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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
INDIAN BRANCH

Report for March 1938.

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

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Representation of Burma at I.L.Conference:

When necessary, Burma's Representatives to form part of United Kingdom Delegation. ✓

In the House of Representatives, Burma, replying to a question put on 2-3-1938 by Mr. U.Mye Nyun (Oil-fields, Non-Indian Labour) whether Burma has the right to send representatives or delegates to represent her at the International Labour Conference held at Geneva annually, the Hon'ble Counsellor to His Excellency the Governor said:-

Burma is not a separate member of the League of Nations and consequently is not a separate member of the International Labour Organisation, with a right to substantive separate representation thereon. It has been arranged, however, that whenever matters of direct interest to Burma are under consideration, the Government of Burma should nominate advisers or experts to represent Burma's views, such advisers or experts being attached to the United Kingdom delegation, and if the extent of Burma's interest in the agenda of a particular conference justifies it, being given the status of substitute or even full delegates in that delegation. Burma's representation at the annual International Labour Conference will therefore be decided each year on a consideration of Burma's interest in the matters on the agenda."

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-3-1938.) +

India and the Technical Tripartite Conference on Coal Mines:
Government of India's Decision not to Participate. +

According to a press communiqué issued by the Government of India on 1-4-1938, India will not participate in the Technical Tripartite Meeting on the Reduction of Hours of Work in Coal Mines which is scheduled to be held at Geneva in May 1938.

(The Statesman, 2-4-1938.) +

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Ratifications.

I.L. Convention re. Safety of Workers in Building Industry:
Resolution to consult Provincial Governments adopted by Central
Assembly. ✓ +

On 26-3-1938 the Legislative Assembly considered the following resolution moved by Mr. A.G. Clow, Secretary to the Labour Department, Government of India:-

(a) "That Provincial Governments be consulted regarding the desirability and practicability ~~for~~ legislation to secure greater safety for workers in the building industry; and

(b) "That their attention be drawn to the recommendations concerning co-operation in accident prevention and vocational education."

Views of Government of India.- Mr. Clow, in his speech moving the resolution, referred to the comparative absence of hazard in the great bulk of building operations in India where the great majority of buildings consisted of humble cottages. In the bigger cities, however, where building operations ~~required scaffolding and mechanical appliances,~~ they entered the region of hazard. They had no precise statistics, but it was reasonable to suppose that the number of accidents could be reduced by the enforcement of suitable regulations.

As regards the Convention, the preamble was vague, if not woolly, while the recommendations were so extraordinarily precise that it would be almost impossible ~~to~~ enforce them to any large extent at present. He made it clear that whatever form of legislation was adopted, the executive power would vest in the Provinces and could not be assumed by the Centre, so that it was vital to ensure that if legislation was adopted the Provincial Governments were ready to secure effective enforcement. That was why the Provincial Governments were to be consulted. They were to be consulted on three particular questions, namely:

What is the extent and character of the hazard involved?
How far are these hazards to be reduced by these provisions?

and

Which of these provisions the Provinces are in a position to enforce?

Mr. Santanam's Amendment re. Restricted Application to Municipal Areas.- Mr. K. Santanam moved an amendment to the effect that consultation with the provinces be limited to legislation for safety in the building industry "in Municipal areas."

Mr. Clow pointed out that the amendment would place a limit on the views of the provinces who, he thought, should be left free to consider the question fully, although the Government of India, in addressing the provinces, would suggest to them to consider the desirability of dealing with limited well-developed areas.

Mr. Santanam withdrew the amendment.

Mr. Joshi's Criticisms.- Mr. N.M. Joshi moved an amendment to the effect that after consultation with the provinces, the Government should place their decision before the Assembly as soon as practicable. Mr. Joshi declared that the Government of India were showing a sort of hostility to the International Labour Office and were slow and reluctant to ratify its Conventions. In this case the Government of India were going to consult the provinces nearly a year after the Convention was passed. He added that he did not want the Assembly to be deprived of the opportunity to discuss the decisions of the Government on these matters.

Sir C. Jehangir.- Sir Cowasji Jehangir declared that the risks in building operations in India were negligible and the Convention had no application. The risk in Europe was considerable because steel scaffolding was used and the workmen used steel studded boots, while workmen in India, who were innocent of boots, handled bamboo scaffolding and even in Bombay, where building operations were increasing more rapidly than anywhere else in India, accidents were very, very rare.

Mr. Boyle wants Conventions in general terms.- Mr. J.D. Boyle (European Group) refuted the contention that because there were few accidents in India, therefore India should not have safety regulations. He stressed the need for International Conventions being in general terms, and said it was up to the House to ask the Government of India to make it clear to the International Labour Office that the value of their deliberations was wasted by the effort to go into detailed recommendations in respect of many Conventions intended for general application in many countries.

Neglect of Important Conventions.- Mr. B. Das did not think that the resolution would improve the condition of workers. He criticized the Government's policy of adopting the most "harmless" of the International Conventions and ignoring the more important ones.

Possible adverse effects on Building Industry.- Mr. Hussain-bhai Lalji referred to rules for safety which Municipalities already had, but said that he recognized that buildings constructed outside Municipal areas had to be covered. He, however, cautioned the Government to see that the safety measures did not adversely affect the industry.

