

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICEINDIAN BRANCH

C1903/34

Report for September 1931.

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Co-operation in the Central Provinces & Berar, 1929-30*

Societies and Membership. - The most prominent feature of the year 1929-30 is the registration of 344 new societies. This number is the largest since 1920-21. The standard of strictness and caution in registering new societies was not relaxed. 161 societies were cancelled during the year and 122 reorganized. The number of primary credit societies at the end of the year stood at 4,020, as against 3,851 in the preceding year, and the number of all types rose from 3,954 to 4,137. Making allowance for the fact that the figures of previous years were inflated by the inclusion of 8,446 past members, there was a net increase of 4,600 members of societies during the year, the total membership standing at 128,800.

Recoveries. - The total recoveries from co-operative societies by the Central Banks amounted to Rs. 18,34,347 in the Central Provinces and Rs. 1,787,765 in Berar, as against Rs. 1,701,090 and Rs. 2,398,978 in the previous year. The total demand for the year was fixed at Rs. 10,467,070. Recoveries thus amounted to only 34.6 per cent of the demand. Adverse agricultural conditions in the northern districts and low prices were, no doubt, partially responsible for the poor recoveries, but the facts and figures cited by the Registrar conclusively prove that the will to recover the dues from the societies is not so strong and effective in some areas as in others.

Outstanding Loans. - The loans outstanding against members of co-operative societies at the close of the year under review amounted

to Rs. 6,886,094 in the Central Provinces and Rs. 9,852,678 in Berar, as against Rs. 6,463,895 and Rs. 9,222,069 respectively, in the previous year. The percentage overdues to the total dues increased from 50.2 to 53 in the Central Provinces and from 40 to 54.1 in Berar. Excluding dues from societies under award and under liquidation, the overdues amount to 35.2 per cent in the Central Provinces and 37.6 per cent in Berar, as against 28.1 per cent and 19.7 per cent of the last year.

Central Banks. " The Central Banks continued to enjoy the confidence of the depositing public as is evident from a further increase in the deposits from individuals from Rs. 13.5 millions to Rs. 14.4 million in spite of the reduction in the rates of interest made by some of the banks. It is unfortunate that full advantage of the deposits is not or cannot be taken by some of the banks in extending the benefits of co-operative finance to agriculturists for short-term agricultural purposes. The Government agrees with the Registrar that the Central Bank should not rest on their oars after merely collecting deposits, but should utilize them in financing agriculture at reasonably lower rates of interest.

The total working capital of banks increased from Rs. 22,636,280 to Rs. 24,055,947. Share capital fell from Rs. 1,988,333 to 1,968,632 for the whole province. Doubtful debts have decreased in the Central Provinces by Rs. 21,453, but have increased in Berar by Rs. 192,731, while bad debts have increased in Central Provinces by Rs. 50,763 and in Berar by Rs. 290,682. There is an increase of Rs. 512,723 in the total bad and doubtful debts. This is partly due to the fact that, while central banks are exercising clemency on the ground of economic depression, the other creditors of many members are bringing pressure to bear on them and getting hold of all their available assets.

Cash advances made by the Central Banks to the primary co-operative societies amounted to Rs.1,851,978 in Central Provinces and Rs. 1,839,227 in Berar, as against Rs. 1,522,958 and Rs. 1,884,237 respectively, of the preceding year. The increase in the Central Provinces is due to a revival of demand as a result of reorganization and registration of an increased number of societies.

(Progress of Co-operation in Central Provinces and Berar during 1928-29 is reviewed at pages 45-46 of the September 1930 report of this Office).

The Central Banking Enquiry Committee's
Recommendations re. Co-operation.

For a summary of the Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee's recommendations regarding the development and regulation of co-operative primary societies see pages 45-49 of this (September 1931) report.

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References to the I. L. O.

The Pioneer and the Hindustan Times of 4-9-31 and the Hindu of 5-9-31 reproduce in full an article contributed by Mr. John Cliff, Member, Royal Commission on Labour in India, under the caption "The Workers of India; How the I.L.O. Might Help the East" published originally in the August 1931 issue of Headway (Vol. XLIII, No. 8). (A short summary of the article was given at page 1 of the August 1931 report of this Office). Copies of the article were supplied to the more important of the Indian newspapers by this Office.

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The Pioneer and the Times of India of 7-9-31 and all papers published a short communique under the caption "Mission from the International Labour Office to China" dealing with the assistance given by the I.L.O. at the request of the Chinese Government to organise a factory inspection service in China. The communique was supplied by this Office to the Associated Press of India on 3-9-31.

* * *

On 10-9-31 Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh asked the following questions in the Legislative Assembly regarding the protest made by the Indian Employers' delegation re. the nomination of Mr. Tarlton to ^(as) 15th session of the I. L. Conference.

(a) Will Government kindly explain the circumstances under which Messrs. Walchand Hirachand, Ghosh, and Bagla, the Indian Employers' delegates to the International Labour Conference at Geneva, walked out of the Conference Hall in protest?

(b) Who is Mr. Tarlton; to what nationality does he belong;

who nominated him to represent India; and what are his antecedents and qualifications in this respect?

(c) Is it not a fact that the organisations which nominated Mr. Tarlton have a membership, 88 per cent. of which is incorporated in, controlled from, or belongs to Great Britain?

In reply Mr. J.A.Shillidy, Secretary, Industries and Labour Department of the Government of India, said:

(a) The gentlemen named are reported to have walked out of the Conference Hall as a protest against the action of the International Labour Conference in accepting the credentials of Mr. E.S.Tarlton as Adviser to the Indian employers' delegate.

(b) At the time of his nomination Mr. Tarlton was the Chairman of the Indian Mining Association. He is a British subject and was nominated by the Government of India in conformity with the provisions of Article 389 of the Treaty of Versailles. The nomination was upheld by the Credentials Committee and the Conference.

(c) Exact information is not available, but the answer to the question, as I understand it, is almost certainly in the negative.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: What is the strength of the organization which nominated Mr. Tarlton?

Mr. J.A.Shillidy: I did not catch the question.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh: With regard to (c), I should like to know how many Indians are on the organization which nominated Mr. Tarlton.

Mr. J.A.Shillidy: I cannot say quite how many Indians there are. I have not got the exact information; but the answer to the question is almost certainly in the negative.

Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar: Did the Honourable Member try to get the exact information?

Mr. J.A.Shillidy: No; I am afraid we cannot get the information.

The Text of Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's questions with Mr. Shillidy's answers is published in the Times of India of 11-9-31, and the Hindustan Times of 12-9-31, and also in ^{the} Legislative Assembly Debates dated 10-9-31 Vol.V NO.4. page 166.

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HK.

New India of 10-9-31 (Vol.V, New Series, No.24) publishes at page 4 a short article under the caption "India and the International Labour Conference". The article criticises the views expressed by Mr. Walchand Hirachand, the Indian Employers' delegate to the 15th I.L.Conference, regarding India's connection with the League and the I.L.O. at a recent meeting of the Committee of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay. He is reported to have said at this meeting; "It did not serve the interests of the Indian employers to be connected with the Labour Conference". Mr. Walchand Hirachand is also reported to have said that "Indian labour leaders, by going to Geneva, got exaggerated notions of what Labour achieved and could achieve in other countries and wanted to press for legislation of an advanced type in this country".

The article, after criticising Mr. Walchand Hirachand's views as those of an obscurantist, states that Sir Atul Chatterjee has a better claim, in virtue of his long association with the I.L.O., to give a just appreciation of what India has gained and may gain by her association with Geneva. The article then quotes several extracts from an interview recently given by Sir Atul Chatterjee to the Geneva correspondent of the "Indian Nation". In the course of the interview Sir Atul Chatterjee is reported to have said that as a result of participation in the Conference, "instead of being, in matters of Social Reform, confined in a backwater, India has mingled with the main stream of thought and action in these matters. Though without doubt the industrial legislation, which has been passed in India during the last ten years, has been profoundly influenced by the work of the International Labour Organization - that is the value of India's adhesion to it - it cannot be asserted that Geneva has, in any way, dictated to India; for every thing that had been considered and accepted at Geneva had to be placed before both Houses of the Legislature in India, where the Government of India did not possess a majority with which it could carry proposals not acceptable to the opinion represented in those

Houses". As regards the League, Sir Atul stated: "India has risen greatly in the esteem of the world as the result of the able discharge of their duties by the representatives of India at these Conferences".

The Servant of India of 3-9-31 (Vol. XLV No.35) publishes a short editorial note at page 418 on Mr. Walchand Hirachand's speech under the heading "Mr. Walchand's ill-considered Criticism". The note reproduces the following editorial comments on the speech published in the Leader, Allahabad.

"Mr. Walchand Hirachand is perfectly entitled to hold his own opinions and to give expression to them, but he is very much mistaken if he thinks that public opinion in India, including the section of Indians whom he was deputed to represent at Geneva, will endorse these views of his. Indeed, it is for the first time that we have heard a prominent Indian merchant expressing such views about Geneva. The International Labour Organization has already, within the short period of its existence done much to improve the lot of the working classes, and has for that reason incurred the displeasure of those who, deriving their inspiration from Moscow, like to fish in troubled waters and find in discontented labour a great field for pursuing their activities. Let Mr. Walchand know that if India and other countries should decide to break off connection with Geneva and if the institution should languish for want of support, nowhere will it cause greater satisfaction than at Moscow --- Frankly, we regard Mr. Walchand's criticism of Geneva as very ill-considered".

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The Hindu of 16-9-31 publishes a letter dated 28-8-31 from its Geneva correspondent in the course of which reference is made to the attention that has been drawn by the I.L.O. to the importance of the Ten-Year Plan of China in the 17-8-31 issue (Vol. XXXIX No.7) of Industrial and Labour Information. The letter also refers to a memorandum presented by the Director of the I.L. Office to the Committee of Credits of the European Commission of the League dealing with a proposal for remedying the existing unemployment by the institution of public works.

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The Hindu of 12-9-31 and the Hindustan Times of 14-9-31 publish an article prepared in this Office under the caption "Civil Servants Salaries: Substantial Cuts in Other Countries". Some of the material for the article is taken from the notes on Civil Servants' Salaries in Poland and Japan published in the issue of Industrial and Labour Information dated 3-8-31 (Vol. XXXIX No.5).

* * *

Dr. P. Subbaroyan, M.L.C., Ex-Minister of the Madras Government, made an appreciative reference to the I.L.C. in the course of the presidential address delivered by him at the Pondicherry Labour Conference on 6-9-31. He stated that labour problems were growing more and more important every day and that the present tendency was to deal with these problems from an international point of view rather than from a purely national one. He cited the instance of the various Conventions and Recommendations passed by the I.L. Conference as proof of the recognition of the increasing importance of labour problems in all progressive countries. A summary of Dr. Subbaroyan's speech is published in the Hindu of 7-9-31.

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A reference to the Washington Hours of Work Convention was made in the Council of State on 15-9-31 when the Hon'ble Mr. Jagdish Chandra Banerjee asked for information regarding the hours of work for railway servants fixed by the I.L. Conference and the observance of the Convention in India. The full text of the questions and the reply thereto is ^{reproduced} published at pages 14 of this report ⁱⁿ under

the section dealing with Conditions of Labour.

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At page 83 of the Report of the Millowners' Association, Ahmedabad, for the year 1930-31^{is} published the text of the communication sent to the Government of India by the Association giving the names of ~~the personnel of~~^{the} Association's nominees for the Indian Employers' Delegation to the 15th session of the I.L.Conference.

At ~~pages~~² 11-12 the Report of the Committee of the Mysore Chamber of Commerce for the year 1930-31 contains a reference to the Chamber's approval of the personnel of the Indian Employers' Delegation to the 15th I.L.Conference recommended by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

* * *

His Excellency the Viceroy in his Address to a joint session of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly at Simla on 14-~~20~~⁹-31 made the following reference to the work of Sir Atul Chatterjee in connection with International Labour Conferences :- " I should like to acknowledge the invaluable services rendered on behalf of India at the International Labour Conferences by Sir Atul Chatterjee who has recently relinquished charge of his duties as High Commissioner for India. Sir Atul was associated with the International Labour Organisation from its inception in 1919. Out of the 15 sessions of the Conference held so far, Sir Atul has attended no less than 11, and

from 1926 he has been in addition the permanent representative of the Government of India on the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation. His election as President of the International Labour Conference in 1927 was a signal honour to India".

(Extracted from Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol.V. No.6, 14-10-1931).

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The excerpts from the proceedings of the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce for August 1931 publish the views of the Chamber on the I.L.O. Questionnaire on the Age of Admission of Children to Employment in Non-Industrial Occupations. The Committee is of opinion that legislation on the subject is inopportune in India at present in view of the very elementary state of primary education in India and the present economic position ^{of} the country.

