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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

INDIAN BRANCH

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Report for September 1935.

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

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References to the I.L.O.

"Kashmir Times", Srinagar, dated 3-9-1935, publishes an appreciative review of the Director's Report to the 19th I.L.Conference. (A copy of the Director's Report was forwarded to this paper for review by this Office).

... ..

The September 1935 issue of the National Christian Council Review, Nagpur, publishes a long and appreciative review of the Director's Report to the 19th I.L.Conference. (A copy of the Director's Report was forwarded to this paper for review by this Office).

... ..

"Federated India", Madras, dated 4-9-1935, publishes an appreciative review of the Director's Report to the 19th I.L.Conference. Special attention is directed in the review to <sup>the</sup> chapters dealing with "planning" and unemployment relief. (A copy of the Director's Report was forwarded to this paper for review by this Office).

... ..

A communique re. Holidays with Pay issued by this Office on 14-9-1935, is published by the Hindustan Times dated 15-9-1935, the Hindu dated 18-9-1935, "Commerce and Industry" dated 17-9-1935, Indian Labour Journal dated 22-9-1935, and "Federated India", Madras, dated 25-9-1935 (vide encl. 2 to H.4/1646/35 dated 19-9-1935 and encls. 4,5 and 6 to H.4/1677/35 dated 26-9-1935).

... ..

The Statesman, dated 13-9-1935, publishes a press summary of the views of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce on the question of Holidays with Pay. The view of the Chamber is that legislation on the subject

is "neither desirable nor practicable at the present stage". The Chamber has strongly recommended to the Government of India not to ratify any Convention on the subject which may be adopted at the 1936 session of the Conference.

The Statesman dated 15-9-1935 publishes the views of the Bombay Millowners' Association on the subject of Holidays with Pay. The Association is strongly opposed to the proposal.

... ..

A communique re. Reduction of Hours ~~in~~ in Public Works (issued by this Office on 18-9-1935) is published by the Hindustan Times dated 19-9-1935, the Leader dated 23-9-1935, "Commerce and Industry" dated 24-9-1935, the Hindu ~~and~~ Times of India dated 26-9-1935 (vide encls. 6 to H.4/1646/35, dated 19-9-1935, ~~and~~ 7 and 8 to H.4/1677/35, dated 26-9-1935 and 1 and 2 to H.4/1731/35, dated 3-10-1935).

... ..

A communique re. Reduction of Hours ~~in~~ <sup>the</sup> in Steel Industry (issued by this Office on 28-9-1935) is published by the Hindustan Times dated 29-9-1935 and the Leader dated 3-10-1935 (vide encls. 3 and 4 to H.4/1731/35, dated 3-10-1935).

... ..

A communique re. I.L.O. and the 40-Hour Week (issued by this Office on 10-8-1935) is published by the Planters' Chronicle dated 21-9-1935 (vide encl. 9 to H.4/1677/35 dated 26-9-1935).

... ..

Indian Delegation to Preparatory Maritime Conference; The Hindustan Times dated 18-9-1935 (vide encl. 11 to H.4/1646/35 dated 19-9-35).

... ..

News item re. attendance of Mr. N.M. Joshi at the forthcoming Governing Body meeting and Preparatory Maritime Conference; the

Statesman and the Hindustan Times dated 18-9-1935 (vide encls. 12 and 13 to H.4/1646/35 dated 19-9-1935).

... ..

Mr. N.M. Joshi's departure to Geneva to attend the forthcoming Governing Body meeting and the Preparatory Maritime Conference; The Hindustan Times dated 24-9-1935 and the Amrita Bazar Patrika (vide encls. 1 and 2 to H.4/1677/35, dated 26-9-1935).

... ..

Cartoon re Mr. N.M. Joshi's departure to Geneva; the Hindustan Times dated 21-9-1935 (vide encl. 3 to H.4/1677/35 dated 26-9-1935).

... ..

"Federated India", Madras, dated 18-9-1935, publishes the reproduction of the article: "The Future of the I.L.O." which was published in the August 1935 issue of "Labour", London. (Copies of the article were sent out by this Office to several Indian papers).

... ..

The Indian Social Reformer, Bombay, dated 14-9-1935 and the National Call, dated 18-9-1935, publish an article under the caption: "The Woman Worker and Geneva", contributed by Chrystal Macmillan. In the article, the writer condemns the tendency shown by the I.L.O. to treat women workers as a separate class from men workers and impose restrictions on them (women). The writer says: "We have now to be on the watch for new attacks on the woman worker. We have to be on the watch for proposals to benefit male workers at the expense of women workers by prohibiting or curtailing women's work; for proposals to give arbitrary power to a minister to say what work a woman may or may not do, or what quotas of women workers are to be allowed, or to say what work is dangerous to a woman's health or morals and to be prohibited to her". The writer refers to the statement made in the last

Director's Report that "the whole subject of women's work merits closer and more unprejudiced analysis than it has yet received", and describes it as a 'frank admission' on the part of the Director of the necessity <sup>to</sup> of approaching the problems of women workers from a new angle. The present policy of the I.L.O. of adopting 'discriminatory' Conventions is declared to be dangerous and the writer appeals to public opinion to be on the alert to counteract the move to displace women workers by men workers.

... ..

Legislative Assembly debate on the resolution recommending ratification of the Revised Draft Convention re. employment of women during night; the Statesman and the Hindustan Times dated 3-9-1935 (vide encls. 1, 2 and 3 to H.4/1622/35 dated 12-9-1935).

... ..

Interpellations in Legislative Assembly re. India's contribution to the League and employment of Indians in the League Secretariat; the Statesman and Hindustan Times dated 5-9-1935 and the National Call and Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 6-9-1935 (vide encls. 4, 5, 6 and 7 to H.4/1622/35, dated 12-9-1935).

... ..

The Council of State resolution urging appointment of a Committee to enquire into the benefits derived by India from membership of the League of Nations; the Hindustan Times dated 13-9-1935 (vide encl. 22 to H.4/1646/35 dated 19-9-1935).

... ..

Interpellations in Legislative Assembly on India's contribution to the League of Nations and the number of Indians on the staff of League Secretariats; the Hindustan Times dated 19-9-1935 (vide encl. 23 to H.4/1646/35, dated 19-9-1935).

The July 1935 issue of "Indian Insurance", Bombay, publishes a long article under the heading: "Insurance in India", contributed by Mr. G. Krishna Moorthy. In the course of the article an incidental reference is made to the I.L.O. The writer urges that the Government of India, in view of the fact that India is a member of the I.L.O., should encourage industrial insurance.

... ..

H.H. the Aga Khan's speech at the League Assembly; the Statesman and Hindu dated 14-9-1935, the Times of India dated 16-9-1935 (vide encls. 14, 15 and 16 to H.4/1646/35 dated 19-9-1935).

... ..

The Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 18-9-1935 publishes an editorial on the above. It is pointed out that the criticism, coming as it does from a pro-government person like the Aga Khan, lends great weight to similar views expressed in the Indian press for some time past.

... ..

Mr. Basu's speech at the League Assembly; the Hindustan Times and the Times of India dated 19-9-1935 and the Leader dated 20-9-1935 (vide encls. 18 to H.4/1646/35 dated 19-9-1935 and 11 and 12 to H.4/1677/35 dated 26-9-1935).

... ..

Mr. S.C. Bose's press note re correspondence with Information Bureau, League of Nations, about Indians on the staff of League Secretariat; the Hindustan Times dated 17-9-1935 and the Amrita Bazar Patrika dated 18-9-1935 (vide encls. 19 and 20 to H.4/1646/35 dated 19-9-1935).

The Hindustan Times dated 18-9-1935 publishes an editorial note on the above. It is suggested that the refusal of the information asked

for by Mr. Bose will only add to the suspicion already felt by India about the principles and policies of the League.

... ..

Reproductions from I.L.O. News Bulletin; the Planters' Chronicle dated 7-9-1935 (vide encls. 10 and 11 to H.4/1622/35 dated 12-9-1935).

... ..

Communique re. I.L.O. Textile Inquiry (issued by this Office on 24-7-1935) is published by the Indian Textile Journal (August 1935) (vide encl. 13 to H.4/1622/35 dated 12-9-1935).

... ..

Tribute to the League and the I.L.O. by Dr. Kalidas Nag at a meeting at Calcutta to make arrangements for the Carnegie Centenary: (the Times of India dated 9-9-1935), (vide encl. 9 to H.4/1622/35 dated 12-9-1935).

... ..

The August 1935 issue of the Indian Textile Journal, Bombay, reproduces from the Hindu dated 10-8-1935 a summary of a communication sent by the Assistant Secretary of the All India Railwaymen's Federation regarding the strike situation in Savana Mills, Pondicherry. It is pointed out in the communication that the French authorities are not giving effect to many ratified I.L.Conventions in French territory.

... ..

The August 1935 issue of the Commercial Review, Alleppey, reproduces from the Scholar an article under the caption: "Labour Legislation in British India" contributed by Mr. A.C. Ramalingam. The article examines in detail the various obstacles in the way of India ratifying many of the I.L.Conventions.

... ..



The September 1935 issue of the Insurance World, Calcutta, publishes an article under the heading: "National Social Insurance in Fascist Italy", contributed by Mr. Monindramohan Moulik. In the course of the article reference is made to the I.L. Convention re. sickness insurance.

... ..

The Financial News, Bombay, dated 14-9-1935, publishes a review of the Addendum recently issued to the League of Nations publication: "National Public Works".

... ..

The "Silver Jubilee Souvenir, 1910-1935, edited by Mr. H.G. Franks and B.R. Sen, I.C.S. (Publishers: Art Press, Calcutta), publishes an article under the caption "Indian Labour Coming into its Own" contributed by Mr. N.M. Joshi. Several paragraphs in the article deal with the question of how far the I.L.O. has been instrumental in quickening the pace of labour legislation in the country and in raising the conditions of life and work of Indian labour.

... ..

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

The ~~Ex~~ Planters' Chronicle, Madras, dated 7-9-1935, reproduces items: "Nineteenth Session of the International Labour Conference" and "Recruiting of Labour in Plantations, etc." from the I.L.O. News Bulletin No. 7 (July 1935).

... ..

The following messages having reference to the I.L.O. emanating

from Reuter x or other European news agencies and press correspondents were published in the Indian Press during September 1935:-

1. A Reuter's message dated 13-9-1935 from Geneva summarising the speech of H.H. the Aga Khan at the last session of the League Assembly.
2. A Reuter's message dated 17-9-1935 from Geneva summarising the speech of Mr. Basu at the last session of the League Assembly.
3. A Press Note issued by Mr. Subbas Chandra Bose from Karlsbad re. India's membership of the League of Nations.