Protection in Building Industry needed.- Seth Govind Das, heartily supporting the resolution, did not agree that the number of accidents in the building industry in India was small. From his own experience of building houses for his family he knew that bamboo scaffolding was more dangerous than steel scaffolding.

690,000 Building Workers affected.- Professor Ranga said that the building industry was a fast growing one, using modern appliances and methods involving more and more risk and employing no fewer than 690,000 workers. It was no use waiting till the people affected asked for safety measures.

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Breach of Correct Procedure. - Mr. Gadgil declared that the convention whereby the House had the privilege of discussing every International ^{conventions}, whether it was ratified or not, had been broken. He, however, supported the ~~Convention embedded in~~ the resolution pointing out that the way of wisdom was to legislate in advance of developments.

Mr. Clow's Reply. - Mr. A.G. Clow, replying to some of the points made during the debate, referred to the complaint that there had been a change in the convention of placing ^{Labour} International Conventions before the House. He said that the Government of India never claimed that they were going to decide which of the ^{Conventions} should be laid before the House and which not. What was altered in certain respects was the procedure in laying the recommendations before the House.

As regards the question of what the Government were doing with a large number of other ^{Conventions}, he said the Government hoped before the end of the session to be in a position to lay a statement on the table showing precisely what they proposed to do in respect of each of them. He accepted Mr. Joshi's amendment, but could not promise that Government would move a resolution in a negative sense. It would be for the members of the House, if they were dissatisfied with the Government's decision, to take such action as appeared appropriate to them.

The resolution, as amended, was passed.

(The Statesman, 26-3-1938.) ✓ +

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National Labour Legislation.

The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill, 1937:
Passed by Central Assembly on 4-3-1938. ✓

The Central Legislative Assembly discussed on 3 and 4-3-1938 the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill, 1937, as modified by the Select Committee (vide page 2 of our February 1938 report).

Professor N.G.Ranga's amendment suggesting the inclusion of clerks among the employees eligible for compensation under the Act was rejected.

Mr. A. Ayyangar's amendment for the inclusion of bus conductors among persons entitled to benefit was also lost. Sir N.N.Sircar said that the legal opinion was that conductors were actually covered by the Bill as it was, but that it was found in practice later that these persons were not covered, Government would bring an amendment to rectify the position.

Professor Ranga's amendment proposing the extension of the Act to persons employed in operations for catching or hunting of elephants or other wild animals was accepted by the Government and passed.

During the third reading of the Bill, Mr. N.M.Joshi and Professor Ranga urged that the Government should bring forward a more comprehensive Bill soon, as many of the provisions of the present Bill were either inadequate or out of date compared to the English law.

The Bill was passed on 4-3-1938.

(The Statesman, 5-3-1938.) ✓

The Factories (Orissa Amendment) Bill, 1938:
Bill referred to Circulation. ✓

Mr. Pyari Sankar Roy (non-official) moved in the Orissa Legislative Assembly on 8-3-1938 the reference to a Select Committee of the Factories (Orissa Amendment) Bill, 1938, which he introduced in the Assembly on 28-1-1938 (vide pages 3-4 of our February 1938 Report).

The Hon. Mr. Bedhram Dube, Minister in Charge of Labour, opposed the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee and moved that it be circulated.

The Hon. Mr. Dube's motion was carried.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-3-1938.) ✓

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Fixation of Minimum Rates of Wages Bill, 1938:
Orissa Assembly refers Bill for Circulation.

Mr. Pyari Sankar Roy (non-official) moved in the Orissa Legislative Assembly on 8-3-1938 that the Fixation of Minimum Rates of Wages Bill, 1938, introduced by him on 28-1-1938 (vide pages 4-5 of our February 1938 report), be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. Roy, after explaining the provisions of the Bill, referred to the I.L. Convention of 1928 on the subject and expressed regret that India had not yet ratified the Convention. In support of his Bill, he quoted the views expressed by the Whitley Commission on the I.L. Convention regarding minimum wages and stated that Mr. Harold Butler, whom Mr. Roy met in Delhi, had expressed the opinion that the time was ripe for India adopting legislation on minimum wage fixing machinery.

The Hon. Mr. Bodhram Dube, Minister in Charge of Labour, opposed the motion for referring the Bill to a Select Committee and moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion.

Mr. Dube's motion for circulation was passed.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-3-1938.)

The Trade Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1936:
Bill passed by Central Assembly on 18-3-1938.

The Select Committee Report: The Select Committee to whom the Trade Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1936, was referred on 24-8-1937 (vide pages 14-16 of our August 1937 report) reported on the Bill on 10-3-1938. The main change made by the Select Committee related to Clause 8. This Clause proposed to repeal Section 16 of the parent Act, which dealt with general strikes, and to substitute in its place a provision whereby Government could, if they had appointed a tribunal to investigate a dispute, declare any strike in furtherance of that dispute illegal. The Select Committee recommended the retention of Section 16, with certain amendments to give it a less restrictive character.

Discussion in the Assembly: The Bill as amended by the

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Select Committee was discussed by the Central Legislative Assembly on 17 and 18-3-1938. Mr. A. G. Clow, who moved for the consideration of the Bill, pointed out that the Bill aimed at not only the settlement of strikes, but the prevention of strikes as well.