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National Labour Legislation.

The Indian Mines (Amendment) Act, 1931.

The following is the full text of the Indian Mines (Amendment) Bill (L. A. Bill No. 37 of 1931) with the statement of objects and reasons which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 7-9-31. The Bill was passed by the Assembly on 16-9-31:

L. A. Bill No. 37 of 1931.

A Bill further to amend the Indian Mines Act, 1923, for a certain purpose.

Whereas it is expedient further to amend the Indian Mines Act, 1923, for the purpose hereinafter appearing; It is ^{hereby} enacted as follows:-

1. This Act may be called the Indian Mines (Amendment) Act,

Short title 1931.

2. In section 3 of the Indian Mines Act, 1923, after clause (c), Amendment of section 3, Act IV of 1923. the following clause shall be inserted, namely:-

"(cc) 'District Magistrate' means, in a Presidency-town, the person appointed by the Local Government to perform the duties of a District Magistrate under this Act in that town".

Statement of Objects and Reasons.

The Indian Mines Act, 1923 (IV of 1923), confers certain powers and duties on District Magistrates. In addition, powers are conferred upon District Magistrates by the Regulations and Rules issued under the Act. There is, however, no person who can exercise within the limits of the Presidency-towns the powers conferred upon District Magistrates under the Indian Mines Act, 1923. The Bill proposes to remove this defect.

(The Gazette of India, 12-9-31. No. 37. Part V, page 102).

Government and the Whitley Report: Probable Lines of Action.

Considerable interest is being evinced in Indian labour circles as to what action the Government of India and the Provincial Governments are proposing to take on the recommendations contained in the Whitley Report. The recommendations total up to 357. The special representative of the Statesman at Simla, writing on the subject under date 1-9-1931, says that serious endeavours are being made by the Government of India to evolve a scheme to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour Conditions in India.

The following, according to the Statesman's representative, are the main features of the probable lines of action contemplated by the Central Government:-

The Government of India contemplates the issue to local Governments, by the middle of September, of a lengthy circular letter explaining its attitude to the report and the measures it proposes should be taken for the earliest and most favourable possible treatment of the questions which the report raises. It is suggested that the recommendations should be provisionally grouped into six ^{groups} ~~clauses~~, namely:-

Grouping of Recommendations.- (1) Recommendations involving central legislation, under which head fall the Factory Acts, for example.

(2) Recommendations necessitating administrative action by the Government of India; for example, the proposal that there should be an annual Government note on the working of the Trade Unions Act, recommendations affecting the issue of licences to brokers under the Merchant Shipping Act, the recommendation that no legislation should be passed to make breach of contract a penal offence, and the appointment of a Labour Officer to watch the labour conditions of industrial employees, under direct control of the Government of India.

(3) Recommendations involving provincial legislation, e.g., concerning minimum wages on the Assam plantations.

(4) Recommendations requiring administrative action by the provincial Governments.

(5) Proposals for action by public bodies, such as municipalities, e.g., compulsory education in areas where there is a large concentration of industrial employees.

(6) Proposals requiring action by employers and workers and their organization, e.g., the training of promising workers to enable them to assume charge of trade union affairs.

The proposal for this grouping of the recommendations is likely to be incorporated in the Government of India's letter to the local Governments, and ²it is obvious that there must be some consultation between the Central and Provincial Governments, ₂ concerning many of the measures suggested for carrying out the recommendations of the report, even when the executive responsibility ^{for these measures} will rest either with the Central Government alone or with only one or another of the Provincial Governments.

Special Subjects.- Following the Government of India's first letter, a series of letters will be addressed to the local Governments, each dealing with a specific subject of the Whitley Report's proposals and giving the Government of India's opinion thereon. For example, one letter will be concerned with unemployment, and another with suggestions for the amendment of the Indian Factories Act, which, though it is a Central Subject, cannot be dealt with adequately or equitably without consultation with the various local Governments.

Other matters which will probably be brought up for immediate consideration in the same way are legislation for the oilfields, wages and tenancies in the coalfields, machinery for fixing minimum wages, legislation relating to the indebtedness of industrial workers and to maternity benefits, sickness insurance and the recognition of trade unions. It is obvious, in fact, that with the Whitley Report before it the Government wishes to spare no effort to avoid or mitigate in India the hardships and iniquities that have accompanied ~~the~~ industrial progress in other countries, and that India, recognized by the League of Nations as one of the principal industrial countries of the world, shall benefit to the fullest measure possible from the lessons of other countries' experience.

(The Statesman, 2-9-1931).

Conditions of Labour

Bill to Regulate Conditions of Labour in Beedi Factories, Madras

Reference was made at pages 23-24 of the April 1930 Report of this Office to a Conference held at Madras in April 1930 under the auspices of the Youth League, Madras, to consider the problem of Child Labour in Beedi (country cigarettes) factories in Madras Presidency. An enquiry ^{subsequently} undertaken by a committee consisting of Mr. V. T. Arasu, M.L.C., the convener of the Conference, and three other members on the conditions of work of children in that industry revealed conditions of work which were appalling in the extreme. The following extract from a communication dated 26-9-1930 from Mr. Arasu to this Office supplies figures regarding the number of boys engaged in the trade in that Presidency.

"There are 14000 children employed in that (beedi) industry alone in the Madras city. The term children is here used in the sense that they are below sixteen years of age. Of this 14000, 6000 are of school going age, i.e. below twelve years of age. This industry is not restricted to Madras city alone. The other important places in this presidency where this industry is localised are: Vellore, Trichinopoly, Palghat, Coimbatore etc. I have had the opportunity of visiting the above named centres. The conditions are just the same as in Madras, and the number of children employed in those centres may be approximately stated as follows:

Name of place	No. of children	No. of children of school going age.	Total No. of workers
Vellore	8000	4000	20000
Trichinopoly	2000	1000	6000
Palghat	2500	1000	5000
Coimbatore	4000	1500	10000

Mr. V.T.Arasu has recently given notice of a bill to be introduced in the Madras Legislative Council to regulate the working of, *and* labour conditions in, beedi factories in the Madras Presidency. The

as explained by the author

following is the text of the statement of objects and reasons for introducing the bill:

"Beedi making was, until some years back, a small scale industry mostly resorted to by the villagers as a subsidiary occupation. But within the last few years, the demand for beedies, both within this province as well as from places like South Africa, Ceylon and the Federated Malay States, has grown so enormously that it has ceased to be a cottage industry. It has now come to be run on a large scale, and is at present localised in the city of Madras and other mofussil centres like Vellore, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly. In each of these centres there are tens of thousands of labourers employed in beedi factories. The number of labourers employed in any one of these factories ranges from about 10 to 200. In one particular factory in the town of Vellore, there are as many as 700 employed under one management and under one roof.

Though the industry is at present being run on large scale, and though it employs such large numbers of labourers, no control is exercised over them by either the Government or the respective local bodies. The Act XII of 1911, which regulates the working of all factories where more than 30 persons are employed, does not apply to beedi factories as there is no steam, water, electrical or other mechanical power used in the process of manufacturing beedies.

Thus let alone and allowed to carry on as they like without any restraint or check whatsoever, these beedi factories have become a menace to the health of not only the labourers employed therein, but also of the citizens at large of the respective areas where they are situated. Most of these factories are small airless boxes, often without any windows, where the workers are so crowded thickly on the ground that there is barely room to squeeze between them. Others are dark semi-basements with clamp mud floors unsuitable for manufacturing process. Sanitary conveniences and other adequate arrangements for the removal of filth and refuse are generally absent. Regular intervals for meals, and weekly holidays are generally non-existent. The daily hours of work generally range between twelve to sixteen.

Another matter of paramount concern is the question of child labour. Broadly speaking, about fifty per cent of the labourers employed in any one of these factories are children below the age of 16; and quite a large proportion of these are children of school-going age. These children are employed for long hours usually ranging between twelve to fifteen hours a day without adequate interval for meals or weekly rest days, for wages as low as half or one anna a day. Corporal punishments and other disciplinary measures of a reprehensible kind are often resorted to in order to compel these children to work for such long hours and small wages.

For the past three or four years, there has been a consistent and growing agitation in this presidency to bring these beedi factories under some sort of control and regulate their working. Several public bodies have also made definite representations to the Local Government on this matter, and urged on them the necessity of undertaking legislation. The Whitley Commission have also recommended the initiation of an Act to regulate these factories. But the Local Government have not till now done anything in this direction.

It is necessary that legislation in regard to this matter should be undertaken without any delay whatsoever. For, the number of children in these factories is increasing day by day. And there can be no two opinion that something must be done - sooner the better - to save more children from getting ~~z~~ into the inhuman clutches of the owners of beedi factories, as also to remove the existing ^{lines} from the perdition in which they are at present placed and drive them to school. Hence this Bill.

This Bill seeks to make these beedi factories clean and healthy, regulate their working hours and, prohibit the employment of children under twelve years of age.

(The Hindu, 9-9-31).

Indianisation in Tata Steel Works, Jamshedpur.

Owing to the trade depression, the Management of the Tata Steel Works at Jamshedpur have found it necessary to hasten the Indianisation in the superior services of the works wherever it is possible, and as a result 24 ~~con~~venanted European Officers are being discharged. An Indian, who for the past four years has been Assistant Superintendent of the Duplex Plant, has been appointed Superintendent of the Open Hearth Plant, 6 out of the 7 furnaces in the Open Hearth Plant will now be operated entirely by Indians.

((The Times of India, 1-9-31).

K.

Hours of Work of Railway Servants

The following questions regarding the Hours of Work of Railway servants were put on 15-9-31 in the Council of State by the Honourable Mr. J. C. Banerjee:-

~~The Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee:~~

- 1. Will Government be pleased to state the number of hours for which a continuous railway servant works?
- 2. Will Government be pleased to state the number of hours for which an intermittent railway officer works?
- 3. Will Government be pleased to state the maximum number of hours fixed for the railway workers by the League of Nations at Geneva?
- 4. Will Government be pleased to state if the Geneva regulations in regard to the conditions of labour on the Railways are being observed?
- 5. If not, why not?

In reply the Honourable Mr. J. C. B. Drake said:-

- 1. According to the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1930, a railway servant, other than one whose employment is essentially intermittent, is subject to certain exceptions, not permitted to be employed for more than 60 hours a week on the average in any month. In actual practice on the North Western and East Indian Railways, to which Railways the Act has been applied, about 30 per cent. of such servants are not employed for more than 48 hours a week, while a further 30 per cent. are not employed for more than 54 hours a week.
- 2. According to the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1930, a railway servant whose employment is essentially intermittent is, subject to certain exceptions, not permitted to be employed for more than 84 hours in any week.
- 3. The Washington (Hours of Work) Convention adopted by the International Labour Conference lays down for British India the principle of a 60-hour week. Its application to Railways is limited to such branches of rail-way work as may be specified by the competent authority.
- 4. and 5. The provisions of the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1930, in the matter of the grant of weekly rest to railway servants, are being strictly applied on the North Western and Eastern Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1930, and the Railway Servants' Hours of Employment Rules, 1931, will be applied to other railways as quickly as financial circumstances permit.

Recruitment for Assam Tea Gardens:

Conference to Implement Whitley Recommendations.

His Excellency Sir Laurie Hammond, Governor of Assam, held a conference at Shillong during the last week of September 1930 with the representatives of the Assam tea industry to see whether it was possible for the local Government to take any speedy measures towards the introduction of the recommendations of the Whitley Commission on the subject of recruitment of labour. (For summary of these recommendations see pages 519 - 522 of the Whitley Report).

Assam Government's Policy Outlined.

The Governor in his

opening speech outlined the policy which the Government of Assam proposed to adopt with regard to the Whitley Recommendations. His Excellency said:-

"The Central Government will take the initiative on the recommendations involving Central legislation in connexion with the Labour Commission's report. They will address the local Governments on the recommendations which concern them, including those which are almost entirely provincial in character. They do not, however, desire that the examination by local Governments of those recommendations should be postponed until the receipt of their letters, nor do they contemplate that local Governments should refrain from exercising their powers to give immediate effect to any recommendations of the Labour Commission which concern them.

The main object of the conference is as to see whether it was possible for the Government of Assam to take any measures now towards the introduction of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The Assam Labour and Emigration Act (Act VI of 1901) has been proved to be defective and the cost of recruitment is obviously disproportionate to the change in the cost of production of tea."

Control Still Necessary.