Ratifications.

Convention re. Employment of Women During Night:

Assembly Recommends Ratification. +

On 2-9-1935 Mr. D.G.Mitchell, Acting Member in Charge of the Industries and Labour Department with the Government of India, introduced in the Legislative Assembly, a resolution recommending the ratification of the revised Draft Convention re. employment of women during night. After some discussion the resolution was adopted by the House. Mr. Mitchell, later in the day, introduced a Bill to amend the Indian Factories Act to give effect to the resolution by making the necessary changes in the Act.

(The Statesman, 2-9-1935).

(For fuller details see pages 149-157 of the Legislative Assembly Debates dated 2-9-1935). +

10

National Labour Legislation.

Factories (Amendment) Bill, 1935; Employment of  
Women during Night Prohibited.

Legislative Assembly Bill No.30 of 1935. +

Mention was made in the Section: "Ratifications" of this report of the introduction in the Legislative Assembly on 2-9-1935 of a Bill to amend the Factories Act in order to implement the I.L.O. Draft Convention re. employment of women during night. The text of the Bill is published at page 94 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 7-9-1935. The Bill removes the Government's power under the Factories Act, 1934, for granting exemptions to the provisions prohibiting night work of women in the case of women managers or supervisors or women employed in confidential capacities. In all other cases Sec. 45(1)(b) of the Factories Act, 1934, <sup>already</sup> prohibits night work of women. +

Payment of Wages Bill, 1935; Select Committee Report. +

Reference was made to the Payment of Wages Bill, 1935, introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 13-2-1935 and referred to <sup>a</sup>Select Committee on 21-2-1935. The Select Committee has now presented its report which is published at pages 77-86 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 7-9-1935. Numerous changes in the Bill have been suggested both in the majority and minority reports. The more important of them are:

Majority Report: (1) The operation of the Bill has been extended to cover railway workers.

(2) The limit of wages below which the Act applies has been raised from Rs. 100 to Rs. 200.

(3) Definition of "industrial establishment" has been enlarged to include tramways; dock, wharf or jetty; inland

steam vessels; and oil-fields.

(4) Definition of 'wage' has been recast.

(5) It is made clear that the employer or other person need not pay wages personally, but should be responsible for their payment.

(6) The clause providing for the extension of the period for the payment of wages within 7 days if the 7th day happens to be a holiday, to the next working day has been deleted; large establishments have been granted a period of ten days instead of seven and all payments have to be made on working days.

(7) Payment of wages in kind has been prohibited.

(8) List of acts for which fine can be imposed will have to be prepared by individual employers themselves and the Local Governments sanction obtained.

(9) Before a fine or a deduction can be imposed, the employee affected should be given a chance to show cause why such fine or deduction should not be imposed.

Minutes of Dissent.- (I) by Sir H.P.Mody.- (1) Forfeiture of wages and, in lieu of notice, cost of cloth damaged by operative should be added to the list of deductions which may be made from wages according to clause 7(2).

(2) It should be permissible to pay wages in kind or in species

(II) by Messrs. S. Satyamurti, B.B.Varma, V.V.Giri, S.K.Hosmani, Mohanlal Saksena, A.N.Chattopadhyaya and N.M.Joshi. - (1) The Act should be applicable to all factories and workshops where twenty or more persons are employed.

(2) The Act should apply directly to industrial establishments as well as to factories.

(3) The principle of weekly payment or at least fortnightly payment whenever trade unions prefer it should be accepted.

(4) Fines should be abolished altogether. If, however, the fine system is retained, it should not affect employees getting Rs. 15/- or below and should not exceed an amount equal to quarter of an anna in each rupee of wages earned.

(III) by Mr. N.M.Joshi.- Mr. N.M.Joshi, in addition, has separately made a few practical suggestions. They are;

(1) Local Governments should be given power to extend the act to any industry or occupation.

(2) Position of substitute workers as regards payment by employers should be clarified.

(3) An employee going on leave or terminating employment should be paid on his last working day.

(4) The principle that a deduction may be made so long as the workers express their willingness voluntarily should not be accepted and employers should be prevented from making deductions even in such cases.

(5) The power given to Government in Sec.7(2)(f) is too wide. It should not be open to interpret "service" to include supply of tools and material.

(6) Provision should be made for enabling employees to appoint auditors to audit the accounts of the services provided by employers.

(7) For proper payment of wages statutory provision should be made for the inspection of weights and measures used by the employers for ascertaining the production for which wages are paid.

(Pages 77-86 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 7-9-1935). +

The Saurashtra Factories Act, 1935; Junagadh State

Act No.36 of 1935. +

The Junagadh State (Western India) has recently adopted a Factories Act which received the assent of His Highness the Nawab Saheb on 29-5-1935. The Act came into force on 20-6-1935. The salient feature of the Act is that it follows faithfully the provisions of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, as amended from time to time till the beginning of 1931, except for changes to suit local conditions. The only important departure from the Indian Factories Act of 1911 is that the Junagadh Act is declared not to apply to factories managed by the State, where as the Indian Act applied to factories belonging to the Government as well. Other features of the Act are:

- (1) a child is defined as a person under 15 years of age.
- (2) The weekly rest day is Friday instead of Sunday.
- (3) The hours of employment for a child is 6 hours per day and for an adult 11 hours per day.
- (4) The hours of employment per week are 60 for adults.
- (5) Children and women are not to be employed in any factory before 5-30 a.m. or after 7 p.m.
- (6) person employed in a factory for ~~11~~ more than 60 hours in any one week is to be given payment for overtime at a rate which shall be one and a quarter times the rate at which he is normally paid.

(A copy of the Saurashtra Factories Act was forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute D.1/675/35 dated 26-9-1935.) +

Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1935:

Referred to Select Committee. +

At pages 32-34 of our February 1935 report was given the text of the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1935, intended to abolish arrest and imprisonment for debt of honest debtors and to confine such detention in prison only to dishonest debtors. On 13-9-1935, Sir Henry Craik, the Home Member with the Government of India, moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The motion did not meet with serious opposition and the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

(The Statesman, 14-9-1935). +

The Punjab Factories Rules, 1935. +

Attention is directed to pages 846 to 876 of Part I of the Punjab Gazette, dated 6-9-1935 where the draft Punjab Factories Rules, 1935, are published. These rules are made under the Indian Factories Act, 1934. +

14

Conditions of Labour.

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in U.P.-1934.\* +

An year of smooth working, with nothing exceptional to record—such is the impression given by the Report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act during 1934 in the United Provinces issued by the Director of Industries of the United Provinces. The outstanding fact in the Report is that the number of accidents rose from 1979 in 1933 to 2099 in 1934. The rise in the number of reported accidents is explained to a certain extent by the fact that the number of factory operatives employed in registered factories of the U. P. rose from 112693 in 1933 to 12986 in 1934 (over 95 per cent of the 1934 factory operatives consisted of male labour). Of the 2099 accidents, 39 were fatal, 412 serious and 1648 minor accidents.

A satisfactory feature of the year is the increase in the number of agreements for payment of compensation registered during the year. In 1934 these cases amounted to 43 as against 37 in 1933.

The table published at page 5 of the report of the number of persons in each wage-class to whom compensation was awarded shows that 17 deaths out of the total of 43 deaths occurred in the group drawing Rs. 10 and under per month. The majority of persons to whom compensation was awarded drew Rs. 25 per mensem or less as pay, 36 out of the 43 victims of fatal accidents and 22 out of the 36 permanently disabled belonged to this wage class.

During 1934 compensation was paid in respect of 44 deaths,  

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\* Report together with the prescribed Returns on the Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 (VIII of 1923) in the United Provinces for the calendar year 1934. -Allahabad:Supdt., Printing and Stationery, U.P.1935. -Price As.3. - pp.7



62 cases of permanent disablement and 620 cases of temporary disablement, and the total amount of compensation paid came up to Rs. 46,725 as against Rs. 38,721 in 1933 for 35 deaths, 49 cases of permanent disablement and 970 cases of temporary disablement.

During the year efforts were made to make the provisions of the Act better known among the factory population. With this purpose in view, a summary of the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, as amended by the Act of 1933 was prepared in English, Hindi and Urdu and was distributed to all registered factories in the province to be put up in conspicuous places within the factory premises so as to attract the attention of the workmen. +

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bengal, 1934.\* +

The Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation in Bengal in his annual report on the Workmen's Compensation Act in that province during 1934 has suggested that the volume of business necessitates his office being a full time one. As a result of wider knowledge among workmen of the provisions of the Act and the Amendment Act, 1934, coming into force from 1-7-1934, the total number of applications under the various sections increased by 12.14 per cent to 722.

Some Results of Working of Amended Act.- The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act, 1934, (passed by the Legislative Assembly on 28-8-1933) which was intended to give effect to the various recommendations of the Royal Commission on labour regarding

\*Government of Bengal - Annual Report on the Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act during the year 1934.-Supdt., Govt. Printing Bengal Govt. Press, Alipore, Bengal. 1935. Price As.3 or 4d.-pp.11.

improvements on the Original Act, introduced substantial changes in the Act. The Amendment Act not only widened the scope of the Act to bring new type of workers under its purview but also increased considerably the scale of compensation and introduced two ~~other~~ <sup>more</sup> classes of dependants. These changes have yielded several interesting results. In the first place, revision of the scales of compensation has increased the proportion of petty ~~and~~ claims, since the enhanced rates make it worthwhile to lodge a larger number of claims. Secondly, the larger benefit has attracted ~~another~~ <sup>many</sup> unauthorised practitioners and touting is reported to be on the increase. In their eagerness to get cases, lawyers and agents of parties are exhibiting willingness to be paid only after compensation is realised, and the incidental out-of-pocket expenses are met by agents. Thirdly, experience has shown that claims for considerable sums are often tenable against small manufacturing business firms which often find it <sup>difficult</sup> unable, within the statutory period, to pay the amount in full. The Commissioner not having been given discretionary powers to grant more time, this provision, the report points out, is a cause of great hardship being occasioned to small firms. Fourthly, section 17 prohibits 'contracting out' and workers are denied the possibility of ~~a sell~~ <sup>effecting a settlement</sup> benefit by compromise which is very often is the only way in which a worker in a small firm can derive any benefit. Fifthly, the necessity to pay large amounts as compensation, the Report points out, has an injurious effect on small industrialists generally and tends to drive them out of business, a result which is against public interest.