Discussion centred mainly round the recommendation of the Select Committee to retain Section 16 in a modified form. Several members characterised Section 16 as conceived in an anti-labour spirit.

Mr. N.M.Joshi moved an amendment to exclude tramways from public utility services. The amendment was defeated.

The House accepted an official amendment for inclusion among public utility services of tramway services and inland water transport services "if the Provincial Government, by notification in the official Gazette declares" these services to be public utility services for the purposes of this Act.

An amendment to drop the word "prolonged" in Section 16 of the Act was moved and carried.

Mr. Joshi's Criticism.- Mr. N.M.Joshi, speaking on the Bill as finally amended, pointed out that he could not congratulate the Government on the piece of legislation they were enacting. The Bill, taken as a whole, was not conceived mainly in the interests of labour. The Government already possessed enough powers under the 1929 Act, but since then, though hundreds of strikes had occurred, the Provincial Governments refused to take action under its provisions and more and more depended on their repressive powers. He urged the Governments, both Central and Provincial, to come forward with really beneficial measures for labour.

The Bill was passed by the Assembly on 18-3-1938.

(The Statesman 18,19-3-1938)..+

The Bombay Shops Bill, 1938: 9-Hour Day:

Paid Holidays: Minimum Age - 12. ✓

The Government of Bombay is planning to introduce in the current Session of the Bombay Legislative Assembly, the Bombay Shops Bill, 1938, for regulating hours and conditions of work of shop assistants. The following are the main provisions of the Bill:

Establishments and Employees Covered.- The Act shall apply to persons employed in the following classes of establishments, namely -(i) Shops; (ii) Commercial Establishments; (iii) Hotels, Restaurants, Eating Houses, Theatres, Cinemas and similar places

of entertainment. Nothing in this Act shall apply to domestic servants, care-takers or watchmen or to persons employed in a supervisory capacity in any such establishment.

Definitions.- In this Act, "Shop" would mean any premises where merchandise is sold either by retail or whole-sale or both and for the purpose of this Act includes offices, ware-houses or godowns, whether in the same premises or otherwise, used in connection with such trade or business, hairdressers' and tailors' shops and similar establishments; while "Commercial establishment" is defined as premises, other than a shop or factory, wherein a trade or business is carried on.

9-Hour Day: 54-Hour Week. (a) Shops.- Subject to the provisions of this Act, the hours of work of a person employed in a shop shall not exceed nine on any one day. Shops may be exempted from the provisions regarding hours during the week before Christmas, Diwali week, etc., or 1 on such days as may be prescribed. Subject to the provisions of this Act, no person shall be employed in a commercial establishment for more than nine hours on any one day or 54 hours in any week, exclusive of intervals for rest or meals.

(b) Commercial Establishments.- Commercial establishments shall be exempted from the provisions of section VII during the preparation of periodical accounts or balance sheets or by reason of a special emergency, provided that the number of days on which such work is carried on does not exceed fifteen in a calendar year.

(c) Hotels, Restaurants, etc.- No person shall be employed in a hotel, restaurant, eating house, etc., for more than nine hours on any one day, exclusive of intervals for rest or meals.

Rest Interval.- Every employee shall be granted, during the period of daily employment, an interval of at least one hour for rest or meals, provided that no employee shall be employed for more than six hours without an interval for rest of at least half an hour.

Spread-Over.- The periods of work of a person employed in an establishment subject to this Act shall be so arranged that along with the intervals for rest they shall not spread over more than twelve hours in a day, provided that where the establishment is entirely closed for a period of not less than three hours between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. the spreadover may extend to fourteen hours.

52 Annual Holidays with Pay.- Every person employed in a shop or in a commercial establishment or in any other establishment which is subject to this Act shall be entitled to 52 whole holidays with pay in each calendar year of which at least four must be given in each calendar month. Where a person employed

is required to work on a holiday notified as such under the Negotiable Instruments Act he shall be entitled to receive an extra day's holiday in lieu thereof in addition to any holidays which may be due to him under the provisions.

Child Labour: (a) 12 to be Minimum Age.- No child under the age of twelve years shall be employed in any of the establishments subject to this Act, provided that any child who is already so employed may continue to be so employed on receiving a certificate of fitness from the Certifying Surgeon. No child (below 15 years) shall be employed in or about the business of an establishment covered by this Act before 6 a.m. or after 7 p.m.

(b) 6-Hour Day.- The hours of work of a child shall not exceed six on any one day. The hours of work of young persons (over 15 but below 17 years) shall not exceed eight on any one day. Children and young persons shall be entitled to the same holidays as other employees.

Closing Time.- Government may, after such enquiry as may be prescribed and after consultation with the local authorities and the employers affected, issue an order fixing the hours at which shops must be closed.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1938)..4

The Indore Payment of Wages Bill:

Referred to Select Committee on 28-3-1938. ✓

The Indore Payment of Wages Bill, intended to regulate the payment of wages to certain classes of persons employed in all factories and workshops where 50 or more persons are employed, and which is drafted on the same lines as that of the Payment of Wages Act of British India, came up for discussion in the Holkar State Legislative Council on 28-3-1938. Employers' interests opposed the Bill.