" I think the time has not yet arrived for the removal of all restrictions and that the control on recruitment and the forwarding of labour must remain a regrettable necessity and as a temporary expedient. Is it, however, necessary for us to await the enactment of a new Emigration Act? Must we wait for the abolition of the Assam Labour Board and the appointment of a Protector

of Immigrants and his staff in order to place recruitment on a healthy basis. It should be possible to come to some arrangement by which, in return for the removal of restrictions in recruiting districts, there was a definite arrangement in tea gardens for repatriation. If this could be done and there was adequate propaganda in recruiting districts, the cost of recruitment could be reduced. The Assam Government will be glad to help the industry in this matter in any way they can. Steps in this direction have already been taken by the Central Provinces Government."

Fixation of Wages. - "As regards the fixation of wages, the Royal Commission considered that a careful investigation should be undertaken in the shape of collecting returns and more adequate statistics for which a specialist was required. His Excellency suggested that it would probably be useful to depute an officer to Ceylon to examine the system of working there, accompanied by a representative of the agency houses in Calcutta. This small committee could visit Ceylon in, perhaps, November and December and study the system on the spot and see to what extent it could be adapted for introduction into Assam. ^{in Assam} The importance of inviting the co-operation of the industry was recognised as their practical experience should minimise the difficulties. After the collection of returns and their tabulation and analysis, the Government would invite the industry to submit proposals for a wage-fixing machinery."

(The Statesman, 29-9-31).

Hours of Work in Textile Mills in Indian States:

Congress's efforts to establish 10-hour day.

The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress had recently appointed a Textile Mills Exemption Committee to inquire into conditions of labour in Indian textile mills and to advise the Working Committee as to what mills should be recognised by the Congress. By a resolution passed in August 1931, the Congress Working Committee decided to make the recognition of a textile mill by the congress contingent ^{inter alia} on the absence of complaints regarding treatment of textile labourers or any reduction in the wages. The Working Committee of the Congress also

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resolved that the Textile Mills Exemption Committee should endeavour, wherever possible and necessary, to prevent, by amicable arrangements, any penalisation or victimisation of labour in the mills which have signed the Congress declaration and help in the bettering of labour conditions in these mills. The withholding of recognition by the Congress means that the products of unrecognised mills would be placed on boycott list and as this in turn entails great difficulty in marketing goods, textile mills in British India have generally agreed to abide by the terms laid down by the Congress.

The Secretary, the Textile Mills Exemption Committee, Ahmedabad, in a statement issued to the press and published in the Hindu of 25-9-31 says:-

Mills in British India.- "The Exemption Committee had occasion to communicate with the authorities of several mills with reference to the reports appearing in the press of an actual or intended cut in the wages of the operatives in those mills. In this connection letters were addressed to the Model Mills, Nagpur, the Benares Cotton and Silk Mills, the Swadeshi Mills, Indore, the Abhyudaya Mills, Calcutta, and the Cotton Spinning, Weaving and Manufacturing Mills, Pulgaon. The authorities of the Model Mills, Nagpur, have agreed to refrain from making a reduction now. A similar reply has been received from the Cotton and Silk Mills, Benares. The Swadeshi Mills, Indore, have restored the cut. The Abhyudaya Mills have not sent any definite reply.

Mills in Indian States.- The attention of the Committee has also been drawn to the prevalence of excessively long hours of work in textile mills in certain Native States. It has been ascertained that in respect of hours of work, conditions in most of the large States are on a par with those obtaining in British India. It has been discovered, however, with very keen regret, that in some States ~~the~~ textile labour is being compelled to put in unbearably long hours extending in some cases to fourteen per day. It would be a surprise to many to know that such inhuman conditions can still exist, particularly, when the trend of opinion in British India is already in favour of a further reduction from 10 to 9 or 8 hours and a textile mill in Delhi has already adopted a 9-hour day.

Demand for a 10-hour day.- The Exemption Committee has appealed to the mills in question to introduce a ten-hour day from the 1st October 1931. The following mills have been approached in this behalf:- The New Jehangir Vakil Mills, Bhavanagar, the Rajkot State Cotton Mills, Rajkot, the Cambay State Mills, Cambay, the Krishnakumar Mills,

Mahuwa, the Wadwan Camp Mills, Wadwan, the Vinod Mills, Ujjain, the Cotton Ginning, Spinning and Weaving Mills, Ujjain, and the Shri Sahu Chatrapathi Mills, ~~Kol~~ Kolhapur. Of these the first three, ~~six~~ viz., the Bhavanagar, Rajkot and Cambay Mills, have undertaken to introduce a ten-hours day from the first of October 1931. It is hoped that the other mills also will perceive the enormous wrong that is being done to the women, men and children affected by too long hours, and will in response to the call of humanity, make the required change without any delay. The true interests of the industry dictate ~~the same~~^{such a} course".

(The Hindu, 25-9-1931).

Minimum Wages in Ceylon: Questions re. reduction in Assembly.

At pages 34-36 of the May 1931 report and pages 15-17 of the June 1931 report of this Office, references were made to the efforts made by the Government of Ceylon to lower the minimum wages of estate labourers in Ceylon in view of the serious ~~at~~ economic depression prevailing in the plantation industries in the Island. In reply to a series of questions ^{on this subject} put in the Legislative Assembly on 7-9-31 by Mr. C.S.Ranga Iyer, M.L.A., Deputy Leader of the Opposition, ~~on this subject~~, Sir Fazl-i-Husain made a statement on the situation from which the following facts are extracted:-

The following minimum rates of wages for Indian estate labourers were introduced in Ceylon with effect from the 1st January, 1929:-

	Men.	Women.	Children.
	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.
Up-country	54	43	32
Mid-country	52	41	31
Low-country	50	40	30

When these wages were fixed, it was arranged, that good clean unblended rice should also be issued to each Indian labourer at a cost not exceeding Rs.6.40 per bushel at a monthly rate of not less than 7/8ths of a bushel for a man, 6/8ths of a bushel for a woman and 5/8ths of a bushel for a child. Owing to a fall in the market price of rice, the Ceylon Government approached the Government of India in April last with a proposal that the issue price of rice should be fixed at Rs. 4.80 per bushel and that a corresponding reduction should be made in the standard wages by 5, 4 and 3 cents per day for men, women and children respectively. The Government of India were satisfied that the proposal amounted only to a re-adjustment of wages and caused no reduction in the effectual earnings of the labourers. They accordingly gave their consent to it. The Ceylon Government then summoned Estate Wages Boards for the reassessment of wages owing to the fall in the general cost of living. It is understood that the suggestions put forward by these Boards have been considered by the Board of Indian Immigrant Labour, but the Government of India have not yet received any communication on the subject from the Colonial Government. They are in close touch with the situation through their Agent and will do

all they can to safeguard the interests of the Indian labourer in Ceylon.

In reply to the question whether the Government of India would take steps to stop Indian labourers from proceeding to Ceylon until labour wages and conditions are made satisfactory, Sir Fazl-i-Husain said that recruitment for rubber estates in Ceylon had entirely ceased, while in the case of tea estates fresh recruiting licenses were not issued, unless special reasons are shown, and that the Government of India did not consider that any further steps were needed to restrict emigration to that country.

(The Legislative Assembly Debates , 7-9-31, Vol.V.No.1 pages 27-29).

The Hindu of 8-9-31 makes the following editorial comments on Sir Fazl-i-Husain's statement:-

Sir Fazl-i-Husain's statement in reply to a question in the Assembly regarding the reduction of the wages of Indian labourers in the Ceylon plantations will cause surprise and disappointment among the Indian community in that Island. Sir Fazl-i-Husain refers to the fall in the price of rice as though that were the sole or crucial factor that should govern the fixing of a minimum wage. Had he read the report of the Agent of the Government of India in Ceylon carefully, he would have noticed certain other factors in the situation which none may disregard without doing injustice to the labourer. That report (reviewed at pages 10-16 of the July 1931 report of this Office) for one thing, made it clear that indebtedness among the workers was both widespread and serious. Surely, it cannot be contended, in the light of this fact, that Indian workers in Ceylon enjoy a high standard of living, much less, that their remuneration is so high that a cut would not do serious injustice to them. It may be recalled in this connection that the Indian Agent in the Island has deprecated in his latest report all suggestions calculated to disturb the minimum wage law. By the way, did the Government of India consult the Indian labourers on the point before they formed their opinion?

(The Hindu 8-9-31).

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Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act
in Bihar & Orissa, 1930*

The daily average attendance of persons employed in Factories coming under the purview of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bihar & Orissa is reported to have been 158,602 adults and 1,363 minors as compared with 162,529 adults and 2,232 minors in 1929. The decrease is not confined to any particular locality and may therefore be attributed to general depression in trade. ¹⁷⁶ 176 persons lost their lives as the result of accidents, 132 were permanently disabled and 2,579 (including one minor) suffered from temporary disablement; while in 1929, the corresponding figures were 159,171 and 4,147. There was no case of occupational disease during the year under review. The total sums paid as compensation for the three classes of accidents were Rs. 84,797-14-0, Rs. 44,582-4-9 and Rs. 44,610-12-0 (out of which Rs. 4 were given to the minor) against Rs. 80,963, Rs. 40,957-12-9 and Rs. 44,353-13-0, respectively, in the preceding year. Out of these amounts Rs. 83,896-2-0, Rs. 3,806-14-0 and Rs. 1,220-8-7, respectively, were paid through the Commissioners for Workmen's Compensation as compensation for fatal accidents, permanent disablement and temporary disablement. Compensation in the majority of cases of permanent disablement was as usual settled out of court and generally by agreements under section 28. The average amount paid as compensation for a fatal accident was Rs. 498 and for permanent disablement Rs. 337 as compared with Rs. 511 and Rs. 239 in 1929.

Although the Act is becoming more widely known and fuller advantage is being taken of its provisions, there are still many workmen, according to the report, who have very little knowledge of their statutory rights. The report recommends that vernacular abstracts of the Act should be posted at places of employment.

(The Working of the Act in Bihar and Orissa during 1928

is reviewed at pages 25-27 of the August 1929 report of this Office)

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act,
1923, in Bengal during 1930*

The total average number of workers employed per day in the registered factories in Bengal during 1930 was 667,900, of which 18,810 were minors. According to the returns received from 1,490 employers, of which 1,359 came from factories, 123 from mines, 6 from Port Commissioners and 2 from Tramways, there were, during 1930, 100 deaths, 356 cases of permanent disablements and 2,750 cases of temporary disablement (including cases of 4 minors) in respect of which compensation was paid during the year, as compared with 149,315 and 2,018 cases respectively during 1929. The amounts paid by way of compensation in 1930 were Rs. 61,194 for deaths, Rs. 85,042 for permanent disablement, and Rs. 46,817 for temporary disablement; one case of lead-poisoning in the Government printing press was reported; but a claim made for compensation in respect of the disease was disallowed by the Commissioner.

According to the Report, 1930, the Calcutta Claims Bureau continued in full and valued co-operation with the Commissioner. Claims against the employers insured with its members, at present including 32 leading insurance companies, were handled with commendable promptitude and judgment. The only Trade Union which helped its members more or less regularly in the realisation of compensation was the Indian Seamen's Union of Kidderpore. During the year under report, a claims agency, the first of its kind in the Presidency, was started at Kharagpur. This organisation, the "Kharagpur Claims Bureau on Workmen's Compensation", generally dealt with claims arising out of accidents in the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company's Kharagpur Workshops.

(The working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bengal during 1928 is reviewed at pages 27-28 of the August, 1929 report and that for 1929 at page 17 of the August 1930 report of this Office).

* Government of Bengal Commerce Department Annual Report on the Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bengal during the year 1930-
Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot 1931 - Price Indian, 11 annas;
English, 1s. - pp. 16.

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act
in the Madras Presidency, 1930*

The returns under section 16 of the Act were received from about 1,600 establishments out of 1,642 factories and about 200 mines in the Madras Presidency. There is no improvement over last year in the number of defaulters. The Calcutta Claims Bureau, of which many insurance companies are members, was given permission, as usual, to submit returns on behalf of the employers who have insured their liabilities with them. In the Presidency, only about 40 employers, mostly Europeans, have insured their liabilities under the Act. Important employers like the Buckingham and Carnatic Co., Ltd., the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Co., Ltd, the Madras Electric Tramways and Supply Corporation, the South Indian Railway Co., Ltd., and the Madura Mills Co., Ltd., have not yet resorted to insurance.

Accidents were reported in 136 returns. 23 cases of death, 63 cases of permanent disablement and 710 cases of temporary disablement (including ^{those} ~~there~~ of 25 minors) were reported in these returns, as against 23 cases of death, 35 cases of permanent disablement and 594 cases of temporary disablement reported in 1929. Compensations paid for these accidents amounted to Rs.10,861-8-0 for deaths, Rs.12,081-4-3 in respect of permanent disablement and Rs.6,720-15-9 in respect of temporary

* Government of Madras - Public Works and Labour Department - G. O. No.1916 L., 29th July 1931 - Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923-Working-1930 - pp.22.

