: and the Bill has been the first of its kind in India to receive assent.

According to the new Act, the maximum limit of the Government demand shall be one fourth instead of one half of the net assets. The ratio of enhancement permissible on reassessment is limited in any assessment circle to one-

fourth, and in any individual estate to two-thirds on the previous rate. Assessments will now remain unaltered for a forty-year period, with certain exceptions in the case of lands served by canal-irrigation introduced after the last assessment, or proposed to be introduced during the term of the settlement. Payment of land revenue wholly or partly in kind has also been abolished.

The Cotton Handloom Industry of Madras.

In September 1928 the Government of Madras constituted a Conference to discuss the working of the Textile section of its Industries Department, and to consider the lines of future progress. The Conference held six sittings from the period September 1928 to January 1929 and submitted its recommendations to the Madras Government in February 1929.

The Textile Cottage Industries of the Madras Presidency include cotton, silk, wool, coir hosiery, lace embroidery, sericulture, etc., and ranks next in importance only to agriculture. The Conference, however, confined its attention to the cotton weaving branch only, the most important of such cottage industries. The report finds that the industry does not show any sign of decline, but that on the contrary since the war the production of cotton cloth on handlooms has increased by nearly 200 million yards per annum or by nearly 20 per cent. From the figures of the rate and cost of production of cotton cloth on the handlooms, the report concludes that, "the fallacies regarding the economic inefficiency of the handloom which have so long held the field have been exposed." The cost of handloom production is lower than that of the power loom, and for the same investment the quantity of cloth produced on the handloom

is larger than on the power loom. The difficulty confronting the handloom industry was that when the handloom cloth reached the markets, its price was higher by 7 to 10 per cent than that of the power products. The problem, therefore, was to remove the disparity in prices so that this important cottage industry may flourish, providing continuity of employment for weavers, and part time work for agriculturists during seasons of unemployment.

The cotton mill industry of India was accorded protection by the Government by the removal of the excise duty on cloth, enhancement of the import duty on yarns, removal of the import duty on machinery and by the appointment of a trade mission to find markets for the products of power looms. The Conference is of opinion that similar measures of protection should be extended to the handloom industry also. In order to mitigate the severity of competition between power looms and handlooms the Conference recommends that "the duty on yarns of counts above 40 should be removed, and in the case of yarns below 40 s which are mainly supplied by Indian mills, government may stipulate a condition that they should not be below a standard strength test, and should be of the reputed count, correct length and weight. Government may also assist the handloom industry by providing facilities by rail for transporting yarn and cloth for weavers' cooperative societies.

Other solutions for the removal of the present disparity in prices by internal development of the handloom industry, which would bring about a mutual adjustment are also being sought. The Textile Expert of the Madras Government makes the following recommendations:-

(a) an organisation for securing yarns at a favourable rate either by direct purchase from mills or by starting of

a cooperative spinning mill,

(b) an organisation for the preparation and distribution of ready made warps,

(c) employment of two looms instead of one, with the help of members of the weavers' family relieved from the labour warp preparation,

(d) an organisation for the marketing of handloom cloth,

The Textile Expert's scheme involves activities in the direction of improvement in the technique of the handloom, imparting technical training, bringing into existence linked organisations for the supply of ready made warps and placing the industry on a commercial footing by cooperative organisation. Some of the other recommendations made by the Conference are:-

(1) The imparting of weaving instruction in aided industrial schools in the mofussil should be more strictly inspected by a competent supervising staff.

(2) The present system of demonstration of improved methods of weaving by peripatetic parties should be more vigorously continued.

(3) The economic conditions of the weavers should be bettered, and towards that end, a system of cooperative societies specially designed for credit arrangements, cheap supply of yarns and marketing facilities should be set up.

(4) Efforts should be made for the introduction of mechanized processes to be linked with handlooms.

Special attention is drawn to the cutting from the Hindu giving the full text of the recommendations of the Textile Conference, as also to the cutting from the Statesman of 27-2-29, dealing with the handloom industry in Bihar and Orissa.

Indian Tariff Board's Activities.