Mr. N.H.Draavid, who moved consideration of the Bill, said that it would remove one of the grievances of the employees of mills and factories in Indore State that their wages were either not properly calculated or that the payments were delayed and that indiscriminate fines were imposed.

Seth Bhanwar Lal Sethi, opposing the Bill, said that there was no necessity for such legislation and it would be impossible

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for managements of mills to maintain discipline if they were not allowed to impose fines. He said that it would be impossible to make out pay bills within three or four days of the date on which the payment of wages fell due. Similar legislation in British India, he said, had failed to achieve its objective and so it should not be introduced in Indore, as it would create unnecessary difficulties.

On the motion of Captain H.C.Dhanda, the Bill was referred to a Select Committee of the House. The Select Committee is to report within three months.

(The Statesman, 29-3-1938) +

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Conditions of Labour.

Efforts to Restrict Output in Jute Industry:

Main Lines of Proposed Agreement. ✓

Reference was made at page 16 of the report of this ~~month~~ Office for February 1938 to the negotiations that are at present being carried on between the Indian Jute Mills Association, Calcutta, and non-Association mills regarding reducing ^{time} of working hours and other measures to restrict output in the jute industry. The following information about the progress of the negotiations is taken from the address of Mr. H.H. Burn, the retiring president of the Association, at the Annual General Meeting of the Association held at Calcutta in the second week of March 1938.

Possibility of Agreement.- Referring to the recent negotiations, Mr. Burn said that the possibility of a lasting solution, agreed to by the non-Association mills (principally the Adamjee, Agarpara, Gagalbhai, Shree Luxminarain, Shree Hanuman, Mastanpara and Calcutta Jute Manufacturing Company's Mills, representing in all 4,600 looms; the smaller Bengal units, comprising approximately 800 looms, namely, Kedarnath, Goushabakar, Mahadeo, Kelay (Nafar Ghandra) Ganesh and Bharat, the Ludlow Jute Mills, incorporated in U.S.A.; the Cawnpore Jute Mills; the Katihar Mill; the Rameshwara Mills; the Nellimaria Mills and the Ghitavalsah Mills) were brighter than ever before.

Essentials of Agreement.- The essentials of the proposed agreement according to him were: (1) that the agreement embraces all or nearly all units at present engaged in the industry on a basis of equality; (2) that the agreement is sufficiently flexible to meet all conceivable consumption demand; (3) that the agreement is sufficiently flexible to enable the signatories, as far as it is possible to do so, to resist the entrance into the industry of new mills; (4) that the agreement is such as to ensure, ultimately if not immediately, a fair and reasonable margin of profit; and (5) that the agreement will secure stable conditions within the industry for a period of years with facilities for efficient and economic working.

Main Terms of Agreement.- (1) Period: Five years, leaving a new agreement to be negotiated during the last year of the five year period; or five years and continuing thereafter subject to suitable notice of termination which may be given only by a simple majority of the voting strength of the signatory mills.

(2) Termination Clause:- A termination clause, if such is considered essential to meet the danger of new entrants to the industry, to be invoked at any time during the currency of the agreement on suitable notice which may be given by a proportion of the signatories, representing a simple majority of the total

voting strength.

(3) Working Hours: The agreement should provide for working hours not exceeding 45 per week or the equivalent thereof in loom hours per week, for a period of one year in the first place; hours to be varied thereafter according to circumstances, on not less than one month's notice, by the votes of 75 per cent of the loom strength of signatories in the case of a decrease, and by a simple majority in the case of an increase; subject (a) to a minimum of 40 hours per week or the equivalent thereof in loom hours; (b) to a maximum of 54 hours per week or the equivalent thereof in loom hours, such maximum to be exceeded only on the vote of 75 per cent of the loom strength, to meet either an unforeseen demand such as might arise in case of war or an abnormal cycle of world prosperity, or to meet the danger of actual or projected new mills; (c) subject if necessary to the concession that signatory mills of 250 looms or less will be permitted to work 54 hours per week or the equivalent thereof in loom hours, such limit to be exceeded only in the event of hours generally being increased under the agreement above 54 per week; and (d) subject to suitable arrangements to enable those mills who have sold forward to implement contracts made prior to 28th February 1938.

(4) Rationalisation: suitable provision on the lines already proposed for inter-mill or inter-group rationalization in the interest of efficient and economic working.

(5) Making up lost time: suitable provision for the making up of time lost only on account of strikes, shortages of coal, failure of electric supply, mechanical breakdown or other circumstances or calamities beyond the control of the mill itself.

Other Provisions: The agreement is also to provide for (a) prohibition regarding installation of new machinery and scrapping of second hand machinery, (b) inspection of looms and working hours, (c) penalties for infringements, etc.

Mr. Burn concluded by pointing out that an agreement on the lines was sure to meet with the approval of the markets overseas, the investing public, the Provincial and Central Governments and the industry in Dundee. Referring to the attacks made by Dundee jute interests, he said that Calcutta's increased jute output during the past two years has been misinterpreted as a competitive attack upon Dundee and has given rise to a strong plea for protection of the United Kingdom market against the influx of jute goods from India.