Claims Bureaux and Trade Unions. - During the year there were

a few claims bureaux and trade unions which were very active in rendering assistance in the settlement of claims. Of these the Calcutta Claims Bureau, which represents the majority of insured employers in the province, <sup>is</sup> reported to have continued to render very valuable assistance. A number of trade unions, notably the Press Employees' Association, the Port Trust Employees' Association and the Seamen's Union, were active in helping their members in realising compensation.

Statistics of Workmen and Accidents.—According to 1,726 returns received during the year, there were 569,372 adult workers and 5,815 minors employed in factories, railway workshops, tramways, ports and mines. During the year there were 66 ~~and~~ accidents resulting in deaths, 328 in permanent disablement, and 2,022 in temporary disablement (including 2 cases of minors) in respect of which compensation was paid. An amount of Rs. 43,390 was paid in respect of deaths; Rs. 46,971 in respect of permanent disablement; and Rs. 21,025 in respect of temporary disablement. ~~Rx Rs. 618~~ Rs. 618 were paid in respect of the two cases of temporary disablement of minors.

Occupational Diseases.— There was only one case of occupational disease in 1934; for <sup>this</sup> ~~which~~ compensation <sup>amounting to</sup> of Rs. 2,730 was paid by agreement. Another claim was filed by a workman, which remained pending at the close of the year, but has since been heard and allowed. Both the claims were in respect of disablement due to lead poisoning contracted in the course of employment in Printing Presses owned by Government. The Commissioner calls pointed attention to the fact that though a large number of workmen are employed in private Printing Presses no claim other than the solitary one referred to in the previous report has been received. It is remarked that these cases must be far more common in private employment than in the Government Presses which receive careful supervision in all respects

Factory Administration in B. & O., 1934\*

Statistics of Factories, Workers and Inspections.- The year opened with 347 factories. 23 new factories, mostly sugar factories, were registered and 11 factories were removed during the year, leaving a total of 359 factories at the end of the year. Of the 359 factories, 52 remained closed throughout the year. Of the 307 working factories, 250 were perennial and 57 seasonal. The number of persons employed during the year was 78,224 against 72,254 in 1933. Of these 5,540 were women and 254 children as against 5,047 and 235 respectively in 1933. The number of factories inspected during the year was 283 and the total number of inspections made was 404. It is pointed out that the experiment of inspections being carried out by a number of local inspectors turned out to be<sup>a</sup> failure. Discussing the reasons for the failure, the report says:

"From their (local inspectors) lack of training, and their complete independence of the regular inspectors, it is impossible that what their work lacks in quantity should be made up in quality. When this scheme for filling the void left by the removal of a regular inspector was proposed to me, I noted two possible mitigations for what was otherwise an undesirable measure of economy - a reduction in the cost of travelling and the ability to undertake a greater number of prosecutions without dislocation of touring programmes. In eighteen months there have been, so far as this

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\* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the province of Bihar and Orissa-1934- by the Chief Inspector of Factories, B.& O. - Supdt., Govt. Printing, B.& O., Patna. 1935.- Price Rs. 1-8-0. - pp.29.

has been notified, no prosecutions by Local Inspectors, and any saving in travelling expense has clearly been at the cost of effective inspection. Factory inspection in the province cannot be what it ought to be, or what any commission on labour conditions would require, unless (1) the number of regular inspectors is increased, as repeatedly represented in these annual reports and (2) ex-officio inspectors are made directly subordinate to the Chief Inspector."

Sanitation and Health of Operatives.- It is reported that sanitation was, on the whole, satisfactory and that the Lady Additional Inspector has been able to secure a high level of sanitary accommodation for women. Improvement in ventilation and lighting of factories continued. The health of the employees, the report says, appeared to be normal. No epidemic was reported. The Chief Inspector has suggested the advisability of getting workers in rice mills and other dusty industries and in type-composing rooms to be examined by Civil Surgeons annually for pulmonary or eye defects. The Lady Inspector has reported the presence of ~~be~~ bronchitis and defective vision among women workers and has found them generally in poor health. Some of them were observed to be at work in a very advanced stage of pregnancy.

Safety.- The report points out that as in previous years the fencing of machinery received strict attention. Particular attention was also paid to secure the observance of the rule stipulating that oilmen and others working near machinery in motion should wear tight-fitting garments. During the year 17 factories reported the formation of Safety Committees, bringing the total

of such factory Committees in the province up to 30.

Manual for Safety Committees.- The report draws special attention to the fact that during the year a manual of about 400 pages on safety, lighting and ventilation in factories was distributed free of cost among factory-owners, local inspectors and magistrates ~~by his department.~~ Thus action was taken in response to the request made in 1931 by the ~~Executive~~ Governing Body of the I.L.O. to the factory inspection services of member States to organise safety services in factories. It was felt that before an intensive safety campaign could be carried out in the province, an easily obtainable manual on the conditions that make for safety in factories was necessary and hence the ~~above circular~~ <sup>manual</sup> was compiled <sup>its copies</sup> and distributed.

(The working of the Indian Factories Act in Bihar and Orissa during 1933 is reviewed at pages 49-51 of our October 1934 report).

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Factory Administration in C. P. & Berar, 1934\*

Number of Factories, Operatives and Inspection.- According to the annual report on the administration of the Indian Factories Act in the Central Provinces and Berar during 1934, there were 972 factories in Central Provinces and Berar on the Factories Register at the close of the year under review. 26 new factories were registered and 10 factories removed in the course of the year. Of the 972 factories, 726 were actually working during the year. Of 726, 117 were perennial and 609 seasonal. All the 726 factories were inspected during the year; 227 factories were inspected once, 208, twice, 140 thrice and 151 more than thrice. The total number of workers in the factories decreased from 61,781 in 1933 to 60,503 in 1934. Of these 60,503 workers, 40,416 were men, 19,624 women and 463 children.

Health and Safety.- The report states that particular attention was paid during the year to two questions — that of providing adequate fencing and guards for machinery and ~~providing~~ tight-fitting clothes for employees at work near moving machinery. It is remarked that in seasonal factories, which form the majority in the province, progress in safety measures is too often hampered by continual changes in management and the lack of sufficient technical knowledge to carry out requisitions of factory inspectors. In spite of frequent warnings, in the ginning factories women in loose saris are given the work of picking particles of stained cotton from gin rollers in motion. During the year several improvements were effected to comply with the provisions regarding ventilation and humidification. The general health of employees

\* Report on the Administration of the Indian Factories Act, 1911 (Act XII of 1911), as modified up to the 1st June 1926, in the Central Provinces and Berar for the year 1934. - Nagpur. Govt. Printing, C.P.-1935-pp. 33. -Price. Rs. 1-8-0.

is reported to be satisfactory.

Housing of Operatives and Welfare Work. - It is observed that owing to trade depression no great progress has been made in respect of the housing of operatives. No progress was registered in welfare work also. The popularity of creches attached to mills is stated to have varied considerably in different localities.

Accidents.- Altogether 334 accidents were reported of which 5 were fatal, 52 serious and 277 minor.

Hours of Work and Holidays.- During the year, according to the report, the larger perennial factories strictly adhered to the provisions re. hours of work and weekly rest. Breaches of provisions re. rest periods were not so common during the year; only managers of five factories were prosecuted on this count. 26 prosecutions were launched against managers of factories for infringing the provisions re. hours of work and convictions were obtained in all these cases.

Wages and General Conditions.- According to the table of wages appended to the report, a general fall in wages, to the extent of about 6%, is noticeable. This is explained as due to continued trade depression and consequent unemployment. At the instance of the Government of India, enquiries were made during the year under report into unemployment and wage cuts in the cotton textile industry.

Maternity Benefit.- Under the C.P. Maternity Benefit Act, 1930, 567 women are reported to have claimed benefit. Of these 511 were found to be qualified and Rs. 8,908 paid.

(Factory Administration Report for C.P. & Berar for 1933 is reviewed at pages 40-42 of our July 1934 report). +



Labour Conditions of Factory Operatives  
in Baroda State, 1933-34\*. +

Number of Factories and Workmen.- The number of working factories subject to the control of the Factory Act during the year ending 31-7-1934 was 123 as against 135 in the preceding year. Of these 123 factories, 28 were perennial and 95 seasonal. These factories employed between them 25,859 workers during the year as against 24,288 during 1932-33. Of the 25,859 factory workers, 22,110 were engaged in the cotton industry and the rest in other industries. The total numbers of women and children employed during the year were 4,691 and 346 as against 4,690 and 819 respectively in 1932-33.

Wages.- The report shows that the average daily wages for skilled labour increased in the cases of foremen and <sup>1</sup>backsmiths and decreased in the cases of all others. The wages of unskilled labour decreased from the rates of 1932-33 from Rs. 0-10-0 for men and Rs. 0-8-0 for women to Rs. 0-9-4 for men and Rs. 0-7-8 for women during the year under review, while the rate for children increased from Rs. 0-6-0 to Rs. 0-7-0.

Inspection.- According to the report all the perennial factories, with the exception of two, were inspected more than twice and the seasonal ones with the exception of a few were inspected twice or oftener.

Sanitation and Safety in Factories.- During the year under review vigorous attempts were made to induce factoryowners to keep the factory and surroundings in a sanitary condition and to provide

\*Annual Report of the Department of Commerce, Industries and Labour Baroda State. - For the year 1933-34 (ending 31-7-1934) -Baroda State Press 1935.-Price Rs.0-15-0. pp.110.

proper guard for all machineries.

Accidents and Workmen's Compensation.— The number of accidents amounted to 91, ~~out~~ of which 80 were minor, 9 serious and 2 fatal as against 66 last year ~~out~~ of which 54 were minor, 7 serious and 5 fatal. There was one prosecution for violation of the provisions of the Factory Act during the year. The Manager of the Factory was convicted and fined. During the year compensation amounting to Rs. 3,145 was paid in cases of accidents <sup>occurring</sup> ~~arising~~ in industrial concerns by insurance companies.

Strikes.— There were six strikes in the State during the year involving 3,612 workers and entailing a loss of 139,902 working days. The proposal for applying the Indian Workmen's Compensation Amendment Act to this State was sanctioned during the year.