2. 24
disablement (including Rs.189-2-11 paid to ~~the~~ 25 minors). The average amount of compensation paid in cases of death was Rs.472, in cases of permanent disablement, Rs.192 and in cases of temporary ~~amount~~ disablement, Rs.9-8-0.

The number of cases filed during the year was 146 as against 128 in 1929. Of these 146 cases, 24 relate to proceedings instituted for recovery of compensation under section 10 of the Act, 61 to distribution of compensation to the dependants of deceased workmen under section 8, 60 to memoranda of agreement for registration under section 28 and 1 to recovery under section 31 of compensation awarded to the claimant. The increase in the number of cases filed during the year was mainly due to the increase in the number of memoranda of agreement sent by employers for registration under section 28 of the Act. 28 cases and 9 agreements were pending at the close of the year.

(The working of the Act in the Madras Presidency during 1928 is reviewed at pages 31-32 of the August 1929 Report, and that during 1929 at page 18 of the August 1930 report of this Office.)

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in the Punjab, 1930*

The number of accidents coming within the purview of the Workmen's Compensation Act in the Punjab during 1930 increased from 614 in 1929 to 730. The number of fatal accidents and of temporary disablements also increased from 14 and 580, respectively, in the previous year, to 20 and 667 in the year under review, but the number of permanent disablements decreased from 47 to 43. As the increase in the total number of accidents reported occurred mostly under minor accidents, the percentage

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age of accidents, coming within the purview of the Act to the total number of accidents reported, decreased from 65 to 55 during the year under review. Of the total number of accidents coming within the purview of the Act during the year, namely, 730, compensation was paid in 536 cases, as against 540 in the previous year out of a total number of 580 cases, which gives a percentage of 73.4 against 84.4 of the previous year. The total amount of compensation paid during the year was Rs.31,869-7-3 as against Rs.47,793-1-2 in the previous year. This sum included the amount of Rs.17,864 paid as compensation in respect of cases pending from previous years. Out of the total amount of Rs.31,869-7-3, Rs. 8,250 were paid in respect of the fatal accidents, Rs.16,411-6-8 for cases of permanent disablement (which includes the amount of Rs.252 given to 1 minor) and Rs.6,950-0-7 for cases of temporary disablement.

During the year under review, there were 24 accidents coming within the purview of the Indian Mines Act, 1923, as compared with 13 in the previous year. Of the 24, 2 were fatal, 1 entailed permanent disablement and 21 temporary disablement. The total amount of compensation paid during the year was Rs.1,152-11-9 (including Rs.252 paid in respect of two cases of temporary disablements which had occurred in the previous year) as compared with Rs.2,874-6-0 paid during 1929. But it may be noted that this low figure is due to the fact that compensation was paid in only 10 out of the 24 cases during the year. In others, the claims were still pending when the year closed, because a number of the accidents had occurred towards the end of the year. Out of Rs.1152-11-9, Rs.680 was paid in respect of fatal accidents,

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Rs. 126 in respect of permanent disablements and Rs.346-11-9 in respect of temporary disablements.

65 fresh proceedings were filed under section 10, and 46 under section 8, with Commissioners appointed under the Workmen's Compensation Act. 47 cases were pending at the commencement of the year. Of these, 109 were admitted by the employers, 3 were allowed ex parte, 2 were dismissed for non-appearance, 1 was withdrawn, 2 were allowed, ^{and} 1 was allowed in part after contest, while 49 were pending at the close of the year. 63 agreements were filed with Commissioners and 22 were pending from the previous years. Of these, 61 were registered as filed, 11 registered after modification, and 2 were ~~not~~ not registered on account of "other causes". There ^{were //} ~~were~~ agreements pending when the year closed.

(The Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in the Punjab during 1929 is reviewed at pages 27-29 of the report of this Office for November 1930).

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Factory Administration in the United Provinces, 1930*

Number of Factories* The total number of factories in the United Provinces under the operation of the Indian Factories Act at the close of the year 1930, was 409 as against 384 in 1929. This represents an increase of 6.51 per cent. in the number of factories against 5.37 per cent. and 2.95 per cent in 1928 and 1929 respectively. Of the 409 factories, 156 were seasonal and 253 perennial factories. Out of these, 376 factories worked during the year and 33 remained closed.

Number of Operatives. - The average daily number of persons employed in the registered factories, as obtained from the annual returns submitted, was 92,161 against 91,188 in the previous year. The bulk of this or nearly 92 per cent. is adult male labour. The increase is entirely due to the registration of the new factories. Out of the 92,161 operatives, 30,102 were employed in the textile industry, 21,529 in Government and local fund factories, 10,503 in gins and presses and 10,385 in food, drink and tobacco factories.

Employment of Women and Children. - The average number of women and children employed in factories for the last two years was as follows:-

			<u>1929.</u>	<u>1930.</u>
Women	6,362	6,623
Children	1,109	863

732 women were employed in tea factories and 3,549 women in cotton ginning factories. The proportion of women to the total number of employees has steadily remained round about 7 per cent. for the past 8 years. For the year under report it is 7.2 per cent. against 6.98 per cent. in 1929.

The decrease of some 22 per cent. in the number of children employed is due to the textile factories, Cawnpore; Opium factory, Ghazipur; cigarette factory, Saharanpur; and the glass works at Bahjoji, employing less children. The percentage of children to the total number of workers has been steadily declining during the past ten years. In 1920 it was 3.69 per cent, and in 1930 it is only .94 per cent.

Inspection: - The number of inspections and visits made during the year was 990 as against 591 in 1929. 135 factories were inspected once, 106 factories were inspected twice, 63 factories were inspected ~~more~~ thrice, 53 factories were inspected more than three times and 19 factories were not inspected.

* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the United Provinces for the year 1930 by W.G. Mackay, Chief Inspector of Factories and Boilers. Allahabad: The Superintendent, Government Press, United Provinces 1931. price, 14 annas. - pp. 35.

A number of special visits were made for enquiry into accidents and also to particular factories on Sundays and before and after the fixed working hours, as a result of which the prosecutions for contravening sections 22 and 26 were much more numerous this year and it is hoped it will have a deterrent effect in the future.

Sanitary Arrangements and Ventilation. • The report states that the sanitary arrangements, except in a few instances, were on the whole more or less satisfactory during the year under review.

Fencing of Machinery. • The fencing of machinery and the provision of suitable guards was, according to the report, generally well maintained but in four cases prosecutions were instituted for failure to provide necessary guards. Three of them were in seasonal factories.

Accidents. • 1,865 accidents (246 serious and 1,592 minor) were reported during the year as compared with 16 fatal, 205 serious and 1,569 minor in 1929. There is reason to think that a better knowledge of the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act has improved the reporting of accidents. The majority of the accidents occurred, as in previous years, in Railway Workshops which reported 1,524 out of the total 1,865 accidents. ^{27 fatal,}

Housing of Factory Operatives. - 216 additional quarters, i.e. 125 single and 91 double, were constructed in thirteen districts during the year. The Government Harness and Saddlery Factory, Cawnpore, started the construction of the workmen's dwellings during the year. 17 excellent lofty well-constructed double-quarters, which are intended to house some of their higher paid workmen, are expected to be ready for occupation ~~in~~ about the middle of 1931. A specified number of quarters, including smaller ones for the lower-paid men, will be built each year. This progressive construction policy, according to the report, will naturally be governed by the financial position and future developments of the factory. The local scheme for the housing of some 20,000 factory workers continues dormant as none of the mills have taken up the matter actively which is due, probably, to the depressed condition of trade during the year under review.

Hours of Employment. • The majority of factories worked up to the maximum limit allowed by the Act. Labour was plentiful in practically all districts throughout the year under report. The weekly hours of 56 factories were not more than 48, those of 33 factories were not more than 54, while those of 280 factories were above 54.

Welfare Work. • Due to adverse trade conditions, welfare work did not expand to any considerable extent but the existing institutions continued to be well maintained. The following indicates the main additions made during the year.

The British India Corporation built a new community hall in their Kakomiganj settlement and now have a maternity clinic there in charge of a qualified nurse as in their other settlements. Two new cottages for welfare workers were built, also a water reservoir with an electric pumping plant, and drainage and sanitation has been greatly

improved. It is hoped in the near future to add a segregation hospital to this settlement.

It is reported that there were 300 more persons living in the Kakomiganj settlement than in the previous year, and that there is a large waiting list as is the case in the Allengaj and McRobertganj settlements.

Both creches and schools have been well attended during the year.

Messrs. Begg, Sutherland and Company, Limited, opened a dispensary for the womenfolk and children of the Elgin Mills employees. It is in charge of a qualified lady doctor and is evidently greatly appreciated, the average monthly attendance of patients being over one thousand.

For the benefit of the same women and children ^{working in the above Company,} special programmes of music, singing, cinema shows, etc., were arranged by the welfare superintendent, and it is understood, the cinema shows and acting in public by the school girls caused considerable excitement among the women, some of whom had never previously seen a cinema picture.

For the workmen of the Cawnpore Electric Supply Corporation, an institute and reading room was opened. Newspapers, magazines and indoor games are provided, and there is also a library of about one thousand books in English, Hindi and Urdu. The average daily attendance is said to be 55 and the monthly issue of books about 225.

A monthly recreational programme is conducted for the benefit of the workmen of the Cawnpore Sugar Work and Cawnpore Textiles, Limited, of which Messrs. Begg, Sutherland and Company are also the Managing Agents.

The New Victoria Mills have considerably improved and extended their creche which now has two qualified nurses in attendance. A Committee of ladies visits the creche periodically, inspects the arrangements for free clothing and feeding of the children, and makes suggestions for improvements where considered necessary.

The East Indian Railway opened a small hospital in the premises of their Carriage and Wagon Workshops at Lucknow. This is well equipped and is in charge of an assistant surgeon and, its proximity to the works enables immediate treatment to be given in accident cases.

(The report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the United Provinces for the year 1928 is reviewed at pages 25-27 of our October 1929 report, and that for 1929 at pages 29-31 of our November 1930 report).

Conditions of Labour.

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Retrenchment on Railways: Proceedings ofCourt of Enquiry.

Reference was made at pages 43-46 of the report of this Office for August 1931 to the decision of the General Council of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation to co-operate with the Court of Enquiry appointed by the Government of India only if the interpretation placed by the Court on its terms of reference was liberal and satisfactory to the A.I.R.F. The Court held its first sitting on 9-9-1931 at Bombay. The A.I.R.F. was represented by Messrs. Jamnadas Mehta, President, ^{S.C. Joshi} and V.V. Giri, General Secretary of the A.I.R.F., and ^{S.C. Joshi}.

Mr. Mehta, who presented the case on behalf of the Federation, placed before the Court of Inquiry the fear entertained by the General Council of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation that the terms of reference of the Court were not wide enough. It was pointed out that it was clear from the letter written by the Government of India to the Federation on July 18, 1931, that Government were anxious that all the facts in ~~the~~ dispute should be investigated. In a subsequent letter dated August 8 (vide page 43 of the report of this Office for August 1931) Government expressed their anxiety to examine all reasonable alternatives to retrenchment. The Federation, Mr. Mehta said, felt that the terms of reference as framed now by the Government fell short of Government's original intention, and requested the Court to make it clear whether the following issues came within the scope of the inquiry: (1) Whether the conventions about hours of work and weekly rest should not have been put into force before retrenchment was begun? (2) whether contribution to the Railway Provident Fund should not have been diverted temporarily to prevent retrenchment; (3) wage cut in all its aspects; (4) stoppage of extravagance; and (5) Capricious and arbitrary use of power vested in the Railway Board, including discrimination of all kinds. Mr. S.C. Joshi raised the question as to whether it would be open for the Federation to lead evidence that there has been favouritism and discrimination of a racial character in the method of retrenchment. (The M. & S.M. Railwayman, Vol. 3, No. 3, Sept. 1931).

After hearing the arguments of Mr. Mehta the Court came to the following decision:-

That it was within the scope of enquiry of the Court to investigate into favouritism and discrimination even if it be of a racial character.

That the issue whether the conventions regarding hours of work and weekly rest should not have been put into force before retrenchment was begun came within the purview of the Court.

That "short time working whether by a day or more of every week or month, respectively or whether compulsory leave by rotation without pay or with reduced pay by disallowing overtime in some cases so as to stop the discharging of others or stoppages resulting in general short time all round" as alternatives to compulsory discharge came within the purview of the third item of reference.

That it was open to the Federation to lead evidence with regard to the temporary diversion of provident fund contributions as an alternative to retrenchment though the court could not accept the proposals owing to ~~the~~ statutory difficulties. (The M. & S.M. Railwayman, September 1931, pages 66-67, Vol.3, No.3).