(The Statesman, 14-3-1938.) ✓

Report of the Cawnpore Enquiry Committee:
Wage Increase and Holidays with Pay recommended. +

Reference was made at pages 25-26 of our August 1937 report to the appointment by the Government of the United Provinces of an Enquiry Committee into textile labour conditions in Cawnpore. Though the report has not yet been published, according to the Cawnpore correspondent of the Statesman, the following are some of its more important recommendations:

(1) An increase in workers' wages of 10 to 20 per cent with a prescribed minimum; (2) recruitment of labour by an independent board in which both labour and employers will be represented; (3) restrictions on the right of employers to dismiss workers at will; and (4) the right of workers to privilege and sick leave with pay benefits.

Other recommendations, which are reported to be unanimous, suggest the complete stoppage of the over-lapping shift system; urge that no mill should work on Sundays for any reason; and ~~reiterate the claims of the Cawnpore Mazdoor Sabha to recognition by employers.~~

Wage Cuts.- After a careful consideration of the question of wages, the Committee is understood to have come to the conclusion that there had been a general cut in wages in the Cawnpore textile mills, though it was untrue to say that the wage cuts had been uniform in all mills.

Minimum Wages.- In regard to a minimum wage, the Committee is believed to have laid down that no labourer in the Cawnpore Textile Mills should be employed at less than Rs. 15 monthly. The Committee has recommended that no changes in the rates of wages and in any other conditions of work affecting the workers' income, etc., should be made without the Mazdur Sabha and the workers being given advance information of the same. Workers and the Mazdur Sabha, the Committee recommends, should be given sufficient time before such changes are introduced so that if they do not approve of them they may attempt alterations in the proposed changes through negotiation with mill employers.

Right of Dismissal of Employer.- On the question of dismissal, the Committee have recommended that, ordinarily, no worker should be dismissed without notice. In cases of workmen being summarily dismissed on any charge by the employers, the Mazdoor Sabha should be entitled to represent their case before employers. If the matter cannot be solved amicably by negotiation between employers and the Mazdoor Sabha, the latter may place the matter before an arbitration board. On the arbitration board's finding

that a worker has been wrongly dismissed, he should be paid his wages until the date of the inquiry and he should also be given six months' wages as compensation. His name should also be entered in a Government employment applicants' register and he should be found a job.

Recruitment of Labour.- The Committee advocates changes in the present methods of recruiting labour which, it is alleged, lead to corruption. The Committee is opposed to individual mills recruiting their labour directly and suggest the formation of a labour exchange at which employers, the Mazdur Sabha, and the Government will be represented through their nominees. This exchange will be independent of any one party's influence and will do all the recruiting of labour for the Cawnpore textile mills.

Multiple Shifts.- The Committee is also understood to have found that the system of overlapping shifts and multiple shifts is illegal and should be abolished forthwith.

Leave with Pay.- The Committee is reported to have devoted considerable space to a discussion of the evidence with regard to workers' complaints regarding leave. It recommends that each worker should be entitled to sick leave with pay for a maximum period of 15 days each year. Each worker should also be granted 15 days' privilege leave with pay each year.

Weekly Rest.- Under no circumstances, says the Committee, should work be done on Sundays in lieu of other days. Holidays on other days should not be compensated for by work on Sundays. Piece-wage workers should also be entitled to Sunday and other holidays, and leave with pay. Though working on piece wages they should get their wages for Sundays and other holidays like time workers.

Recognition of Mazdur Sabha.- The Committee has also recommended that employers should recognise the Mazdur Sabha as representative of Cawnpore labour. It will be recalled that employers had recognised the Mazdur Sabha at the recommendation of the Premier, but had later withdrawn their recognition.

Though the Government has not yet formally published the Committee's report, advance copies have already been circulated among labour M.L.As; the Employers' Association and the Mazdoor Sabha have also received copies. The Committee's report is shortly expected to be formally published by the Government.

(The Statesman, 6-4-1938). +

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One Month's Leave with Pay for Calcutta
Corporation Menial Staff. +

On 25-3-1938 the Calcutta Corporation discussed a recommendation of its Services Committee to grant the Corporation menial staff (jamadars, peons, orderlies, cycle peons, durwans, and bearers) privilege leave with full pay for one month in a year. The clerical and sub-ordinate staff of the Corporation, it was pointed out, is already getting this privilege, irrespective of the extra cost involved in making arrangements for acting staff.

Supporting the recommendation of the Committee, Mr. K.C. Roy Chowdhury drew the attention of the House to the I.L. Convention on Holidays with pay.

The motion was adopted by 39 votes against 26.

(The Statesman, 26-3-1938) +

Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for Various Centres
in India during December 1937 and January 1938. +

The cost of living index numbers for working classes in various centres of India registered irregular changes during December 1937 and January 1938 as compared with November 1937.

Bombay.- The index number (Base: Year ending June 1934) of the cost of living for working classes in Bombay in December 1937 and January 1938 remained stationary at 107. The average in the year 1936 was 104.

Ahmedabad.- The index number (Base: Year ending July 1927) of the cost of living in Ahmedabad in December 1937 fell by 2 points to 75, and by 2 more points in January 1938 to 73; for 1936 the average was 71.