The findings of the Tariff Board with regard to the application for the removal of tariff inequality in respect of the manufacture of printing type in India are published by the Pioneer of 3-1-29. The problem in a nutshell is to devise measures for removing tariff inequalities by adjusting the duties so as to afford relief to type foundries which import type metal as well as to those which manufacture it locally. The Tariff Board report finds that "the only method which will afford assistance to both class of producers is an increase on the duty of printing type". The Board has, therefore, recommended "that the duty of printing type should be fixed at a rate corresponding to the duty paid on imported type metal, the tariff inequality being higher in this case". Further, in view of the rapid decline in the prices of German type the Board has recommended "that the duty on printing type should be converted from an 'ad valorem' into a specific duty". The Board has turned down the plea for protection of the printing type industry in India, as on the admission of the applicants themselves, the Indian type foundries supply more than 80 per cent of the Indian market and as such protective measures are not needed at present.

The application of the Indian Cable Company for the removal of disabilities in the matter of tariff treatment was also considered by the Tariff Board. The crux of the trouble is that the development of certain industries in India is hampered by the fact that the duty on the finished article is lower than the duty on the materials which have to be imported for the manufacture of that article. In respect of the cable construction industry in India the Board has recommended that "the duty on electrolytic copper rod, known as 'black rod'

be removed; that a duty of 5 per cent be levied on rubber insulated electrical wires and cables other than those specified in Article 90-A of the Tariff Schedule". The Board, while declining to recommend the grant of a bounty to the industry, however, finds that "on the materials placed before us there is a prima facie case for holding an enquiry into the industry's claim for protection".

Draft Bill for Registration of Nurses, Midwives and "Dais."

The Government of Bombay have circulated for opinion a draft Bill submitted by the Bombay Presidency Nursing Association, making provision for the examination and registration of nurses, midwives and dais (country nurses) in the Presidency. The Bill proposes to establish a Nursing Council whose duty will be to maintain an official register of qualified nurses, midwives and dais. The first Council will consist of 25 members, with the Surgeon General as president. The other members, including the president of the Examination Board, will be nominated by the Governor-in-Council. Three of these at least will be registered medical practitioners, and three will be persons registered as nurses and midwives. The Council will supervise the training and conduct the examinations necessary for admission to the register, and will also assist in such training by grants to institutions etc., The supervising authority will, besides exercising general supervision of registered persons, investigate charges of malpractice, negligence or misconduct, and will report such cases to the Council. The Bill provides a penalty of Rs. 300 for persons who falsely pretend to be registered under the Act and take or use the name or title of registered nurse. The Bill invests the Government with the right to interfere in case the Council has failed to exercise, or has abused the powers conferred upon it by the Act.

(Times of India, 12-2-1929).

MARITIME AFFAIRS.

Deferred Rebates Abolition Bill.

Interest in maritime affairs was revived in the Assembly, when on the 20th February, Mr. S.N.Haji proposed the motion for reference to a Select Committee of his Bill to abolish the system of deferred rebates in the coasting trade. The Bill is complementary to the Coastal Reservation Bill sponsored by the same member, and to which reference has been made in the February report. While the Coastal Reservation Bill aims at keeping shipping earnings in India, the Deferred Rebates Abolition Bill is intended to ensure a fair distribution of business among Indian shipping companies. Mr. Haji, in his speech supporting reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, points out that the evidences of witnesses before the Royal Commission of 1907, the Imperial Shipping Committee of 1923, and the Mercantile Marine Committee of 1924 had condemned the continuance of the system of deferred rebates. Further, deferred rebates ^{was} ~~was~~ abolished by most of the Dominions, and even some of the provincial governments desired the abolition of the system. Under the system, the existing shipping of India tends to get concentrated in the hands of the P. and O. and its subsidiary companies and thus encouraged a monopoly. The system, in brief, allows a steamship company to levy freight charges at a certain nominal advertised rate, but enables the company to compel the patronage of shippers by the grant of rebates on the essential condition of a promise to use in future the "bottoms" of that particular shipping company only. "Disloyal" shippers are further penalised by refusal of shipping space at critical periods, by delaying shipment and by discrimination in freight adjustments. According to Mr. ~~Haji~~ Haji, the abolition

of the rebates system would at one stroke remove all these evils, and encourage the unhampered creation of an Indian mercantile marine. To say such action is based on racial discrimination is to condemn legislation which aims only at giving an essential minimum of national protection. The Assembly on the 20th February referred Mr. Haji's Bill to a Select Committee, despite the opposition of the Government and European interests, by 52 votes to 42.