The Council of Action of the A.I.R.F. met immediately after to consider the ruling and the following statement was issued on 11-9-1931 by Mr. V.V. Giri on the attitude of the A.I.R.F. towards the Court of Enquiry:-

In pursuance of the resolution of the General Council of the Federation held at Madras on the 29th and 30th August (vide pages 45-46 of the Report of this Office for August 1931), Messrs. M. Jamnadas Mehta, S.C. Joshi and V.V. Giri appeared before the Court of Enquiry and sought from the Court an authoritative interpretation of the various terms of reference and the Council of Action is satisfied that the interpretation placed on the terms of reference by the Court is adequate for substantial presentation of the case of the workers before that Court. The Council of Action therefore now calls upon all affiliated unions and their members carefully to prepare the workers' case on their respective lines, so that judgment may not go by default against them. (The Hindu, 12-9-1931).

The Court began its enquiry into the actual dispute from 14-9-1931 when evidence was led by the Federation in regard to retrenchment in the G.I.P. Railway.

The work of the Court is proceeding.

Labour News in Brief.

Proposed Discharge of Bombay Millworkers.

The management of several mills in the Bombay City have, according to the Times of India of 28-9-1931, put up notices informing their workmen that the services of a considerable number of them will not be required after 1-10-1931. It is estimated that about 5,000 mill hands

will be thrown out of employment in Bombay City. This drastic step, it is stated, has been taken on account of the rise in the ~~per~~ price of cotton due to the financial crisis. Night work is to be stopped in many mills, putting out of employment about 3,000 of the total number expected to be thrown out of work. A large number of men working on day shifts are also being retrenched. Considerable dissatisfaction is prevailing among mill workers. (The Times of India, 28-9-1931).

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Kurla ~~Swade~~ Swadeshi Mill Strike, Bombay.

On account of trade depression, the management of the Kurla Swadeshi Mill, Bombay, decided to close down some 600 looms in the mill and gave notice of discharge to 700 workers in the spinning section of the mill. This was resented by the workers who ~~be~~ believed that this was a ruse on the part of the management for re-engaging the men later on on reduced wages. As a protest against the retrenchment there was a partial strike in the spinning department of the mill on 14-9-1931. The strike, however, spread to other departments and by 17-9-1931 nearly 4,500 workers had downed tools and the mill was subjected to picketing. (The Times of India, 19-9-1931).

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Madhavji Dharamsey Mill Strike, Bombay.

3,000 ~~me~~ workers of the Madhavji Dharamsey Mill went on strike on 2-9-1931 as a result, it is stated, of the management's decision to close down the blanket department of the mill from 3-9-1931. The closure of the department necessitated the discharge of 200 workers employed in the department. The appeal of a committee of workers to the management to reconsider the decision to close the department

having failed, all the workers of the mill struck work. (The Times of India, 3-9-1931).

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Lock-out of Bombay Electric Supply Tramway Workshops.

500 workers employed in the Bombay Electric Supply Tramway Workshops at Dadar were rendered idle on 29-9-1931 as a result of a lock-out declared by the management. Trouble is reported to have been threatened for some time over the decision to keep the workshop closed every Monday, in addition to Sundays, as a measure of economy, only a small number of men being employed to keep the machinery in proper order. Workers, regarding this as an indirect wage cut, picketed the workshops on 28-9-1931 with a view to preventing the workers from attending. On 29-9-1931 when the workers presented themselves for work the workshops were closed, the management having declared a lock-out.

(The Statesman, 30-9-1931)

Industrial Organisation.

Workers' Organisation.

11th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress, Calcutta:

Resolutions Passed.

At pages 53-54 of the report of this Office for July 1931 ^{was given} a brief summary, as published in the Statesman of 10-7-1931, of the resolutions passed at the 11th session of the All-India Trade Union Congress held at Calcutta from 4 to 7-7-1931. The following is the full text of some of the more important of the resolutions passed by the 11th session of the A.I.T.U. Congress on 7-7-1931:-

Condemnation of Conduct of Mr. Deshpande and his Group.- Taking into consideration the fact (a) that Mr. Deshpande and his group since the Nagpur Session of the Trade Union Congress have done nothing to keep the T.U.C. in a normally functioning condition; (b) that they have not cared to make any efforts to help the work of bringing about unity in the ranks of workers; (c) that they have, instead of helping the work of the Session of the Trade Union Congress obstructed the work of the Executive Council for full three days, having gone to such extremes as to insult the President and other comrades, and to violate the constitution of the T.U.C. by calling a meeting of the Executive Council which they have no right to call, by holding a mock session of the Congress at Matiabruz attended by representatives of Unions many of which are bogus; (d) that they have avoided the responsibility of submitting ^{the} annual report and statement of accounts, and have resorted to obstructive tactics, so as to prevent the passing of a censure motion against them, This Congress strongly condemns the rôle played by Mr. Deshpande and his group during the whole of the last year and specially, their conduct in the meetings of the Executive Council of the T.U.C. at this session.

Fundamental Rights.- Resolved that a Sub-Committee be formed with the following members to go into the question of fundamental rights and report its findings to the Executive Council within two months: (1) V.H. Joshi; (2) A. Tayab Shaikh; (3) P.M. Naidu; (4) J.N. Mitra; and (5) S.B. Kar.

Unity.- ~~This Congress~~ Resolved that this Congress exhorts all Trade Unions in the country to explore all avenues for bringing about Unity in the Trade Union movement and further authorise the following committee to co-operate with all Trade Union organisations in the country including the Bombay Unity Committee and lay down a common platform for the achievement of unity. This Congress also resolves that in working for unity the committee do observe the following instructions:- (1) No affiliation of the Trade Union Congress at present to any foreign organisation; (2) the question of sending

delegates to the Geneva conference to be kept open to be decided every year at the annual session of the Congress; (3) the decisions of the majority in the T.U.C. to be binding on all affiliated unions.

Resolved further that the platform of unity suggested by the Bombay Girni Kamgar Union be referred to the above Committee for their consideration:

The Committee.- 1. Mr. A. Tayab Shaikh; 2. Mr. R.S. Ruiker; 3. Mr. S. Mukunda Lall (convener); 4. & Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose; 5. Mr. W.V.R. Naidu.

Capitalism and Socialism.- This Congress impresses upon the workers and peasants of India that in view of ~~the~~ (a) most drastic, inhuman and ruthless retrenchment both by reduction of staff and wage cuts in the already starvation wages of the subordinate staff and workers in Government, and other capitalistic industries and organisations and allied grievances like forced ~~leave~~ leave, etc., (b) the consequent growing unemployment in the ranks of the workers, and (c) the economic starvation of ~~the~~ millions of peasants in India due to ~~the~~ intense exploitation ~~by~~ the landlords and the Government it has become absolutely imperative and essential for the workers and peasants of India to end this capitalistic exploitation; this Congress calls upon the workers and peasants to carry on their struggle ~~for~~ the following demands:-

1. Unconditional transfer of all power to the people;
2. Abolition of the Indian States and parasitic landlords;
3. Freedom of the peasantry from all exploitation and exaction so that the greater part of their surplus produce may remain in their possession;
4. Nationalisation of land, public utilities, mineral resources and bank;
5. Repudiation of debts contracted by the foreign Government;
6. Provision for an irreducible standard of living for the workers through the introduction of minimum ^{monthly} wages of Rs.50/- for skilled workers and Rs.40/- for unskilled; ^{workers} 44-hour week, healthy conditions of labour, insurance against unemployment, sickness, old age, etc.;
7. Control of the economic life of the country by the workers and peasants so that the fruits of national freedom may not be usurped by the capitalists.

Non-Recognition of Unions.- This Congress condemns in most unequivocal terms the policy of ~~withdrawing~~ or refusing recognition to ~~the~~ properly constituted Trade Unions by the employers, private as well as Governmental, and further invites all organisations interested in the working class movement to rally round the Trade Union Congress in forcing the hands of these employers to accord recognition to all such properly organised Trade Unions.

Venue of Next Conference.- The next session of the Congress be held at Jamadoba in the colliery area in Manbhum District.

(Extracted from communication dated 3-10-1931 to this Office from Mr. S. Mukunda Lall, General Secretary of the A.I.T.U.C.).

A.I.T.U.C. and Foreign Organisations: No Immediate Affiliation.

The General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress issued the following statement under date 6-9-1931 to the press regarding the policy of the A.I.T.U.Congress with regard to affiliations of the Congress with foreign organisations:-

"My attention has been drawn to the Reuter's news dated London, August 31, to the effect that the decision of the Indian Trade Union Congress to affiliate with the League Against Imperialism is warmly acclaimed by the London headquarters of the League. In this connection I hasten to inform the public that there had been no such decision at the recent session of the All-India Trade Union Congress held in Calcutta. On the other hand, owing to internal dissension and disorder caused thereby in the labour organisations, the Congress decided for no affiliation at present with any foreign organisation; but in the meantime, it has determined to bring about greater unity and work for more solidarity in the Indian working class movement."

(The Times of India, 7-9-1931).

1st All-Bengal Trade Union Conference, Kankinarrah, 1931.

The First session of the All-Bengal Trades Union Conference was held at Kankinarrah, near Calcutta, during the third week of September 1931, with Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta, M.L.C., as president.

Discussing the position of labour in the future constitution of India, Mr. K.C. Roy Choudhury, M.L.C., chairman of the reception committee, suggested that important labour legislation affecting local industry and local workers should be undertaken by the Provincial Councils, while specified labour measures dealing with factories, railways and shipping should be left in charge of the Central Government. As regards franchise and electorates, the speaker recommended the formula adopted at the Madras session of the All-India Trade Union Congress, namely, that

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the representation of the working classes in the central and provincial legislatures should be considerably increased, that labour organizations ~~in the legislatures~~ should be given special representation in the legislature through their own constituencies and that the system of election should be substituted for that of nomination.

The Conference passed resolutions urging the employers and the Government to give immediate effect to the recommendations contained in the Whitley Commission Report.

(The Statesman, 24-9-31).

The Pondicherry Labour Conference, 1931

A Labour Conference of French-Indian labourers was held ^{at} in Pondicherry on 6-9-31 under the chairmanship of Dr. P. Subbarayan, ex-Chief Minister of the Madras Government. The conference was convened with the object of recommending to the Government of France to extend the French "Code-du-Travail" with suitable modifications to the French-Indian Labourers.

In an interesting speech Mr. Jeer Naidu, the chairman of the Reception Committee, traced the course of labour legislation in French India. The following is a brief summary of the relevant portions of the speech:-

Many years ago Mr. Joseph David, one of the leading advocates of this place, took up the cause of the labourers and agitated for their uplift. As a result of his agitation, the Home Government was pleased to direct the Local Government to appoint a Labour Commission for French India to consider the ways and means by which the "Code-du-Travail" of France could be introduced in French India with suitable modifications. The Commission was appointed in 1927, but there was no labour representative in it. Mr. R. Sellane, another leading advocate, was appointed to the Commission in his ex-officio capacity as member of the French India Assembly, and he put up a strong fight in the Commission for the introduction of all sections of the French Labour Act with modifications based on the Indian Factory Act. But his suggestion was not accepted by the majority of the Commission. Finally, the Commission recommended to the Home Government the introduction of the Labour Act (I and II parts only) with some modifications, and their recommendations were returned by the Home Government to the Local Government after two years for the reconsideration of certain points raised therein. In 1929 these points were again reconsidered by the Commission who returned the draft recommendations to the Home Government once again for approval. In 1930 the draft was again sent back to Pondicherry with a view to consider whether it required any further modification in the light of the resolution passed by the Geneva Conference on compulsory labour in that year, but the Commission decided that the Geneva resolution had no bearing ^{on} the French-Indian Labour and re-submitted the draft with their opinion. Nothing was heard of about it till now. In order to bring this fact to the notice of the Home Government and ^{compel} insist on them to introduce all the sections of the Labour Act of France, with suitable modifications in French India, this Conference had been arranged.

Proceeding further, Mr. Jeer Naidu said that another and more

important reason for holding this Conference, was that the labourers of Pondicherry, particularly those who were working in the Port, had been suffering hardships for the past twenty years. The labourers had many grievances of their own, such as want of accommodation, medical aid, education ^{of} their children and other amenities of life, and it was the duty of the delegates and the leaders present ^{at the Conference} to help the labourers to get their grievances redressed. It was also up to them to ~~XXXX~~ see that the "Code-du-Travail" of France was introduced in French India with suitable modifications at an early date and the speaker hoped that the Conference would pass effective resolutions on the subject mentioned.

Dr. Subbaroyan, in the course of his presidential address, emphasised the necessity for labour getting organised. He stated that labour problems are gaining in importance every day and that the tendency ~~was~~ to meet those problems from an international point of view rather than from a national one and gave the instance of the various conventions and recommendations passed by the I.L.O. as a proof of the importance of labour in the governance of a country.