Sholapur.- The index number (Base: Year ending January 1928) of the cost of living in Sholapur rose in December 1937 by 3 points to 76. The number remained stationary at 76 during January 1938. The average for 1936 was 71.

Nagpur.- The index number (Base: January 1937) of the cost of living in December 1937 fell by 2 points to 63, and in January 1938 by one more point to 62.

Jubbulpore.- The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in Jubbulpore in December 1937 declined by 2 points to 61, and in January 1938 by one more point to 60.

(Extracted from the Monthly Survey of Business Conditions in India, December 1937 and January 1938 issues.) +

Increased Wages in Textile Industry:
Protests by Employers' Associations. +

The main findings of the Interim Report submitted by the Bombay Textile Labour Inquiry Committee were given at pages 11 to 14 of our February 1938 report, where it was also stated that the Millowners' Association of Bombay and Ahmedabad have adopted the recommendations regarding increase of wages. This acceptance has, however, been accompanied with protests on the part of the employers. Below are given extracts from authoritative pronouncements on the subject made by the Presidents of the Bombay and Ahmedabad Millowners' Associations:

Millowners' Association, Bombay.

Mr. D.M.Khataf's Views.- In his presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, held on 18-3-1938, Mr. D.M.Khataf, reviewing recent developments in the cotton textile industry, and more particularly the recommendations made in the Interim Report, said:

Inadequate consideration of Employers' case.- It is unreasonable to say that the recommendations contained in this report, based, as they have been, not on actual facts and data but upon a series of assumptions regarding the future trend of prices of raw cotton, cloth, etc., are entitled to the weight and authority of the findings of an industrial court or a court of arbitration. What, in short, the Committee of Inquiry says is:- "We do not accept the figures contained in the consolidated balance sheet of the Bombay cotton mill industry prepared by the Millowners' Association and duly audited; we do not accept the conclusions arrived at by previous Tariff Boards as to what constitutes an adequate return on capital or an adequate provision for depreciation; we do not even accept the proposition that the heavy losses of the past are entitled to be taken into consideration in the framing of the recommendations; we do not believe that shareholders should receive any consideration; and finally we do not accept the proposition that actual profits must be made before a rise in wages could be given."

Unjustified Optimistic Assumptions.- "Having thus disposed off the facts and contentions which the industry advanced in support of its case, the Inquiry Committee then proceeded to enter into the realms of speculative prophecy in regard to the future, and arrived at the conclusion that the prices of raw cotton were going to remain low, that the prices of cloth were not going to fall, that although commodity prices were falling, demand would not deteriorate, and that taking all these theoretical considerations together, the industry

was likely to have an eight per cent greater margin in 1938 than in 1937. We may be pardoned for saying that we can hardly be expected to accept these conclusions as though they were the findings of an industrial court.

Increased Wages Conditional on Capacity to Pay.- "The conclusions of the Committee already show signs of being falsified, as during the last two months, demand has fallen, cloth prices have shown a tendency to decline, and stocks of manufactured goods are on the increase. A blow has been dealt to our growing export trade, and substantial assistance has been given to our competitors in the Indian market. As a practical course, the increase in wages was, however, agreed to. As regards the future, all that can be stated is that the maintenance of the new scale of wages will entirely depend on the capacity of the industry to pay, and that, in view of the prospect of additions to our cost of production arising from Government's announced programme in regard to sickness insurance and other matters, it is problematical how long the new scale can be kept in existence."

Costly Social Welfare Schemes.- "Referring to the social legislation contemplated by the Government of Bombay, he said: "The rate of advance in social legislation must be dictated by the industry's capacity to finance their legitimate share of such schemes without imperilling competitive capacity. Legislation in matters like sickness insurance, holidays with pay, old-age pensions, and social benefits of a like nature should be of an all-India character and so far as sickness benefits and old-age pensions were concerned, the salutary principles followed in other countries, namely, contribution towards the cost by the State in the case of sickness benefits and the provision of the whole or greater part of the cost by the State in the case of old age pensions, must be followed. The embryo schemes envisaged by Government would impose an additional burden of Rs. 4,000,000 per year on Bombay mills, which was excessive in comparison with the burdens imposed on employers for the same class of benefits in other countries; and until the industry had been definitely and permanently established on the road to prosperity, the policy which should be followed in regard to the sickness insurance scheme, holidays with pay and the like should be the encouragement of voluntary schemes by financially strong individual concerns; these schemes may be extended and improved whenever circumstances permitted."

(The Times of India, 19-3-1938).

Millowners' Association, Ahmedabad.

Mr. Balabhai Sakerlal's Views.- In his presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Millowners Association, Ahmedabad, held on 17-3-1938, Mr. Balabhai Sakerlal, reviewing the recommendations of the Interim Report said:

Arbitrary and Incorrect Assumptions.- "It has been felt by employers in the Province that the interim recommendations of the Textile Labour Inquiry Committee are based on arbitrary assumptions and theories and hypothetical and problematic estimates. Amelioration of labour conditions, even by an increase in wages, will receive our full support, but this should be subject to the capacity of the industry to pay. This has to be determined by an examination of relevant statistics. I feel not only that the data relied on by the Committee does not warrant such conclusions, but that it is based on erroneous premises. The criteria adopted even by the Tariff Boards have not been accepted by the Committee. The recommendations are certain to impose a most inequitable burden on the industry to the advantage of units outside the Province.