Welfare Work.— According to the report, 12 factories in the State provided medical relief for their operatives; 14 mills provided 1,852 quarters for the housing of their workers; creches have been provided by 10 mills; 10 mills provided cheap cloth for their employees and 2 mills ran shops for providing cheap grain and fuel.

Conciliation Board.— Government orders were obtained ~~to~~ continue the appointment of the Labour Conciliation Board for a further period of 3 years. No case was referred to this Board during the year.

Action on Unemployment Committee Report.— According to the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the State to investigate into and suggest suitable ~~x~~ remedies for unemployment in the State, proposals were submitted to Government for the creation of a

labour exchange bureau and for the starting of a trade school. The proposals to create a labour exchange bureau and to start a tailoring class were, however, not accepted. As regards opening of a class for shoe-making, it was ordered that a scheme for organising the leather industry in general should be submitted.

(The report on the conditions of labour of factory operatives in Baroda State during 1932-33 is reviewed at pages 33-34 of our September 1934 report). +

Working of the Hours of Employment Regulations  
on Indian Railways, 1934-35.\* +

The Hours of Employment Regulations were applied in the North Western and East Indian Railways from 1-4-1931 and on the Great Indian Peninsula and East Bengal Railways from 1-4-1932. According to the annual report on the working of the Regulations during 1934-35 on these four railways, the total number of workers covered was 355,621 out of 665,418 in all Class I Railways. Though the application of the Regulations have not been formally extended to the Burma and the Company-managed Railways, in actual working many of the principles of the Regulations find application in these Railways.

Inspection.— Now since the Regulations have been in force in the four Railways for a sufficiently long period, the Supervisor of Railway Labour stresses in the report the necessity to ensure that all staff within the jurisdiction of an Inspector to whom the \* Government of India Railway Department.—Annual Report on the working of the Hours of Employment Regulations on N.W., E.I., E.B. & G.I.P. Railways during the year 1934-35 —Simla:Govt. of India Press 1935. — pp.13.

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Regulations apply are systematically inspected, ~~inspected~~ instead of giving full latitude to the labour Inspectors to inspect those places in their jurisdiction which needed their assistance most, as has been the practice hitherto. A half-yearly programme is accordingly being drawn up in the office of the Supervisor of Railway Labour for each Inspector and it is intended to bring it into force with effect from the 1st June 1935

Difficulties of Administration.— It is remarked that there is no change in the position of certain staff on railways who are allowed to work for other Departments, i.e., Postal Department, or to increase their emoluments in other ways (as for instance loading and unloading work) in addition to their normal duties thereby infringing the Regulations. As regards Assistant Station Masters, *It refers to out of hours work of them* who are called upon to do continuous night duty, which though not strictly against the Regulations, is still undesirable. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway have taken the lead in the matter by bringing out rosters which do not entail continual night attendance.

Hours of Employment.— It is observed that with the exception of a few categories of staff who still work beyond their rostered hours of duty, the limitations regarding hours of work laid down in the Act are now being generally observed on Railways. The chief classes of employees who are responsible for breaches of the Regulations are Assistant Station Masters and Goods Clerks. Their number, however, is not large.

Periods of Rest.— Non-compliance with provisions regarding weekly rest was notified in the case of Assistant Station masters on one division of the East Indian Railway, *This arose out of the* ~~due to~~ employment for

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ordinary relief duty of Relieving Assistant Station Masters who are employed exclusively to enable Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters to enjoy their weekly rest. The matter was taken up with the Administration and <sup>an</sup> improvement in the position was noticed ~~after that~~ <sup>an</sup> strenuous efforts were made during the year to minimise infringement of the rule regarding weekly rest.

Classification of Staff.— The powers vested in the Agents of the four Railways concerned of declaring which employees perform work of <sup>an "essentially intermittent"</sup> ~~this~~ nature have been exercised in the first instance after an examination of the work carried out by each post. As regards the unsatisfactory state of ~~the~~ affairs with regard to the extensive classification of staff on the Eastern Bengal Railway as having work of an essentially intermittent nature,, it is stated that considerable improvement in the position has been brought about. While a great number of staff have now been correctly classified as continuous workers, there are still large gangs such as conservancy sweepers, steam pump engine drivers, etc., whose classification is still incorrect. Now that definite steps in the right direction have been taken, however, it is hoped that these anomalies will rapidly disappear.

Payment of Overtime.— Regarding the payment for overtime work it is remarked that a good deal still remains to be done with regard to recording extra-roster hours worked by employees. Only in rare cases, except when changing shifts, ~~xxx~~ have 'essentially intermittent' employees been found to have infringed/ the rule regulating the hours of work.

Continual Night Duty.- The classes of employees who have to perform continual night duty are Station Watchmen and Assistant Station Masters. As regards the latter, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway appears to have progressed farthest in tackling this problem from a time anterior to the introduction of the Hours of Employment Regulations. On the North Western, East Indian and especially on the Eastern Bengal Railway a good deal remains to be done in this direction.

Running Staff.- The duties of the running staff present peculiar difficulties and therefore for the time being this class of staff have been debarred from the protection afforded by the Act. In most cases, however, it has been found that the rosters on which these employees generally work conform to the intentions of the Hours of Employment Regulations.

(The report on the working of the Hours of Employment Regulations on Indian Railways during 1933-34 was reviewed at pages 17-23 of our September 1934 report).

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Conditions of Work in <sup>Re</sup> Building Trade in Bombay City:

~~The~~ Labour Office Report. +

The Labour Office, Bombay, in view of the paucity of details and statistics regarding conditions of work and wages of labourers engaged in the building trade in Bombay City, conducted an investigation into the problem between February and May 1935. The report of the enquiry is published at pages 950-964 of the August 1935 issue of the Labour Gazette, Bombay.

During the course of the enquiry information was obtained in

respect of 2,885 workers actually employed in the trade, excluding contractors and their supervisory staff. The main object of the enquiry being to obtain representative samples of the wages of the various categories of workers, no attempt was made to ascertain the proportion inter se of the various categories of the operatives employed in the trade. The enquiry was confined to skilled workers only and unskilled labourers who form a considerable proportion of ~~the~~ the total labour force engaged in the trade were excluded from its purview.

The principal aspects of the industry dealt with in the report are: (1) special features of the building trade, (2) Age distribution and sex of workers, (3) Methods of recruitment, (4) Composition of labour force, (5) literacy, (6) Wages and methods of payment of wages, (7) duration of employment, and (8) the building industry and workmen's compensation. The following is a brief summary directing attention to the more important facts brought out in the report.

General.- Recently there has been great building activity in Bombay City. In 1930-31 the new houses built were 754; in 1931-32 they were 911; in 1932-33 they were 731; in 1933-34 they were 1053 and in 1934-35 they were 1055. There is little information as regards number of persons employed in the industry and less regards wages. While there are a few big firms of contractors who undertake large-scale construction of buildings, the trade is largely in the hands of small contractors. In very many cases landlords whose principal business is that of merchant, take to the building industry.

Special Features of the Building Trade.- (1) It is a sheltered industry in the sense that there is no foreign competition.

(2) The organisation of the industry is such that it cannot employ a permanent labour force; work in the trade is thus of an

essentially casual nature. It is in a sense seasonal also since during the monsoon months there is practically no building activity.

(3) The industry is almost entirely dependent on man-power.

(4) Organisation both among the employers and the employees in the industry is conspicuous by its absence.

Age distribution and sex. - There is little or no employment of children in the building trade. Women are mostly engaged in unskilled occupations, chiefly in the carrying of loads. The bulk of the males fall within the age groups 20 to 45, while the bulk of the women are to be found in the age groups 20 to 40.

Recruitment of Labour. - A special feature in this sphere is the existence of labour contractors, who are in touch with the labour market and recruit the labour force required. An analysis of the methods of recruitment shows that in 59 per cent of the cases the workers are recruited through a contractor, in 24 per cent of the cases through a mukadam, mistry or naikin, while in 11 per cent of the cases the workers are taken on at the site.

Composition of Labour Force. - The most conspicuous feature is that labour engaged in the building trade is mostly immigrant in character. A second note-worthy feature is the tendency for a particular type of skilled worker to be recruited from a particular part of the country. Thus, it has been found that carpenters come mostly from the Deccan and Kathiawar and masons almost wholly from Rajputana and Kathiawar. This peculiarity is observable in the case of other categories of workers such as bhistis (water carriers), ghaniwallas (those engaged in operating lime mortars), stone-dressers etc. 72 per cent of the immigrant labour live singly in the city. The reasons for the higher proportion of single men in the building industry are mainly two; (1) the building trade is a seasonal trade with comparatively little activity from June to September and (2) owing to occupational specialisation the workers come from long distances and the cost of transporting or visiting the family is prohibitive.

Literacy. - The level of literacy among the building trade operatives is much lower than among industrial workers in Bombay City and lower also than the level of literacy of the general adult population of Bombay City. The percentage of literacy for male workers only was 21.7 per cent and for all workers 20.3 per cent as compared to 43.57 per cent for other industrial workers in Bombay City and 28.60 per cent for the general adult population of Bombay City.

Wages. - The four largest groups of operatives covered by the enquiry are (i) coolies, (ii) carpenters, (iii) masons, and (iv) painters. According to the statistics collected, the average daily wage of male coolies is Re.0-11-10 per day and of female coolies Re. 0-8-2 per day. The wage rates of female coolies reveal much smaller variations than those of male coolies, their daily average being Re. 0-8-2. The daily rate for carpenters doing moderately



skilled work would appear to lie between Rs. 1-8-0 and Rs. 2 per day. Cases in which a higher rate than this obtains relate to highly skilled persons such as cabinet makers, Chinese carpenters, etc. Ordinary masons in Bombay City get an average daily wage of between Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2 while skilled masons get over Rs. 2 per day and may get as much as Rs. 4-8-0 per day. The average daily wage for all masons comes to Rs. 1-14-1. Among painters a fairly thick concentration is found in the wage groups Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 1-8-0, the average wage for all painters being Rs. 1-4-9.

Methods of Wage Payment.- Several systems of wage payment prevail in the industry, such as, monthly, daily, weekly, and fortnightly systems, and payment in a lump amount after completion of the work. The most frequent is the monthly system. Out of the 2885 cases investigated, 81.7 per cent were paid on the monthly system, 9.1 on the daily system, 1.9 on the weekly system, 4.3 on the fortnightly system, 1.6 after completion of work, and 1.4 on imperfectly specified bases. The absence of a well-defined system of wage-payments, it is pointed out, is harmful to the interests of the workers, more particularly because of the prevalence of sub-contractors, who being generally men of no substance, make inordinate delays in paying off workers engaged in contracts on which they have lost.