The following resolutions, inter alia, were adopted by the Conference:-

- (1) This Conference appeals to Monsieur Adrian Juvanon (Governor of the French settlement in India) to strongly recommend to the Home Government the promulgation in French India of the "Code-du-Travail" with the necessary alterations, in accordance with the Indian Factories Act which is the principal Act for labour regulation in British India.
- (2) This Conference appoints, with a view to give effect to the above resolutions, a temporary committee consisting of Messrs. Joseph David, B. C. Balasubramaniam, P. Bhanaraja, Saravana Chettiar and Mohamed Haneef.

(The Hindu, 7 & 9-9-31)

Trade of India in 1930-31*

The annual review of the Trade of India during 1930-31 has recently been published by the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics of the Government of India. According to the report the total value of the imports of merchandise into British India in 1930-31 amounted to Rs. 1650 millions and that of the exports to Rs. 2260 millions. Compared with the values recorded in 1929-30, these figures represent a decline of Rs. 760 millions or of 32 per cent in the case of imports and of Rs. 920 millions or 29 per cent in that of exports.

Imports and Exports: Balance of Trade:

Imports. • On the import side the principal feature of the year was the drastic reduction in the Indian demand for imported textile. The aggregate value recorded under the textile group amounted to Rs. 410 millions as against Rs. 780 millions recorded in 1929-30. The especial significance of this retrogression lies in the circumstances that the textile group which had hitherto been the most important item in the import trade of India was forced to yield its place of predominance to the metal group. The decline under textiles was primarily the effect of a reduction in imports of cotton piecegoods, the total receipts of which amounted to only 890 million yards valued at Rs. 200.5

* Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, India. Review of the Trade of India in 1930-31 - Published by order of the Governor-General in Council - Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch 1931 - Price Rs. 2 as. 10 or 4s. 9d.

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millions in the year as compared with 1,219 million yards valued at Rs.502.5 millions in 1929-30. Naturally enough, all the three principal descriptions of cotton piecegoods - grey, white and coloured - had their respective shares in this heavy decrease, grey goods declining by 561 million yards, white by 202 million and coloured by 237 million yards. But the most striking single factor with regard to cotton piecegoods was the falling off in consignments from the United Kingdom, notably of grey goods, imports of which from that source alone showed a reduction of 377 million yards. The decline under piecegoods was supplemented by a reduction in imports of cotton twist and yarn from 44 million lbs. valued at Rs.60.0 millions to 29 million lbs. valued at Rs. 30.8 millions. It is, however, interesting that the same forces which brought down imports of cotton manufactures to such a low figure, served to give a stimulus to imports of raw cotton, which rose from 24,000 tons to 58,000 tons, mainly as a result of an enlargement of the demand for superior staples from spinners of finer counts in the country. Under the metal group there was a reduction of Rs .77.0 millions; imports of iron and steel declined from 972,700 tons to 614,200 tons in quantity and from Rs. 172.1 millions to Rs.108.9 millions in value. This decline was a continuation of the trend noticeable in the preceding year, but what was most striking was the retrogression of the United Kingdom in this line of trade. There was a decline of Rs. 38.7 millions under machinery and millwork notwithstanding stray improvements in certain directions, such as mining, refrigerating and sugar machinery. Imports of motor vehicles declined from Rs. 75.2 millions to Rs.49.9 million, the reduction being due primarily to a falling off in the number of

vehicles imported from 17,400 to 12,600 under cars and from 15,300 to 8,900 under omnibuses. This reduction, pointing as it did to a restricted demand for new motor vehicles in a year of depression, had its repercussion on the import trade in rubber manufactures, the value of which amounted to Rs. 25.7 millions against Rs. 33 millions recorded in the preceding year. The aggregate value of hardware imported declined from Rs. 50.7 millions to Rs. 36 millions but more significant than the aggregate value were the reductions under metal lamps and enamelled ironware. The sugar trade had another difficult year and the value of the consignments declined from Rs. 157.8 millions to Rs. 109.6 millions. Consignments of mineral oils fell from 253 million gallons valued at Rs. 110.4 millions to 242 million gallons valued at Rs. 104.8 millions despite an increase of 4 million gallons under petroleum, etc. Imports of provisions declined by Rs. 7.6 millions, chiefly, in consequence of a falling off in receipts of vegetable product, biscuits and cakes, and condensed milk.

Exports. " On the export side the outstanding factor was the slump in the jute trade which was responsible for a decline of 378,000 tons in the total weight and of Rs. 340 millions in the value of raw and manufactured jute exported. Shipments of raw jute declined from 4,519,000 bales to 3,470,000 bales in quantity and from Rs. 270 millions to Rs. 130 millions in value. Despatches of gunny bags receded from 522 millions valued at Rs. 220 millions to 434 millions valued at ^{Rs. 150 millions and loss of gunny cloth from 1,651 million yards valued at} Rs. 300 millions to 1,271 million yards valued at Rs. 170 millions. There was a decline of Rs. 210 millions under cotton, raw and manufactured. Exports of cotton raw fell off by 144,000 bales to 3,926,000 bales, mainly as a result of the depressed condition of the

world , but the lower prices for cotton all the world over made the slump conditions more pronounced on the value side, which showed a decline from Rs .650 millions to Rs.⁴⁶⁰ millions . Twist and yarn constituted, as usual in recent years, a minor item in the cotton export trade, but there also the year's despatches declined from 24.6 million lbs. to 23.5 million lbs. Exports of cotton piecegoods also declined from 133 million yards valued at Rs.46.7 millions to 98 million yards valued at Rs. 33.2 millions. Under foodgrains, the value of the shipments declined from Rs.347.9 millions to Rs.298.8 millions, although on the quantity side there was actually a gain from 2,510,000 tons to 2,614,000 tons. This improvement was wholly due to a partial recovery in the wheat export trade. Exports of wheat amounted to 196,500 tons ~~XXXXXX, XXXXXX, XXXXX~~ which compared very favourably with the low figure of 13,000 tons recorded in 1929-30. Shipments of rice declined in volume from 2,326,000 tons to 2,279,000 tons, whereas the value declined more heavily by Rs.55.4 millions to Rs.259.7 millions owing to the lower prices ruling. Shipments of tea fell by 20.4 million lbs. to 356.2 million lbs. and by Rs.24.5 millions to Rs.235.6 millions in value. Shipments of oilseeds amounted to 1,037,000 tons valued at Rs.178.6 millions. This meant a decline of 13 per cent in quantity and of 33 per cent in value in comparison with the exports of the preceding year. The decline was mainly due to a falling off in exports of groundnuts from 714,000 tons to 601,000 tons. Linseed alone among the different kinds of oilseeds showed an increase of 9,000 tons, but in spite of this gain the value declined by Rs.3.1 millions to Rs.54.1 million. There was a decrease in shipments of

hides and skins from 74,100 tons valued at Rs.160.3 millions to 63,000 tons valued at Rs.117.4 millions. Exports of lac amounted to 547,000 cwts. valued at Rs.31.4 millions which represented a decline of 18 per cent in quantity and of 55 per cent in value.

Re-exports. * The total value of re-exports amounted to Rs.51.4 millions which represented a decline of Rs.19.9 millions in comparison with the value recorded in 1929-30 and of Rs.26.9 millions on the basis of that for 1928-29. Shipments of raw skins, which constitutes the major item in the re-export trade, remained stationary at 211 tons, but the value declined by Rs.400,000 to Rs.10.1 millions. Re-exports of sugar fell from 7,000 tons to 3000 tons. Shipments of raw cotton fell away from 1,400 tons to 100 tons in quantity and from Rs. 1.9 millions to Rs.100,000 in value. Re-exports of cotton manufactures (chiefly piecegoods) dropped from Rs.7.8 millions to ^{Rs}5.4 millions. Despatches of raw wool also contracted from 8.2 million lbs. valued at Rs. 6.5 millions to 5 million lbs. valued at Rs.2.85 millions. It is to be noted, however, that this decline in the volume of the re-export trade particularly affected Bombay through which the bulk of this trade passes. During the year under review Bombay's share amounted to Rs.32.3 millions which meant a reduction of Rs.12.9 millions, but in spite of this decline her percentage share remained stable at 63.

Balance of Trade. * The visible balance of trade in merchandise and treasure for the year 1930-31 was in favour of India to the extent of Rs.380 millions compared with Rs.530 millions in the preceding year, Rs.520 millions in 1928-29 and the record figure of Rs. 1090 millions in 1925-26. The net imports of treasure on private

6. account fell from Rs.260 millions to Rs.240 millions of which net imports of gold were valued at Rs.130 millions and of silver at Rs.110 millions . Net imports of currency notes amounted to Rs.300,000.

Tariff Changes in 1930-31.

The changes in the tariff made under the Indian Finance Act, the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Act, the Indian Tariff (Amendment) Act, ~~the~~ and the Steel Industry (Protection) Act, all of 1930 , were dealt with at pages 33-35 of the January 1931 Report of this Office. Since then five Acts have been passed introducing extensive changes in the tariff.

The Steel Industry (Protection) Act, 1931, which was passed on the 28th February, gave effect to the recommendations of the Tariff Board concerning certain railway materials made of steel. It imposed a specific duty of Rs.2-4 per cwt. on fish bolts and nuts, ordinary bolts and nuts and dogspikes and another of Rs.2 per cwt. on rivets and gibs, cotters, keys, distance pieces and other fastenings for use with iron or steel sleepers. It also brought chrome-steel switches and crossings as well as stretcher bars which form part of them under the protective tariff.

The Gold Thread Industry (Protection) Act, 1931, which was passed on the 28th February, gave effect to the recommendations of the Tariff Board on the question of extending protection to the gold thread industry in India. It imposed, for a period of ten years, a protective duty of 50 per cent ad valorem on silver thread and wire including so-called gold thread and wire , as well as [^]silver leaf and lametta,

metallic spangles and articles of a like nature. It also ~~xxxxxx~~ restored the duty on silver plate and on silver manufactures " not & otherwise specified" to the original level of 30 per cent ad valorem.

The Indian Finance Act, 1931, which came into operation on the 30th March, introduced extensive changes in the customs tariff to provide additional financial resources. The changes fall into two distinct classes, increases in the substantive rates and additional impositions of the nature of surcharges. In the first category, the duty on ale, beer, porter, cider and other fermented liquors was raised by about 66 per cent above the old level, while those on wines and spirits (except ~~xxx~~ denatured spirit and spirit used in drugs and medicines) were raised by between 30 and 40 per cent. Duties on all grades of sugar (except molasses) and sugar candy were raised by Rs.1-4 per cwt. and that on silver from 4 as. to 6 as. per ounce, while betelnuts, spices and exposed cinematograph films were transferred from the general rate of 15 per cent to the "luxury" rate at 30 per cent ad valorem.

In the second category a surcharge of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent was imposed on articles bearing 10 per cent duty, 5 per cent on articles bearing 15 per cent or the general rate of duty (except raw hemp) and 10 per cent on articles liable to 30 per cent or "luxury" duty. Other important surcharges are:- 15 per cent on cigars, Rs.1-8 per thousand on cigarettes, 12 as. per lb. on unmanufactured tobacco, 9 pies per gallon on kerosene, 2 as. per gallon on motor spirit, Rs.2-8 per ton on batching oil, 4 pies per gallon on lubricating oil, $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on fuel oil, 10 per cent on arms and motor cars, motor cycles, etc., $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent

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on artificial silk yarn and thread, $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on silk mixtures and Rs.2 per ton on Portland cement. Another important surcharge is that of 5 per cent ad valorem on cotton piecegoods.

The Finance Act also raised the excise duties on motor spirit, kerosene and silver bullion corresponding to the increases in the customs duties on these articles, the enhanced rates being 8 as. per gallon, $2\frac{1}{4}$ as. per gallon and 6 as. per ounce, respectively.

All these changes in the customs and excise duties came into effect on the 1st March, 1931, under the provisions of the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act, 1918.

The Salt (Additional Import Duty) Act, 1931, which came into force on the 18th March, imposed a temporary additional customs duty of $4\frac{3}{4}$ as. per maund on foreign salt in the interests of the Indian salt industry. It will remain in force up to 31st March 1932.

The Wheat (Import Duty) Act, 1931, which came into force on the 20th March imposed a temporary customs duty of Rs.2 per cwt. on foreign wheat in order to assist the sale of indigenous wheat in India. It also raised the duty on wheat flour to the same level and will remain in force up to 31st March 1932.