Ahmedabad hard hit.- "Ahmedabad mills effected a wage cut a year or more later than other centres, and the extent of the cut was smaller than elsewhere. They have shown during the last ten years a proportionately higher advance in the wage level than mills in any other centre. Moreover, industrial recovery began to be felt in Ahmedabad some months later than in Bombay. These are facts which have been admitted by the Inquiry Committee, but nevertheless the Committee have made recommendations on almost a uniform basis, which in my opinion, is incomprehensible. However, the Association has decided to recommend to the members to give at present an increase in wages according to the Government resolution."

Government's Social Legislation.- Referring to the social legislation contemplated by the Government of Bombay, he said: "Another burden on industry was impending social legislation. Its enforcement would mean an additional increase in wages". Over and above the contention already urged that the condition of the industry should be a vital consideration, the speaker urged, that such legislation should cover all classes of workers and be on an all-India basis."

(The Times of India, 18-3-1938)

The Share-holders' Association, Bombay. +

The Committee of the above Association in a memorandum on the Interim Report says:

Unwarranted Conclusions.- The Inquiry Committee has failed to carry out a comprehensive, scientific and detached examination of the working of the industry in all its aspects. The Inquiry Committee appears to have started on its labours with a mental reservation that somehow or other a case had to be made out for granting an increase in wages whether "the present condition of the industry" or "the ability of the industry to bear" warranted such increase or not.

Difficulty of attracting new Capital. - The Committee further observe that the Inquiry Committee have also lost sight of the consideration that this industry, if it has to live and stand the competition of foreign imports, has to be continuously kept up-to-date in its plant and equipment, and in order to enable the industry to do this a continuous inflow of fresh capital must be ensured. The Committee ask whether the industry would be able to attract fresh capital, if its working is now to be determined by the sole consideration for improvement in wages.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1938). +

Increased Wages Secured by Interim Report:

Workers' Complaints of Evasions by Employers. +

Mr. R. S. Nimbkar, General Secretary, Bombay Girni Kamgar Union, has addressed on 13-3-1938 a letter to the Prime Minister, Bombay, complaining of evasions on the part of textile millowners in the matter of according to the workers the increased wages recommended in the Interim Report of the Textile Inquiry Committee. The following are extracts from the letter:

Piece-Workers' Wages Affected.- The Bombay Mill-owners' Association is not carrying out the recommendations of the Textile Inquiry Committee in their Interim Report, in the matter of the wages of piece-workers. The Report of the Committee has been accepted in full by your Government, and the millowners though they consider the wage-increases as unjustifiable have decided to agree to them. But they are cutting down the increases in the matter of piece-workers by an indirect method which has no ground whatever in the Report itself.

Interim Report's Recommendations.- Para 133, Clause 2B, in the Report says "In the case of piece-workers, the rate of increase to which an individual worker will be entitled is indicated in the Schedule by the category of earnings within which may

fall his net earnings during the pay-period." According ~~to~~ to this schedule if two piece-workers earn Rs. 34 and Rs. 38, the rate of increase for the first one will be 2 annas in the rupee and for the second $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas. On page 91, this is made very clear by the Report which says "We are thus led to recommend that the basis 'both' for calculating the increment and for determining its rate should be the actual earnings of each piece-worker."

Individual Earnings substituted by Average Earnings.-
Circular No.845/184 dated 26-2-1938 sent out by the Millowners' Association, Bombay, however, declares that the rate of increase for all piece-workers is not determined by their 'individual' net earnings, but by the average earnings of full time permanent workers. This method of applying the increase is wrong and contrary to the recommendations of the report, both ~~their~~ spirit and word as shown in pages 131, and 133 particularly. The net effect of this tampering with para 131 and 133 by the Millowners is that piece-workers get a less percentage of increase.... In weaving alone, the millowners will make a saving of more than Rs. 30,000 per month, according to our tentative calculations. And we may point out that piece-workers are more than 50 per cent of the total strength. ~~It~~

Redress requested.- I, therefore, request you to take up the question and to ask the Millowners to ~~re~~ restore completely the increase and pay next month whatever shortage is found in this month's wages because of the faulty method followed by the owners.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-38). +

(A copy of the Interim Report was forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute D.1/144/33 dated 3-3-38).

Protest by Byculla Congress Committee. +

The Managing Council of the Byculla District Congress Committee (Byculla is a municipal ward of Bombay city; it has a large working class population) has passed the following resolution on the subject at a meeting held on 9-3-1938:

"This meeting condemns the attempts of the managements of some of the mills, to nullify the good effects of the suggestions of the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee of the Government by discharging hands and re-employing them on lower wages and then giving the increase. So also, it condemns the attempts of others to reduce the number of workers in order to compensate the increase. This meeting calls upon the workers of the Byculla Ward to unite and fight this onslaught on their living conditions and request the Labour Committee of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee to enquire into this grievance of the workers."