Duration of Employment. - Work in the building trade is casual. The average duration of regular employment in the building trade for all occupations comes to 6.87 months in the year. Even the leading contractors do not maintain any considerable permanent labour force except some supervisory staff like mistries and mukadams.

Principal Findings. The following facts stand out as the principal results obtained from the enquiry:-

- (1) There has recently been considerable activity in the building industry leading presumably to greater employment.
- (2) There is a great deal of sub-contracting in the industry often resulting in a loss to the contractor and also the workpeople.
- (3) Mechanization has made very little progress in the industry.
- (4) The labour employed in the industry is very largely immigrant in character.
- (5) There is a great deal of occupational specialisation among the workpeople on a territorial basis.

(6) Employment in the industry is of a casual nature and skilled workers get only about seven months continuous work in the year.

(7) The most prevalent system of wage payment is the monthly system.

(8) In spite of the casual character of the industry, the wage rates of the employees appear to compare favourably with those of workers employed in organised trades and industries. In the course of the general wage census conducted by the Labour Office in the year 1934, information regarding the average daily wages of operatives in all engineering concerns in the City and in engineering occupations in other industries was collected. The results of the census, it is reported, will shortly be published.

(Summarised from pages 950-964 of Labour Gazette, Bombay, August 1935.)

Quarterly Strike Statistics for Quarter ending 30-6-1935.

According to the statistics of industrial disputes in British India for the 2nd quarter of 1935 ending 30-6-1935, published by the Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India, there were 27 disputes during the period involving 23,122 workers and entailing a loss of 210,496 working days. The largest number of disputes occurred in Bengal, where 7 disputes involving 8,834 workers entailed a loss of 136,388 working days. Next come Assam and Bombay with 6 disputes each involving 3,092 and 3,377 workers and entailing losses of 8,152 and 7,503 working days respectively, Madras with 4 disputes involving 1,407 workers and entailing a loss of 9,546 working days and Burma, the Central Provinces, the Punjab and the United Provinces with one <sup>dispute</sup> each involving 1,312, 5,029, 11, and 60 workers and entailing losses of 15,744,

32,900, 143, and 120 working days respectively.

Classified according to industries, cotton and woollen mills were responsible for 8 disputes which involved 14,205 workers and entailed a loss of 171,414 working days, and jute mills with 3 disputes involving 2,384 workers and entailing a loss of 4,908 working days. Other industries were responsible for 16 disputes involving 6,533 workers and entailing a loss of 34,174 working days.

Of the 27 disputes during the quarter under review, 12 were due to wage questions, 7 to personnel, 2 to bonus, 1 to leave and hours and 5 to other causes. In 2 disputes the workers were successful, in 3 partially successful and in 20 unsuccessful. 2 disputes were in progress at the end of the period under report.

(Strike statistics for the quarter ending 31-3-1935 are given at pages 32 of our July 1935 Report).

Holidays with Pay: Views of Bombay Millowners' Association. +

The following is a summary of the views expressed by the Millowners' Association, Bombay, in the course of a letter addressed to the Government of India, on the question of Holidays with Pay, regarding which the Government of India is conducting an enquiry to elicit public opinion.

System will lead to Misuse.- The Association, in their communication on the subject to the Government, states that there is a "leave season" for textile operatives when applications for leave are more numerous than at other times. <sup>The</sup> Introduction of

a system of leave with pay will only accentuate the tendency of the workers to apply for leave all together during the leave season, which will force the industry to carry on work through Badli labour. Work under such conditions will adversely affect the efficiency of the industry to a great extent.

Financial Burden on Industry too Heavy.- Another objection against the introduction of the scheme is that the financial burden entailed by granting holidays with pay will prove too heavy for the industry for the following reasons :-

(a) Most of the mills in Bombay are already committed to extensive schemes of welfare work such as the establishment of creches, etc. and any further burden on the industry during these days of economic depression will prove fatal to such mills.

(b) Bombay and Ahmedabad mills pay probably the highest wages in India to textile operatives. Hence any scheme of holidays with pay will affect these two centres more heavily than it will affect the textile industry in other centres.

System not prevalent in Europe.- The Association remarks that even in the most industrially advanced countries of the West the system of holidays with pay is not prevalent. Hence, there is no reason why the system should be introduced in India which is not very much advanced industrially and where conditions are such as to make such schemes entirely unworkable.

System will Discourage Thrift Habit Among Workers.- Another reason adduced against the introduction of the system is that its adoption will discourage the building up of habits of thrift among workers.

Competition from Indian States.- In conclusion, the Association emphasises the consequences which will result from the introduction of the system in British India, leaving mills in Indian States free from similar obligations. Due to the implementing of a number of International Labour Conventions by the Government of India, ~~the~~ industries in British India are placed in a position of serious disadvantage in competing with industries in Indian States which are not bound to give effect to I.L. Conventions. For example, hours of work in factories were reduced recently in British India but there has not been a similar reduction in most of the Indian States. Hence, any further restrictions or placing of financial burdens on industries in British India without the imposition of corresponding restrictions or financial obligations on industries in Indian States will spell disaster for the former. Therefore, if the proposal for holidays with pay is adopted, it should be adopted only if Indian States also undertake to introduce similar systems in their territories. The Association admits that, from a strictly humanitarian point of view, nothing can be said against the proposal. In the Association's opinion, it is practical difficulties which make the introduction of the system of holidays with pay difficult and undesirable.

(The Times of India, 16-9-1935).

The Madras Maternity Benefit Act; Interpretation  
of Section 5 re. Continuous Service.

The Commissioner for Labour, Madras, recently addressed a communication to the Southern India Chamber of Commerce inviting their suggestions as to the interpretation of Section 5 of the Madras Maternity Benefit Act under which a woman worker in a factory becomes entitled to maternity benefit if she had previously put in nine months' continuous service under the same employer. The question was as to what period of leave, whether authorised or unauthorised, should be considered as a break of service disqualifying such women workers from getting the benefit under the Act.

The Committee of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce agreed with the suggestion of the Commissioner for Labour, that, it would be desirable to be somewhat lenient and that any authorised leave, besides unauthorised leave to the extent of 14 days, might be condoned as not amounting to a break of service.

*Madras,*  
(Good News, 4-9-1935).

Industrial Organisation.

Employers' Organisations.

Indian Industries Association, Bombay:

New Organisation for Safeguarding Smaller Industries.

With the object of safeguarding the interests of those small industries which have sprung up in India in the last four years and which are likely to suffer from competition from outside and <sup>from</sup> ~~by~~ old well-established concerns in India, an organisation ~~has been formed~~ ~~in Bombay~~ called the Indian Industries Association has been formed in Bombay. The Association will try to create friendly feelings and a spirit of co-operation among persons engaged in commerce and trade, ~~and~~ investigate into the methods of production, and consider the question of raw materials, ~~and~~ shipping, banking, insurance and other facilities needed by the smaller industries. It will also secure organised action for the betterment of Indian industries by making representations to the Government concerned and devise publicity in India for articles produced by the smaller industries. A search for foreign markets will also be undertaken. The Association will also try to form local guilds of artisans, craftsmen, and persons engaged in similar trade.

The Association will begin work immediately in Bombay and the Presidency and later extend its activities to the rest of the country

(The Indian Textile Journal,  
August 1935).

Industrial Organisation.Workers' Organisations.1st Bengal Congress Socialists Conference, Calcutta, 1935.

The first session of the Bengal Provincial Congress Socialist Conference was held at Calcutta on 21 to 23-9-1935 under the presidentship of Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, General Secretary, All India Congress Socialist Party. The Conference hall was adorned with posters bearing the slogans: "Remove Ban on Labour Movement", "Wreck the Reforms", "Down with Capitalism and Imperialism", "Hands Off Abyssinia" etc.

In the course of his presidential address Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan dealt with the questions relating to repression and the ~~conditions~~ <sup>Communal</sup> of political differences in the province and suggested the formation of an association on the lines of the Civil Liberties Union of the U.S.A. to fight the repressive policy of the Government of India. He observed that the communal question in Bengal was largely an economic question, since Muslims were largely tenants and Hindus landlords, and that there has always been serious conflict between the Bengal tenant and his land-lord. Often, these economic conflicts have been given a communal colour. Since class divisions coincide roughly with communal divisions in the Province, communal amity in Bengal was very difficult of achievement. He deplored the move of the politicians to aggravate this cleavage by fighting for communal representation in legislatures. He stressed the identity of interest of workers of all religions and advised the continuance of the political fight on a class basis ~~and not~~ <sup>instead of</sup> on a communal ~~mix~~ basis. He also advocated



the early abolition of the Zamindari system in Bengal and the starting of tenants' movements as a remedy for communal differences

Dealing with the task of the Congress Socialist Party, he said that the first and main task of the Party was to develop the anti-imperialist movement. It should be the aim of the Party, according to him, to change the content and policy of the Indian National Congress, so that it may represent the masses and work for their emancipation both from foreign domination and exploitation by their own countrymen. The process of development of anti-imperialist forces, he declared, could not be brought about by mere ideological propaganda. The party should carry on intensive work among the masses, developing their political consciousness and organising their economic fight against capitalism.

On the second day of the Conference, the hall was raided by the police who removed several of the posters exhibited in the hall. Moreover, a contingent of communists who gained admission to the Conference, tried to obstruct the proceedings. The hall was cleared of the communists and the proceedings were resumed. (~~The Hindu, 25-9-1935~~).

A number of resolutions were passed by the Conference; a summary of the more important of them is given below:

Political Repression.- A few resolutions were passed condemning the repressive laws and the power of Government to declare associations illegal, to imprison persons for an indefinite period without trial and to prohibit the use of streets and public parks for purposes of demonstrations and protesting against the present detention policy of the Government of Bengal.

2. Aims of the Bengal Socialist Party.- The Conference declared that the objects of the Bengal Congress Socialist Party (affiliated to the All India Congress Socialist Party) were "the achievement of complete independence, in the sense of separation from the British Empire, and the establishment of a socialist society". The Party, among other ~~things~~ aim at the transfer of all power to the producing masses; development of the economic life

of the country to be planned and controlled by the State; socialization of the key industries; elimination of princes and landlords; redistribution of land among the peasants; liquidation of debts by peasants and workers; recognition of the right of work or maintenance by the State; adult franchise; and no discrimination between religions and between the sexes by the State and no distinction based on caste or community. The Party propose to "work within the Indian National Congress with a view to securing its acceptance of the objects and programmes of the Party".