In addition to the statutory changes mentioned above, the protective duties on iron and steel galvanized sheets and articles made therefrom were increased with effect from the 30-12-1930, under Section 3(4) of the Indian Tariff Act, 1894. The rate for non-fabricated sheets was raised from Rs.30 to Rs.67 per ton while in the case of sheets fabricated or made into pipes and tubes, the alternate specific rate of Rs.33 per ton was in each case raised to Rs.73 per ton. The additional protection is to remain in force up to 31-3-1932.

Effect of Industrial Unrest on Economic Conditions.

As in 1929 labour unrest continued to be a feature of the industrial

situation during 1930; but though the number of disputes was about the same in both years, the number of workmen involved and the loss of working days were much less during 1930. The most important strike of the year was the general strike on the Great Indian Peninsular^{for} Railway which started on February 4, and was over before the end of April, 1930. The other noteworthy strikes of the year were those in the Old Champdany Jute Mill, Hooghly, and in the jute mills at Titagarh. From the point of view of labour peace the year 1931 too has not begun well. In the very first week of January some 8,000 operatives of the Kamarhatty Jute Mills in Bengal went on strike as a result of the introduction of the single shift. The textile mills in Bombay are also having frequent labour trouble.

(The Trade of India in 1928-29 is reviewed at pages 40-45 of the report of this Office for November 1929 and the trade of India in 1929-30 at pages 26-35 of the January 1931 report).

Congress and the Indian Coal Industry:

Plea for Preferential Treatment.

A deputation on behalf of the Indian Mining Federation, consisting of Mr. K. L. Dutt, Chairman, Mr. K. Bose, Vice-Chairman, and three other members waited in deputation on the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress on 10-9-1931 to present the case of the Indian section of the coal industry of this country for preferential treatment. The following are some of the principal points brought out in the memorandum

submitted by the Federation to the Working Committee:-

of the Present Position.- The position of the Indian ^{Section} share in the coal industry, in spite of its numerical strength and potentialities of ~~increasing~~ increased raising is somewhat distressing, both ^{on} ~~in~~ ^{from the} point of view of aggregate output and the average quality of the coal worked, the Indian section is weaker in comparison with the European.

Reasons for depression.- There are well known historical reasons, states the memorandum, which account for this position and to which allusion may be made here. Of the two coal fields the Raniganj area was exploited earlier, notably in the ^{1840's} ~~40's~~ and ^{1850's} ~~50's~~ of the last century and mostly by European capital. The opening of the Jharia coalfields in 1893 gave Indians a chance to retrieve their position in the coal industry. During the concluding years of the last century a few enterprising Indian firms prospected and even started working the best part of the Jharia coalfields. Early in the present century, however, Indian interest in the best collieries of the Jharia coalfields completely yielded place to Europeans.

Lack of Capital, etc.- Lack of capital was so embarrassing for early exploiters of the Jharia coalfields that they found it difficult to resist the temptation of selling over fine colliery properties to Europeans. There are other reasons also which account for the weakness of Indians in the industry. Railway custom is the main stay of colliery enterprise. In the Bengal coal trade for long years the lion's share of railway custom went to firms and benefitted European collieries. In this position, the coal trade struggled on through the first 18 years of this century with only a casual break in the continued record of depression, once in 1907 and again in 1911. This spurt in coal prices in those two years was, however, only short-lived. It was not until the year 1918, synchronising with the post-war industrial boom in this country, that the demand for Indian coal markedly increased

European Competition.- Indian capitalists took advantage of this situation. A large number of small concerns cropped up on all sides of the coalfields but even then the system of wagon control operated to the serious prejudice of Indian-owned collieries and Indian owners suffered grievously in competition with European owners of mines.

Extent of depression.- The extent of depression which has ^{since} overtaken the coal trade ~~since~~ will be clear from the fact that the number of coal mines in the ~~in~~ two coalfields which stood at over 700 in 1923 has dwindled down to 456 in recent years. The coal trade today is strewn with the debris of Indian enterprise which springing up in the year 1918-19, had a short-lived existence and then succumbed to ruthless forces, mostly of economic competition and partly for having to ~~compete~~ compete on unequal terms.

Claim for protection.- The plea which the Indian section of the coal industry has put forward in consonance with the prevailing Swadeshi spirit is this:- That all Indian industrialists who have steam boilers in their industrial establishment should draw for their supply of fuel, through whatever source it may be obtained, only such coal as is the output of Indian owned and Indian managed mines. Negatively speaking the implications of such a formula as that put forward by us are two-fold. In the first place, oil-using steam boilers must be discarded inasmuch as crude oil for steam raising purpose is mostly an imported commodity or at least the product of purely foreign companies operating in this country; secondly, no coal must be used in a steam

boiler, through whatever source it may be obtained, which is the output of a non-Indian mine. We do not consider that we are called upon to explain the obvious consideration of Nationalist economies involved in the formula. It may be briefly emphasised that our proposition is as sound as the position enunciated by the Congress and accepted by the Indian public, that only textile articles of Indian-owned and Indian-managed cotton mills should be patronised by the latter. (The Pioneer, 12-9-1931 and the Hindu, 11-9-1931).

Working Committee's Decision.- The Working Committee at its meeting held on 11-9-1931 passed a resolution endorsing the demand for preferential treatment subject to certain conditions. The following is the full text of the resolution:-

"Whereas coal mining is of great importance as a basic industry essential for the development of the industrial life of the country in all directions, the Committee is of opinion that all possible encouragement should be extended to Indian enterprise in this field. The Committee, therefore, recommends that all industrial concerns in this country, particularly, textile mills, should confine their purchase of coal as far as possible to the produce of Indian owned and managed collieries.

The Committee resolves that the Indian Mining Federation be requested to submit a list of Indian collieries, the ~~the~~ proprietors or agents of which agree to fulfil the following conditions:- 'We hereby declare that (1) we have full sympathy with the national aspirations of the people; (2) that not less than 75 per cent of the share capital of the company is held by Indians; (3) that not less than 75 per cent of the directors of the company are and will continue to be Indians; (4) that there is no foreign interest in the managing agents' firm; (5) that we will assist in the propagation of swadeshi by refraining from exploiting in our own interest the situation arising out of the movement in respect of price or of quality.

In pursuance of the above declaration we hereby undertake to do as follows:- (1) No person connected with the management of the firm will engage himself in propaganda hostile to the national movement; (2) recruitment of the staff will be restricted to Indians except for special reasons; (3) we shall pass as early as possible the insurance, banking and shipping business of our company to Indian companies; (4) we shall henceforth employ as far as possible Indians as our auditors, solicitors, shipping agents, buying and selling brokers, contractors or the suppliers of the goods required for our business; (5) we shall purchase for our business as far as possible, articles of Indian manufacture and will only purchase such foreign articles as are indispensable and as cannot be replaced by Indian swadeshi; (6) those connected with the management of our firm will wear ~~our~~ swadeshi cloth and (7) we shall secure to our operatives a satisfactory scale of wages and conditions of life and work".

(The Hindu, 12-9-1931).

The Ahmedabad Millowners Association's Attitude.

The Ahmedabad Millowners Association, against whom the Indian Mining Federation of Calcutta complained to the Congress, has, after careful consideration of the demand for patronising Indian coal made by the Federation, sent a detailed reply to that body. The Association says that the Ahmedabad Millowners were always anxious to give preference to the best of their extent to Indian-owned collieries. During September 1930, the Association had issued a special circular requesting the mills to patronise Indian-owned mines. Replying to the suggestion that the Association should ask such of its members as had burning contracts with contractors to issue definite instructions to their contractors that all coal purchased by them should be purchased exclusively from the output of the collieries under Indian management and ownership, the Association says that contract relations and terms of agreement between a Mill and a contractor were not supposed to be under the operation of direct instructions to draw coal from particular collieries only.

(The Times of India, 12-9-1931).

Progress of Banking in India, 1929*

The following information about the progress of banking in India is taken from the Statistical Tables relating to Banks in India for 1929 published by the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics of the Government of India:-

Classification of Banks. - The banks dealt with in the statistical tables are classified into (1) The Imperial Bank of India, (2) the Exchange Banks whose head offices are located outside India, (3) the Indian Joint-Stock Banks, registered under the Indian Companies Act, and (4) the Indian Co-operative Banks, registered under the Co-operative Societies Act, II of 1912.

Imperial Bank of India. - An examination of the statements of accounts of the Imperial Bank of India reveals the fact that, as compared with 1928, Government or public deposits decreased in 1929, while private deposits increased. Cash balances showed an increase as compared with the preceding year. The table below summarises the capital, reserves, deposits, and cash balances of the Imperial Bank of India from 1925:-

31st December	Capital	Reserve and Rest	Government or Public Deposits	Private Deposits	Cash balances.
	1	2	3	4	5
	Rs(1000)	Rs(1000)	Rs(1000)	Rs(1000)	Rs(1000)
1925	56,250	49,273	54,644	778,333	174,682
1926	56,250	50,950	64,536	738,970	209,010
1927	56,250	52,407	72,023	720,722	108,865
1928	56,250	53,922	79,486	713,044	105,758
1929	56,250	54,776	75,997	716,431	139,985

* Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, India - Statistical Tables relating to Banks in India 1929 - Published by order of the Governor-General in Council - Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch 1931 - Price Rs. 1-6 or 2s.3d. - pp.52.

Exchange Banks. - The aggregate paid-up capital and reserves of the eighteen Exchange Banks doing business in India in 1929 amounted to £228 millions and their deposits and cash balances in India only to £50 millions and £7 millions, respectively. Of the 18 Exchange Banks, 6 were banks doing a considerable portion of their business in India, and 12 were banks which were agencies of large banking corporations doing a major portion of their business abroad. The position from 1925 to 1929 of these banks was as follows:-

	Number of Banks	Capital, reserve and rest	Deposits in India	Cash Balance in India.
		£(1,000)	£(1,000)	£(1,000)
1925	18	138,311	52,909	7,062
1926	18	148,003	53,658	8,046
1927	18	180,919	51,647	6,098
1928	18	187,923	53,354	6,042
1929	18	227,625	49,994	6,785

Indian Joint-Stock Banks - In 1928 there were altogether 78 Indian Joint-Stock Banks having a minimum paid-up capital and reserves of Rs.100,000, from which returns have been received. The banks are subdivided into two classes, namely, (A) those with a paid-up capital and reserves of Rs.500,000 and over, and (B) smaller banks with a paid-up capital and reserves of between Rs.100,000 and less than Rs.500,000. The aggregate paid-up capital and reserves of these 78 banks in 1929 amounted to Rs.126.9 millions, the deposits to Rs.663 millions, and cash balances to Rs. 95 millions, as stated below:-

	Class A			:	Class B			
	Number of banks	Capital and reserves	Deposits		Number of banks	Capital and reserves	Deposits	Cash balance
		Rs (Million)	Rs (Million)			Rs (Million)	Rs (Million)	Rs (Million)
1925	28	106.0	544.9		46	11.8	34.2	6.8
1926	28	108.4	596.6		47	12.6	34.7	8.2
1927	29	110.8	608.4		48	12.2	34.6	5.2
1928	28	111.0	628.5		46	12.0	35.0	5.2
1929	33	115.4	627.2		45	11.5	35.8	4.5

Total Deposits. - The total deposits in all the three classes of Banks in India decreased from Rs.2,350 millions in 1926 to Rs.2,120 millions in 1929. The respective shares in the total deposits in 1929 were: Imperial Banks of India 37 per cent, Exchange Banks 32 per cent, and Indian Joint-Stock Banks 31 per cent. (In the case of Exchange Banks the figures refer to their deposits in India only)

Proportion of Cash to Deposits. - Cash balances at the end of 1929 were 15 per cent of the liabilities on deposits in the case of the Imperial Bank of India, 14 per cent in the case of Exchange Banks. The percentage for Indian Joint-Stock Banks was 14 in the case of those having capital and reserve of Rs.500,000 and over, and 13 in the case of those with smaller capital.

Indian Co-operative Banks. - The statistics in these tables relate to all Provincial and Central Co-operative Banks and registered non-agricultural(urban) Co-operative Credit Societies with limited liability and a capital and reserve amounting to at least Rs.100,000. These banks are sub-divided, as in the case of the Indian Joint-Stock Banks, into two classes namely (A) Rs.500,000 and over and (B) Rs.100,000 and below Rs.500,000. The following figures show the progress of co-operative banking during the years 1925-26 to 1929-30:-

Class A			Class B		
Number of Bank	Capital & Reserves	Deposits & loans received	Number of Bank	Capital & Reserves	Deposits & loans received.
	R (1,000)	R (1,000)		R (1000)	R (1,000)
25-26	10	9,062	104	20,284	92,981
26-27	12	11,254	119	22,474	119,769
27-28	16	14,982	125	24,734	131,636
28-29	18	16,334	140	27,707	148,688
29-30	22	20,470	157	30,805	161,278

Bank Rates. - These are the rates charged for demand loans, i.e. the rates charged day by day by the old Presidency Banks and the Imperial Banks of India for loans advanced on such security as Government paper. The annual average of these rates for the year 1929 was 6.33, the rates at the end of June and December being 6.88 and 5.79, respectively.