3. Organisation of Peasant Unions.— A resolution was passed urging the organisation of "peasant unions all over the country on the basis of class struggle in alliance with, and under the ideological leadership of the class-conscious proletariat". By such organisation of workers and peasants, it was stated: "It is possible to overthrow the present reactionary leadership of the Congress and attain the emancipation of the toiling masses from imperialism and indigenous economic exploitation." The Conference further resolved that these unions should be organised on the basis of the following programme:

Cancellation of all debts of peasants with uneconomic holdings and the declaration of a moratorium for five years for the rest; entire scrapping of arrears of rents; nonpayment of rents for holdings, the returns from which are below a minimum subsistence level; minimum living wages for agricultural labourers; non-alienation of land to non-cultivating classes; State expenditure on irrigation on a comprehensive plan, to be settled by experts, and the restoration of natural drainage and water channels; compulsory free primary education and provision for liquidation of adult illiteracy; abolition of landlordism in all its forms, the tillers of the soil to be the owners of the land; abolition of feudal and semi-feudal levies; and freedom from attachment in execution of rent or money decrees of homestead, agricultural resources and that portion of a peasant's holding which is just sufficient to maintain an average peasant family.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, *the Hindu*  
25-9-1935).

Mr. R.S.Ruikar, President, A.I.T.U.C. Prefers Appeal  
Against Conviction.

Reference was made at page 59 of our August 1935 report to the conviction of Mr. R.S.Ruikar, President of the All India Trade Union Congress, by the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, on a charge of sedition. It is now understood that Mr. Ruikar has preferred an appeal to the High Court, Calcutta, against the conviction and that the High Court has admitted the appeal. Mr. Ruikar is now on bail. (The Amrita Bazar Patrika,  
13-9-1935).

Institute of Working Journalists: A Calcutta Move.

In several previous reports of this Office references have been made to organisations of journalists in India and the steps taken by them to improve the conditions of life and work of journalists in this country (vide pages 62-63, July 1934 report; page 66, March 1935 report and pages 66-69, August 1935 report). A movement has been recently initiated in Calcutta by some of the City's journalists to reorganise the Institute of Working Journalists, Calcutta, with a view to more efficiently safeguard the interests of working journalists.

At a meeting of Calcutta Journalists held in the first week of September 1935 at the office of the "Ananda Bazar Patrika", Mr. Hem Chandra Nag, editor of the "Forward" presiding, the following resolution was passed:-

This meeting accepts the suggestion for re-organisation of the Working Journalists' Institute of Calcutta, and resolves that a committee be elected to draft rules and regulations of the proposed Institute, and that the committee be requested to submit its report within a fortnight.

The principal speakers at the meeting, Mr. Amal Home, editor of the "Calcutta Municipal Gazette" and Mr. S.N. Majumdar, editor of the Anand Bazar Patrika, explaining the need for an effective organisation of working journalists pointed out how it was not possible to have the grievances of working journalists redressed through organisations like the Indian Journalists' Association as a high percentage of the members of such organisations consisted of either part-time

journalists, who were not journalists in the full sense but took to the profession only as a secondary occupation and who therefore could ~~not~~ not be expected to make common cause with working journalists whose interests were at times quite different from the interests of part-time journalists. Another reason which made some of the existing journalists' organisations ineffective agencies for securing redress of grievances of journalists was that some of them had on their membership journalist-owners of news-papers, who though they were in one sense journalists were in a more real sense employers. The Institute of Working Journalists, Calcutta, is now being reorganised to protect the interests of working journalists.

(The Hindustan Times, 5-9-1935).

X (The Statesman and the Amrita Bazar Patrika, the two Calcutta papers received in this Office, do not publish reports of the above).

The Central Provinces Money Lenders (Amendment) Bill, 1935.

Reference was made at page 66 of our October 1934 report to the adoption of the Central Provinces Money-lenders Act, 1934, to regulate the transactions of money-lending in the province. On 15-8-1935 a Bill was introduced in the C.P. Legislative Council to amend the Act so as to extend its operation to mortgages and pending appeals in order that debtors may derive full benefit from the provisions of the Act. The C.P. Moneylenders (Amendment) Bill, 1935, is published at page 297 of Part II of the Central Provinces Gazette dated 20-9-1935. +

Mody-Claire Lees Trade Pact; Government of India appoints

Tariff Board to Enquire into Protective Duties. +

At pages 36-37 of our October 1933 report was given the full text of the Agreement entered into between the British Textile Mission which visited India in the autumn of 1933 and the Millowners Association, Bombay. The Agreement was given effect to by the Indian Tariff (Textile Protection) Amendment Act which became law on 1-5-1934. In the course of <sup>the</sup> debate on the Bill, the Government undertook to revise the tariff rates two years hence after a review by the Tariff Board. The Government of India have appointed on 10-9-1935 a special Tariff Board with Sir Alexander Murray as chairman to recommend, after a review of present conditions and in the light of the effectiveness of the existing duties, the level of the duties necessary to afford adequate protection to the Indian cotton textile industry against imports from the United Kingdom.

(Page 718-719 of Gazette of India Extra-ordinary dt/-10-9-1935). +

44

The Punjab State-aid to Industries Bill, 1935.

in +

The Punjab Government intends introducing/the next session of the local Legislature a Bill to encourage the development of industries in the Punjab by the grant of State-aid. The text of the Bill is published at pages 890-897 of Part I of the Punjab Gazette dated 13-9-1935.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill says:

For some time there has been a consistent demand both inside and outside the Council for the adoption by Government of a liberal policy for the development of industry in the Province. Government has been in entire sympathy with it, and this Bill is being introduced to meet that demand. The existing provisions for State aid to industry are contained in the Punjab Industrial Loans Act of 1923, which provides for assistance in the form of loans only. This Bill provides for much more extended aid to industry and is designed to give Government power to grant aid under certain conditions to any approved industry in suitable forms, some of which have been expressly mentioned in the Bill. Government hopes that the new provisions will give a strong impetus to industrial development in the Province by releasing shy and idle capital for industrial enterprise.

The main part of the Bill is divided into five Chapters. Chapter II provides for the formation and functions of a Board of Industries with a view to supply Government with expert advice on questions arising out of the Act. Chapter III shows the various forms of aid which may be given and the types of industry eligible for receipt of State aid and how applications for aid are to be made. Chapter IV deals with the granting of loans and methods of recovery, etc. The clauses dealing with loans follow in the main the existing Punjab Industrial Loans Act which will be repealed with the passage of this Bill. Chapter V relates to the supply of machinery on the hire-purchase system. Chapter VI is supplemental and confers on Government the power to make rules.

(Pages 890-897 of Part I of the Punjab Gazette, 13-9-1935).

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Crisis in Indian Jute Industry: Short-time Work to be  
abolished.

References have been made in our reports from time to time since 1930 to the crisis in the Indian Jute industry as a result of slump in jute prices (vide pages 27-30 of our September 1930

and subsequent reports). During the first half of 1930 it was apparent that stocks had begun to accumulate rapidly both at Calcutta and abroad; and the consequent depression in market conditions resulted in negotiations between the Association and outside mills with the object of arriving at working time agreements to regulate output. (The working of the Agreements during 1930 to 1934 has been briefly reviewed at pages 20-24 of the July 1931, pages 31-33 of the August 1932, pages 25-27 of the January 1933, pages 20-21 of the June 1934 and pages 44-45 of the July 1935 reports of this Office). During the past few months it became apparent that these arrangements were not satisfactory and that the ~~handing~~ <sup>was</sup> industry ~~is~~ heading on to a fresh crisis. A general meeting of the Indian Jute Mills Association was called for on 30-9-1935 and the following resolution recommended by the Committee of that Body was passed.

That the requisite six calendar months' notice required by clause 2 of the agreement dated the 21st January, 1933, and made between the Indian Jute Mills Association and the outside mills be given by the Association to the outside mills, viz., The Adamjee Jute Mills, Ltd., The Agarpara Co., Ltd., The Gagalbhai Jute Mills Ltd., The Ludlow Jute Co., Ltd., and to the Shree Hanuman Jute Mills, on the 30th September, 1935, to terminate the said agreement as from the 31st March, 1936.

Reasons for Terminating Agreements.- The Committee have submitted to the members a memorandum setting forth the reasons which have compelled them to take this step. In the opinion of the Committee, "it is essential, for two reasons, to terminate the existing arrangement at the earliest possible moment. In the first place, it is obviously undesirable that the industry should continue to be exposed to the ill-effects of similar action on the part of one individual mill. In the second place, the communication

recently received from the Government makes it clear that the policy underlying the existing working agreement is not in their opinion such as to lead to the rehabilitation of the industry on sound lines. The termination of the existing agreement with the outside mills is, therefore, the first step towards the continuance of negotiations having as their object the formulation and introduction of a scheme which will embrace all mills in India and will satisfy the conditions laid down in the concluding paragraph of Government's memorandum." The following are some of the more important reasons for terminating the working time agreements with outside mills.

As a result of the profitable trading conditions maintained and encouraged by the very favourable treatment that was accorded to the outside mills during the last three years, several new jute mills were started both in Bengal and outside the province. These concerns were growing fast both in number and size. Not being subject to any restriction, the production of such unregulated concerns has assumed fairly large proportions. Besides this, some of the outside mills, which were not members of the Association, but were parties to the working agreement, put forth, from time to time, demands for special consideration. On the other hand, inside the Association itself, several members felt discontented with the arrangement arrived at in 1931. In their opinion, the present policy was wrong. It not only gave the outside mills very great advantage over the member mills, but prevented the members from being ever able to partake in any increased demand for jute goods. Those who entered the field late were expanding rapidly, whilst concerns of older standing



had to be content for ever with their present capacity. During the last twelve months, a considerable number of members veered round to this point of view. Some of the members of the Association threatened to resign unless the terms of the present agreement were changed. The only alternative left to the Committee of the Association was to relieve everybody from the present agreement.

Solution of the Problem.- Unregulated production is bound to lead to a cut-throat competition amongst the mills. Prices of manufactured goods will come down further. Many mills will be faced with the alternative of closing down or working at a loss. The price of jute shares will experience further serious depreciation. Opinion in informed circles goes to show that there are only two ways out of the impending crisis either by the help of the Government of India or by a voluntary arrangement between all the mills. The Government of India have laid down certain conditions which must be satisfied before the industry can hope to get their help. It is felt that it is too much to expect the industry to be able to carry out rationalisation on the lines suggested by the Government of India. The other alternative left before the industry is a mutual arrangement between all mills. In the present circumstances, not much hope of outside mills co-operating in arriving at an agreement is <sup>entertained,</sup> ~~expected.~~

(The Indian Finance, 28-9-1935).

Co-operation.

Progress of Co-operation in C.P.& Berar, 1933-34\*

Statistics and Societies and Membership.- According to the report on the working of the ~~the~~ Co-operative Societies in the Central Provinces and Berar during the year ending 30-6-1934, the year did not witness any signs of recovery in the co-operative movement in the province. During the year 79 new societies were registered and 183 were cancelled, leaving a total of 3,794 societies at the end of the year of which 3,589 were primary agricultural credit societies. The total membership also declined from 1,18,587 in 1932-33 to 1,14,389 during 1933-34.

Financial Position.- Cash recoveries of loans due to central banks amounted to Rs. 1.503 millions. Cash advances reached the lowest figure of the decade, being Rs. 693,199. The factors responsible for this practical cessation of fresh financing are: (1) heavy outstandings against members, (2) poor repayment, (3) demoralisation among members who hold up their produce for meeting agricultural requirements through fear of not getting fresh loans and (4) the desire of some members to avoid borrowing from societies on account of the coercion exercised for effecting recoveries. The total loans outstanding against members rose to Rs. 18.1 millions as against Rs. 17.95 millions in the previous year and the arrears to Rs. 15.82 millions as against Rs. 14.988 millions in the previous year. The financial balance sheet of the co-operative movement as a whole discloses that the outside liabilities

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\*Report on the working of the Co-operative Societies in the Central Provinces and Berar for the year ending 30th June 1934.- Nagpur: Government Printing, C.P. 1935. - Price Re. 1-8-0 . - pp-26+20.

amount to Rs. 19,368,304 and the assets to Rs. 22,983,449. The report states that despite a succession of adverse years the intrinsic position of the movement from the financial point of view is not unsound.

General Position.- It is remarked that the lack of improvement in the economic position of agriculturists in the province was reflected in the progress of the co-operative ~~work~~ movement. Although the financial position of the movement is on the whole sound, it is stated that it has ceased to be a ~~live~~ agency for rural credit except in one District. The main problem confronting the movement is reported to be the problem of over dues which in turn is inextricably bound up with that of recoveries. In many cases it was found that over-dues were beyond the paying capacity of members. The Department devised the following measures to reduce the growing over-dues and bad and doubtful debts and afford relief to the debtors: (1) a scheme has been drawn up for writing off bad debts from reserve and other funds of primary societies in Berar. Suitable remedies in this direction are being taken in C.P. also. (ii) the Central banks and the primary societies affiliated to them have been permitted temporarily to reduce the margin between their borrowing and lending rates to the lowest possible limit. (iii) the reserve fund scheme has been modified so as to permit the interest on reserve funds of all societies being used to reduce the rate of interest charged to members.

In order to enable agriculturists to liquidate their liabilities by easy instalments, the Government has undertaken the organisation of land mortgage banks. Under the scheme the Government has guaranteed the principal ~~of~~ and interest on ~~an~~ long term loans which are made available for periods up to 20 years at 7% interest.

(The progress of the Co-operative movement in the C.P. and Berar during 1932-33 is reviewed at pages 72-73 of our July 1934 report). +

Enquiry into Co-operative Movement in Mysore:

Committee to be Appointed Shortly. +

It is understood that the Government of Mysore State has decided to appoint a Committee to enquire into the working of the Co-operative movement in the State and to make recommendations for its consolidation and development on sound lines. The official announcement regarding terms of reference and personnel of the Committee is expected shortly.

(The Hindu, 24-9-1935). +

Co-operation in Hyderabad:

Enquiry Commission to be Appointed. +

It is understood that the Government of Hyderabad State has under active consideration a proposal to appoint a commission of enquiry to enquire into the progress of co-operation in the State and to make recommendations for the future development and expansion

of the movement. The scope of the enquiry will cover the whole co-operative organisation of the State, including the working of the apex bank. The official announcement regarding the terms of reference and the personnel of the Commission is expected soon.

The movement in the State was inaugurated twenty years ago. According to the latest report of the Registrar of the Co-operative Societies in the State, there are 2,431 societies of all kinds, including 33 Central Banks and one apex bank. Recently a Central Co-operative Union was brought into existence with the object of diffusing co-operative knowledge and expanding the movement. The Union, which has been entrusted with the supervision of the banks and societies, has sub-inspectors and supervisors whose salaries and travelling allowances are met by the supervision fees collected by the institutions without any help from Government. The Union has on its roll 18 life members, 90 ordinary members and 1,197 societies. Annually it holds conferences and celebrates <sup>the</sup> "Co-operators' Day.

(The Times of India, 30-9-1935) a +

Women and Children.

Autumn Session of All India Women's Conference, Simla, 21-9-1935. †

The Annual Autumn Session of the All India Women's Conference was held on 21-9-1935 at Simla under the presidentship of Begum Shah Nawaz. The Conference was attended by over 500 members from all parts of the country. In the course of her presidential address, Begum Shah Nawaz traced the progress of the Conference since its inception ten years back and laid special emphasis on the necessity for unity among women of all castes in India in all matters pertaining to their and their children's welfare. She also gave an elaborate account of her work at Geneva in the League Committee on women and children and in the last session of the I.L.Conference.

A number of resolutions were passed at the Conference, the more important of <sup>which</sup> ~~them~~ are summarised below:-

1. Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women. The Conference passed a resolution lending its whole hearted support to the Punjab Bill for the suppression of immoral traffic in women.

2. Franchise for and Representation of Women under New Reforms. The Conference expressed its disapproval of the methods of enfranchisement, election and representation of women provided under the new constitution as not being in accord with the demands of the organised women of India. The Conference also requested the British Parliament to safeguard the interests of women by making provision in the Instrument of Instructions which are to be framed for the Governor-General and Governors, that women should be given chances of association in the administration of every province as well as in the Central Government especially in the Departments of Education, Health and Labour. Provision is also to be made for at least one woman to be appointed to each Provincial Public Service Commission.

Agriculture.

Agricultural Indebtedness in Travancore:

Recommendations of Agricultural Debts Redemption Committee.

Reference was made at page 62 of our February 1935 report to the appointment by the Travancore Government of a Committee to collect data regarding the extent of agricultural indebtedness in the State and to suggest remedies for its alleviation. The Committee has recently submitted its report, a summary of which is given below.

Extent of Agricultural Indebtedness.- According to the report, the term "agricultural debt" should include all liabilities of an agricultural debtor in cash or in kind, secured or unsecured, but should not include debts incurred for purposes of trade, debts due to Government and co-operative societies and banks, and rents due under lease transactions. The economic depression has worsened the condition of the agriculturists and, in the opinion of the Committee, the situation can be tackled only by prompt action on the part of the Government. The total agricultural indebtedness in the State has been estimated to be between Rs. 200 to 250 millions. The present position is that interest has accumulated heavily while the price of produce and value of land have fallen.

Relief Measures.- The Committee classifies debts as those <sup>Contracted</sup> prior to August 1929 and those <sup>Contracted</sup> since then. The following measures have been recommended to the Government by the Committee by way of relief.

(a) Establishment of Debt Conciliation Boards.- In the case of all debts, secured and unsecured, relief should be made available by means of a net work of Debt Conciliation Boards on the model

of those set up under the Punjab Indebtedness Act of 1934.

(b) Interest.- In the case of debt transactions entered into before August 1929, the interest payable for the period from August 1929 to the date of any enactment passed on the subject, should be one half of the rate of interest payable or 4 per cent whichever is higher, unless the agreed rate is less than 4%, in which case such rate should prevail. The interest allowable on transactions after August 1929, upto the date of any legislation which may be passed on the subject should not exceed 6%. For a period of three years after the enactment of legislation on the subject the rate of interest allowable should be 6% in the case of secured debts and 9% in the case of unsecured debts.

(c) Executions of Money Decrees. - In the execution of any decree for money, the Court should be empowered to order recovery ~~of~~ of the amount in instalments spread over a period up to 20 years if circumstances so demand it.

(d) Abolition of Arrest and Imprisonment for Debt.- The Committee has recommended that, except in cases of duplicity, unwillingness to pay when able to do so, and in all transactions with co-operative societies and banks, arrest and imprisonment for debt should be abolished.

(e) Reorganisation of Land Mortgage Bank. - It is recommended that the existing Land Mortgage Bank should be reorganised and made an effective instrument for liquidating debts the amounts of which have been fixed by Conciliation Boards.



(f) Agricultural Loans.- As regards agricultural loans by Government, it is recommended that the interest on all outstanding loans should be reduced and greater liberality shown in fixing the period of repayment.

(The Hindu, 17-9-1935).

(A requisition for two copies of the Report has been made)<sup>+</sup>.

Indebtedness in Rural Areas in Madras Presidency:

Enquiry Report of Special Officer. †

Reference was made at page 35 of our November 1934 report to the decision of the Government of Madras to appoint a special Officer to investigate the question of agricultural indebtedness in the Presidency and recommend remedial measures. Mr. W.R.S. Sathianathan, I.C.S., the Special Officer appointed for the enquiry, has recently submitted his report on his investigation into the problem. The following points from the Report are taken from summaries published in newspapers. (A requisition has been made for a copy of the Report).

Absentee Landlordism a Prominent Feature:- According to the report, absentee landlordism is steadily on the increase. This is especially the case with persons who lend money to agriculturists and eventually become owners of land when their debtors default. Another type of absentee land lordism arises from the investment of money by government servants etc. on land. The increasing tendency of land to pass into non-cultivating hands has been aggravated greatly by the prevailing economic depression. The Report is, however, opposed to legislation prohibiting alienation

of land<sup>to</sup> non-agriculturists.

Tariff Against Foreign Food-Stuffs Necessary.- Agriculture is the main industry of the province. The incentive to increase the area of cultivation and to adopt improved methods is lacking due to the existing low price levels for food-stuffs in India. These low levels are due to dumping of food-stuffs from outside. The first essential to place agriculture in a solvent position is for the Government to stabilise prices especially by tariffs against dumping of foreign food-stuffs.