Bank failures. - The number of failures in 1929 was 11, Mysore accounting for four and Punjab, Bombay and Madras each for two.

Social Conditions

Abolition of Devadasi System in Savantvadi State

At pages 73 of the July 1930 and 31 of the February 1931 Reports of this Office, references were made to the abolition of the system of dedicating Devadasis (dancing girls) to serve in the Hindu temples maintained by the Governments of Travancore and Cochin. The small State of Savantvadi in the Bombay Presidency has, according to the Times of India of 17-9-31, recently passed an enactment called the Savantvadi Prevention of Dedication of Devadasis Act. By the new Act the performance, within the precincts of a Hindu temple or outside, of any ceremony intending or having the effect to dedicate a Hindu woman as a Devadasi, has been declared illegal and of no effect. The Act further provides that whoever performs or abets the performance of any ceremony ^{of} for dedication of a Hindu woman as Devadasi, will be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine or with both.

Special Backward Class Officer for Bombay.

The Bombay Government, in a Resolution, state that having accepted the resolution of the Depressed Classes and Aboriginal Tribes Committee, appointed in 1928, that there should be some officer definitely charged with the duty of seeing that the progress of the backward classes is continuous and their rights upheld, (Vide pages 71-73 of the Report of this Office for July 1930 for a summary of the Report of the Committee), ~~they have accepted the recommendation and~~ ^{They} have appointed ~~XXXXXX~~.

Mr. O.H.B.Starte, I.C.S., who was Chairman of the Committee, to be the Backward Class Officer in addition to his own duties, with effect from 1-9-1951. Mr. Starte's duties will be to act as the adviser to Government on all matters specially or differentially affecting the backward classes, and to investigate and report on any question relating to them that may be referred to him by ^{the} Government. He is also charged with the general duty of enquiring into their needs and grievances, and where he considers it necessary, of making suggestions or representations to the departmental officers responsible for taking action. If after discussion with the departmental authorities, he is not satisfied with the action taken, he is empowered to refer the matter to higher authorities or to Government.

(The Times of India, 7-9-51)

Industrial Health

Industrial Housing Scheme, Bombay, 1930-31*

The following facts regarding the Industrial Housing Scheme, Bombay, are taken from the Annual Report on the Administration of the Industrial Housing Scheme, Bombay, for the year 1930-31. The scheme consists of 207 chawls (tenements for industrial workers). (For details of rooms and shops in the tenements see table given at page 42 of the January 1931 report of this Office). During the year under review, one room at DeLisle Road and two rooms at Naigaum were converted into shops.

Chawls in Use. - The following table shows the figures of the occupied chawls at the beginning and at the end of the year:-

Locality .		April 1930	March 1931.
DeLisle Road	...	27	27
Naigaum	...	39	42
Worli	...	46	45
Sewri	...	12	12
		Total ... 124	126

Scale of Rents:- The scale of rents for single roomed tenements in the four areas remained unchanged throughout the year. They were DeLisle Road Rs. 8, Naigaum Rs.7, Sewri Rs. 7 and Worli Rs.5. Re. 1 extra is charged for corner rooms. The rents for two-roomed tenements ranged from Rs.17-8-0 to Rs-19-0-0 a month and the rent for three-roomed tenements was Rs.27-0-0 a month. Out of 322 shops only 148 were occupied during the year. The question of revising the rates of rents of shops according to their location was considered, but on account of the prevailing economic depression it was considered desirable to postpone any revision.

Tenancies. - Out of a total of 16,524 rooms and shops 7,800 rooms were occupied at the end of March 1931, as against 7,291 at the

* Annual Report on the Administration of the Industrial Housing Scheme for the year 1930-31 - Bombay : Printed at the Government Central Press 1931 - Obtainable from the Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, Bombay, or through the High Commissioner of India, India House, Aldwych, London, W.C.2, or through any recognized Bookseller. - Price - Anna 1 or 1d. - pp.8.

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end of March 1930. The number of occupied rooms steadily increased in the first quarter of the year, but from August till October there was a gradual decline in the occupancies owing to a number of mills having been closed down and on account of the disturbed political conditions of the city. In November the situation began to improve, and by the end of March the figures of occupancies were higher by 509 than those at the corresponding period of the previous year. The rise in the occupancies at Worli from May 1930 to February 1931 was due to the occupation of four chawls by the Police Department to accommodate political prisoners.

Rent Collections. - The amount assessed for the year was Rs. Rs. 651,447 and the total recoveries, including arrears, during the year was Rs. 652,706. The collections were satisfactory in view of the prevailing conditions and compare favourably with those of previous years.

The total amount due from absconders was Rs. 24,848-5-9 as against Rs. 79,124-13-3 due in the previous year. The amount recovered was Rs. 8,928-14-7. The net amount still to be recovered is therefore Rs. 15,919-5-2 or a little more than 2 per cent. of the total assessment of the year, viz., Rs. 6,51,447. This result, the report states, is not unsatisfactory.

Vital Statistics and Sanitation. -

Locality.	Approximate population.	Deaths.	Death rate per 1,000 approximately.
1	2	3	4
Naigaum	13,245	318	24
DeLisle Road	8,550	196	22.9
Worli	13,525	312	23
Sewri	4,425	63	14.2
Total...	39,745	889	22.3

As the figures of the new census are not yet available the average number of inhabitants per room has been taken as five for the purpose of calculating the specific death rate. The figures in column 2 are approximately the averages of the monthly tenancies multiplied by 5. There was no epidemic in any of the areas during the year.

Maternity Home at Worli. - A maternity home under the auspices of the Presidency Infant Welfare Society was opened at Worli during the year, and a chawl at Worli has been taken up for the purpose. The ground floor of the Chawl has been rendered suitable for the accommodation of children and servants. The first floor has been converted into a Maternity Home, containing two lying-in-wards, five existing rooms being converted by removal of partitions in each ward. Two rooms have been converted into a Labour Ward. The work, which was started at the end

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of January 1931 was completed in March 1931 at a total cost of Rs.9,297 against the estimated amount of Rs.9,299.

(The Annual Report on the Administration of the Industrial Housing Scheme, Bombay, during 1929-30 was reviewed at pages 42-43 of the report of this Office for January 1931).

Slum Clearing in Madras: Corporation's Housing Scheme.

The Corporation of Madras has decided to eradicate some of the worst slum areas in its area. ^{The} Government granted Rs.2,51,000 and some land in Parambur Barracks Road some time ago and there the Madras Municipal Corporation is building 120 houses in addition to 80 houses in Bogipaliam. Each house has a living room 10ft. by 9ft., a bathroom, kitchen, passage 4ft. wide and a back verandah. The cost of each house is estimated at about Rs.1,200 which includes sewerage, water and light.

Sixty more houses are to be built at Bogipaliam, for the cost of which the Corporation will draw on municipal funds. Another housing scheme is contemplated at Triplicane, for which a loan of Rs.100,000 has been raised.

(The Times of India, 17-9-31).

Maritime Affairs.

R. I. M. Dock Workers' Union, Bombay.

A general meeting of the R. I. M. Dock Workers' Union, Bombay, was held on 21-8-31 with Mr. R.S.Asavale in the chair. Mr. Syed Munavar emphasised the need of solidarity amongst the workers, which alone, he said, would secure for them permanency of service, provident fund and other reasonable amenities, as also recognition by the authorities of their registered trade union with some genuine trade unionists as its office-bearers. The president exhorted the meeting to have faith in constitutional methods for the redress of their grievances. Resolutions were passed (1) urging the authorities to give immediate effect to such of the Whitley Commission's recommendations as related to workers of the dock yard, (2) demanding security of service for those who had served for over three years, (3) expressing determination to carry on with renewed vigour the activities of their existing union and (4) protesting against the discharge of some workers of long service and demanding their reinstatement.

(The Trade Union Record, September, 1931
(Vol.2, No.7).)

Conditions of Work of Indian Quartermasters.

At page 75 of the report of this Office for August 1931 reference was made to the demands of the Indian Quartermasters' Union, Calcutta. The following information about the conditions ~~of work of~~

of work of Indian quartermasters is taken from the September 1931 issue of the Trade Union Record, Bombay:

The number of quartermasters at Calcutta being larger than required on board ships, the majority of them remain unemployed continuously for a long time. To minimise unemployment the Union has suggested that the quartermasters who have been serving on the same ship for more than a year, as well as those who come back to the port with the ship completing its voyage after six months, should be discharged. The recruitment of quartermasters is not done through the shipping office but some interested persons attend ships direct for employment which leads to corruption. The Indian quartermasters have to work 12 hours a day with intervals ^{after} every 4 hours which system prevents them from getting complete rest and sound sleep. The Union has suggested that the number of quartermasters on board ~~the~~ ship should be increased and the hours of work should be reduced to 8. On account of want of wheel-houses on all ships they are not protected from sun, rain, ice and wind while working. They are not provided with separate cabins. Their duties are not clearly defined. They are compelled to do the work of chipping, painting, washing etc.

(The Trade Union Record, September, 1931,
(Vol. 2, No. 7).)

Migration.

Indians Abroad: References in Viceroy's Address
to the Legislature.

The Viceroy, in his address to the members of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly at Simla on 14-9-31, made several references to the conditions of Indians abroad. The following are relevant extracts:-

Closer Union question in East Africa. - "As Honourable Members are aware, the Government of India deputed the Right Honourable V.S. Srinivasa Sastri to represent them before the Joint Select Committee of the two Houses of Parliament in London on the question of East Africa. Mr. Sastri gave evidence before the Committee towards the middle of June, and widespread satisfaction will be felt at the fact that, on the question of Closer Union, the views, which the Government of India finally authorised him to express on their behalf, were in complete accord with those of non-official Indian opinion, both in this country and in East Africa. My Government now await the report of the Committee with great interest."

Conditions in Malaya. - "The depression in the rubber and latterly, in the tea industry has seriously affected the Indian labourer in Malaya and Ceylon. The Governments of these two territories have shown a commendable spirit of co-operation with us in ensuring that the measure of sacrifice imposed by the economic crisis on the Indian labourer is not proportionately greater than what he can legitimately be expected to bear along with the other elements engaged in the industry, and that the labourer, who is not prepared to bear his share of the sacrifice, is repatriated to this country free of cost. My Government are watching the economic situation, in so far as it affects the Indian labourer, with constant and sympathetic vigilance and will do all that lies in their power to safeguard his interests."

Indians and the Ceylon Franchise. - "When the Order in Council on the subject of the franchise in Ceylon was first promulgated, there was considerable misgiving as to its effect on the Indian aspirant to the vote. It was feared that the requirement of a certificate of permanent settlement would have the effect of debarring a great many Indians from claiming the franchise. Honourable Members will be glad to hear that the great majority of Indians, who have sought admission to the electoral roll, have done so on the strength of domicile which can be established by a proof of five years' continuous residence in the Island. The total number of Indian electors is over 100,000 and it is hoped that, as the Indian population of Ceylon learns to appreciate the value of the vote and of organisation, their numbers will

increase. Meanwhile, my Government have learnt with great satisfaction that one of the Indian, elected Members of the State Council has secured a seat in the Ministry.

Indians in South Africa - " Early in the new year representatives of the Government of India will meet the representatives of the Government of the Union of South Africa to consider matters arising out of the working of the Cape Town Agreement which was concluded in 1927. As Honourable Members are aware, the Union Government, in deference to our representations, have agreed to postpone consideration of the Bill to regulate the tenure and ownership of immovable properties by Indians in the Transvaal until after this Conference which will also consider this projected measure of legislation. My Government are deeply appreciative of the spirit of friendliness of which this decision of the Union Government is a sign, and earnestly hope that it will help to ensure for the Conference an issue satisfactory and honourable both to India and to South Africa. Non-official Indian opinion, both in South Africa and in this country, has been greatly alarmed by this Bill, as also by certain other legislation, of which the recent amendment of the Immigration Act of the Union in respect of the value of Transvaal Registration certificates is the most important. The Government of India are of opinion that there is justification for this feeling, but do not despair of a satisfactory settlement of all these questions, provided that the representatives of both Governments approach them with earnest resolution to maintain and, indeed, improve upon the friendly relations which the Conference of 1927 did so much to establish. I feel confident that the interests of India will be fully maintained by her representatives under the wise and able Chairmanship of Sir Fazl-e-Hussain."

(Extracted from Legislative Assembly Debates: 14-9-31 -
Vol. V. No. 6 - Pages 342-343).