Estimate of Agricultural Indebtedness of the Province.- The Report holds that as under optimum conditions land yields only about 6 per cent return per annum, interests above 6 per cent per annum on debts contracted by agriculturists should be deemed usurious. If the agriculturist is to be saved, the bulk of his standing debts contracted at interests ranging between 9 and 24 per cent and often rising to 36 per cent must be liquidated through financing agencies, like Government, co-operative societies or land mortgage banks advancing money on easy terms. The present agricultural debt in the Presidency has been estimated at Rs. 2,040 millions. The debt per head of population is Rs. 38, per family Rs. 194 and per acre Rs. 63. The need is great therefore for the scaling down of agricultural debt. The advantages to the debtor-agriculturists are obvious. Such a scaling down will be of equal benefit to creditors, provided, after the scaled down amount is mutually agreed upon, the creditor is paid off in money the sums decreed. The creditor is finding it increasingly

difficult and expensive to draw in his loans, and his best efforts are only bringing him in more land which he really does not want and which he does not know what to do with. Even, if he is given formal possession of the land, he often finds it almost impossible to enter upon and exploit it owing to the determined opposition of the previous owner and his friends. He will welcome payment in money, even if he has to accept about half his legal claim. But, if he is going to agree voluntarily to a scaling down of the debts due to him, he will quite rightly insist on payment only in money and certainly not in land. So long as conciliation is voluntary, it is mentioned, it cannot scare off future credit to any marked extent. On the contrary, it will perhaps encourage future lending.

Debt Conciliation Boards.— The Special Officer has suggested the appointment, by legislation, of Debt Conciliation Boards to effect amicable settlements between creditors and debtors. The majority of money-lenders and agriculturists are said to favour the appointment of such boards. These boards, it is recommended, should not effect compulsory conciliation, but should encourage voluntary conciliation because the agriculturist, being poor and always in need of help, must be financed by some agency or ~~another~~ for at least the legitimate expenses of cultivation. It will take some time to organize and expand the co-operative movement sufficiently enough for it to be able to shoulder the burden of supplying the peasant population with credit for productive purposes. At present only 6 per cent of the total debt has been advanced by co-operative societies. In the meanwhile, the agriculturist

wants credit and he can get most of it only from the money-lender. The latter therefore is very necessary. It is necessary, therefore, to avoid all legislation that will frighten away money-lenders. Compulsory debt conciliation should be resorted to only if voluntary conciliation fails.

Principles which should guide Conciliation Boards. - Debt

conciliation boards should be guided by certain definite principles in arriving at the amount for which debts should be compounded. It is suggested that the following aspects should be considered by the boards in arriving at a decision though the list may not be exhaustive:-

- (i) The amount of consideration actually received;
- (ii) the reasonableness or otherwise of the rates of interest contracted for;
- (iii) the amount of interest that has been allowed to accumulate;
- (iv) onerous conditions, if any, that have been complied with in the grant of loans; and
- (v) the repaying capacity of the debtor.
- (vi) Whether at any time the creditor was offered settlement of the debt in full or part and the offer was refused.
- (vii) The difference in value of the debtor's property and of staple food crops between the time when the debt was incurred and the time of settlement by the board.

Financial Help to Liquidate Debts. - Conciliation can be

started on the understanding that the debtor pays the creditor the sum settled upon, either immediately or in instalments spread over a convenient period. If the creditor does not agree to conciliation on these conditions, the Government may lend as takavi loans to the debtors the amounts agreed upon. The money can be paid direct to the creditors and Government can become the creditor. Such a course is to be adopted if the debtor has sufficient security to offer. Sums up to about Rs. 500 in each case may be found in this way. Payment of bigger settled debts should be

undertaken by co-operative societies and land mortgage banks. If the Government find it impossible to lend out even small sums as takavi loans, it is suggested that payment of all settled debts where adequate security is forthcoming be undertaken by the co-operative societies and land mortgage banks. Such a course is possible only by a great expansion of these institutions. In the case of persons whose immovable assets do not afford the margin of security required by the Government, by co-operative societies or by land mortgage banks, the only relief that can be given to the solvent (those with adequate earning capacity) is to permit them to pay in instalments spread over fairly long periods, if a co-operative society cannot be persuaded to lend on personal or joint security. In the case of that class of debtors whose assets and earning capacity cannot possibly serve to clear off even their conciliated debts, it is suggested that an application for insolvency on behalf of such debtors be made by the debt conciliation boards themselves.

Regulation of Accounts.— The Report stresses the importance of enacting legislation on the model of the Regulation of Accounts Act of the Punjab and suggests many changes in the corresponding Madras Act of 1935 in order to make it more effective.

Other Recommendations.— Other recommendations contained in the report include the compulsory registration of professional money-lenders, the stricter enforcement of the Usurious Loans Act, 1918, abolition of imprisonment for debts as a check to reckless lending; the initiation of an extensive scheme of rural uplift

with education as its main plank, and development of village communications.

A Scheme for Co-ordinated Action.- In every taluk, there are from five to ten natural marketing centres, each centre being within fairly easy reach of a group of surrounding villages, from which ryots bring in their produce periodically for sale. These are the centres where facilities for rural help may profitably be concentrated. It is recommended that the following, among other, facilities may be made available at these ~~xxx~~ centres:- (i) A good warehouse for storing produce; (ii) A loan and sale society; (iii) A co-operative credit society for the supply of cheap, short-term, controlled credit for productive purposes, chiefly, cultivation expenses; (iv) A co-operative stores; (v) Other non-credit societies for the peasant population, most suited to local conditions; (vi) A well-stocked agricultural depot under a demonstrator to supply ryots with implements, seed, manure, graft plants, poultry, eggs for hatching, bee-hives, and so on; (vii) A small farm of 2 to 3 acres for demonstration purposes; (viii) A well-informed price information bureau; (ix) A stud bull; (x) A veterinary dispensary; (xi) A dispensary in charge of an official of the Public Health department; (xii) A boring inspector and a boring set for <sup>boring</sup> ~~putting down~~ wells; (xiii) An inspector of industries; (xiv) A school for adults for the spread of knowledge pertaining to agriculture, co-operation, industries (especially cottage industries), public health and so on, with facilities for a certain amount of practical training. Model appliances should be

available for demonstration; (xv) A wireless loud speaker. In working such centres, officials of the various Government departments should co-operate closely with each other. The activities so co-ordinated will soon make such centres popular and useful. intensive village propaganda is needed and, if necessary, special institutions like co-operative societies may be started in villages, but controlled from the centres.

(The ~~A~~ Hindu, 12-9-1935, and  
The Times of India dated 14-9-1935).

(A requisition for two copies of the Report has been made).

Peasant Group Formed in Assembly:

To Combat Agricultural Unemployment.

A Peasants Group has been formed among members of the Legislative Assembly on 24-9-1935 to further the interests of Indian peasants through their activities within and without the Legislative Assembly. The President of the Peasants' Group is Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury, the Vice President, Sardar Mangal Singh and the Secretary, Prof. N. G. Ranga.

The following statement was issued by the Party on 25-9-1935:

The M.L.A's Peasants Group is intended to further the interests of Indian peasants through their activities within and without the Legislative Assembly. Without prejudice to the obligations as well as the right of every member of this Group to act in accordance with his own respective party's whip on any occasion, the members of this Group agree to do everything possible in their power to take concerted counsel and action to help peasants. It shall be the primary object of the Group to do everything possible to lower the tax burden

laid directly and indirectly on peasants by the Central Government and see that the expenditure of the Government is so redistributed as to benefit peasants to a much greater degree than at present.

While recognizing the need for affording adequate and ~~xx~~ timely protection to Indian industries in order that such industries by proper and full development, may provide remunerative employment to the growing needs of the unemployed, this Group is anxious to see that the masses are burdened by protective duties only for so long and to such extent as will be demonstrably proved to be necessary.

This Group opines that the development of cottage industries is just as important and necessary for the economic solidarity and well-being of peasants as that of big industries and will, therefore, strive its best to see that the interests of the millions who are employed in small industries are not sacrificed for the sake of big industries and that the Government pays increasing attention to their needs.

(The Hindustan Times, 26-9-1935).



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Women and Children.

Autumn Session of All India Women's Conference, Simla, 21-9-1935.

The Annual Autumn Session of the All India Women's Conference was held on 21-9-1935 at Simla under the presidentship of Begum Shah Nawaz. The Conference was attended by over 500 members from all parts of the country. In the course of her presidential address, Begum Shah Nawaz traced the progress of the Conference since its inception ten years back and laid special emphasis on the necessity for unity among women of all castes in India in all matters pertaining to their and their children's welfare. She also gave an elaborate account of her work at Geneva in the League Committee on women and children and in the last session of the I.L. Conference.

A number of resolutions were passed at the Conference, the more important of ~~them~~<sup>which</sup> are summarised below:-

1. Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women. The Conference passed a resolution lending its whole hearted support to the Punjab Bill for the suppression of immoral traffic in women.

2. Franchise for and Representation of Women under New Reforms.- The Conference expressed its disapproval of the methods of enfranchisement, election and representation of women provided under the new constitution as not being in accord with the demands of the organised women of India. The Conference also requested the British Parliament to safeguard the interests of women by making provision in the Instrument of Instructions which are to be framed for the Governor-General and Governors, that women should be given chances of association in the administration of every province as well as in the Central Government especially in the Departments of Education, Health and Labour. Provision is also to be made for at least one woman to be appointed to each Provincial Public Service Commission.

(The National Call, 25-9-1935). +

Migration.

Malaya Government to be asked to Restore Cut  
in Wages of Indian Labour: Standing Emig-  
ration Committee's Decision.

The Standing Emigration Committee of the Central Legislature met on 22nd September 1935 under the presidentship of Sir G.S.Bajpai. The members who attended included Dr. Deshmukh, Rao Bahadur M.C.Rajah, Mr. Muthuranga Mudaliar, Mr. F.E.James, Mian Ghias-ud-Din and Mr. N.M. Joshi.

It is understood that the Committee agreed to continue assisted emigration to Malaya till January 1936, but suggested that the Malaya Government be asked to restore at least the 10 per cent wage-cut imposed in 1930. The Committee, it is understood, agreed to the amendment of the Ceylon Labour Code with a view to permitting deductions from wages towards subscriptions to co-operative thrift societies.

It is also understood that the Committee urged the Government to protest against the proposal to have nomination in place of election to the Fiji Legislative Council, and postponed consideration of the question of land tenures in Fiji as affecting the Indian settlers till the Government of India received further information concerning the land laws there.

(The Hindustan Times, 23-9-1935).