(The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1938). +

Factory Administration in Hyderabad State, 1935-36.* ✓

Number and Classification.- During the year ending 5-10-1936 the number of factories on the register increased from 469 to 521. The net increment is the result of 56 factories being added and 4 factories being removed from the register. Of the 56 factories added to the register during the year, 12 were newly erected and the remaining 44 were already existing, but ~~4~~ were registered as factories during the year; of the latter, 35 were rice mills and 5 bidi manufacturing factories. Of the 521 factories on the register 377 factories worked during the year and the others remained closed. Of the factories that worked 43 were perennial factories and 334 seasonal. 231 seasonal and 6 perennial factories were connected with the cotton industry.

Inspection.- Of the 377 factories working during the year, 329 factories were inspected, of which 241 were inspected once, 65 twice and 23 more than twice. Besides, 40 unregistered factories were inspected and instructions to protect machinery were issued.

Number of Operatives.- The total average daily number of persons employed in all industries was 29,733; of these the cotton spinning and weaving industry employed 7918 persons (6,155 males, 1,864 females and 331 children) and the remaining industries together 21,914 persons (13,014 males, 8,290 females and 610 children). No case of employment of women at night was reported.

Sanitation.- A further improvement was observed in the general standard of sanitation in the factories. The health of employees ~~is~~ remained generally satisfactory throughout the year.

Wages and Strikes.- The scale of wages remained unchanged, and no strikes were reported.

Accidents.- Protection of machinery was satisfactory. Accidents due to want of protection of machinery have become rare. Two fatal accidents occurred during the year. There were 21 serious and 43 minor accidents, as against 26 serious and 54 minor accidents reported during the preceding year.

Workmen's Compensation.- The report points out that even partial compensation was paid only in a few ~~max~~ cases, and that in most cases of serious accidents the question of compensation was not even considered by the factory owners. At the instance of the Factories Department full wages during the period of

* Report on the Administration of Factories and Boilers Inspection Department of H.E.H. the Nizam's Government for the year 1345 Fasli (7th Oct. 1935 to 6th Oct. 1936) (With the Government Review thereon).-Hyderabad-Deccan.-Govt. Central Press 1938. -pp.12

treatment, and incidental expenses were paid to the injured in almost all cases. The Government is contemplating the early introduction of a Workmen's Compensation Act.

Extension of Factories Act.- During the year, two notifications under the provisions of the Factories Act were issued by the Government. The proposal to bring small rice mills employing 10 persons and more, under the Factories Act, which was under consideration of the Government for some time, was accepted and a Notification to that effect was issued. In order to prevent child labour in bidi manufacturing factories, which was reported to have assumed serious proportions, a Notification was issued under Section 2(3)(b) of the Act, bringing all the bidi manufacturing factories employing 20 persons and more under Factories Act. +

C. P. Textile Labour Inquiry:
Committee appointed by C. P. Government. ✓ +

At a meeting of the textile workers of Nagpur held on 11-3-1939, the Prime Minister of the Central Provinces stated:

"It will be the endeavour of the Central Provinces Congress Cabinet to fall in line with the policy of the Bombay Government regarding the recommendations of the Bombay Inquiry Committee, both as regards the extent of restoration of wage-out and the period from which it will take effect, subject to such variations as local conditions necessitate..."

With a view to implement this undertaking; the Governor of C.P. and Berar, has appointed a Committee to report on:

- (1) the extent to which the conditions in the Central Provinces and Berar differ from those which form the basis of the Bombay Committee's recommendations;
- (2) the changes that would as a consequence be necessary in these recommendations in their application to the conditions in the Central Provinces and Berar; and
- (3) the date from which the modified recommendations should take effect.

Personnel.- The following is the personnel of the Committee:
Chairman:- Mr. N.J. Roughton, C.I.E., I.C.S., Financial Commissioner,
Members:- (1) Mr. A.C. Sen Gupta M.A. (Edin), Principal, Morris College, Nagpur, (2) Mr. V.R. Kalappa, M.L.A., and (3) Mr. C.C. Desai, I.C.S., Director of Industries. He will also act as Secretary to the Committee.

The Committee will be advised on technical matters by the following associate members:- Mr. S.H. Batliwala, Manager, Empress Mills, Nagpur, and Mr. R.S. Ruikar, B.A., LL.B., General

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Secretary, Nagpur Textile Union.

The Committee is to submit its report by 30-4-1938.
(Page 216 of Part I of the C.P. and Berar
Gazette, dated 11-3-1938.) +

Industrial Labour Conditions in Bihar:
Local Government appoints Enquiry Committee. ✓ +

As the result of a resolution adopted recently in the Bihar Legislative Assembly, the Government of Bihar has appointed a Committee to investigate the conditions of industrial labour in Bihar and make suggestions for improving the same. The Committee consists of seven members with Babu Rajendra Prasad as Chairman; others are Prof. Abdul Bari, Jagatnarayan Lall, Mr. M.P. Gandhi, Mr. Radhakamal Mukerji, Mr. H.B. Chandra and Prof. R.K. Saran. The last-named will serve as Secretary also.

The Committee is empowered to co-opt local representatives of capital and labour in each area which it may visit and will conduct inquiry into the conditions of industrial labour prevailing in the province with a view to make practicable recommendations for improving level of wages, conditions of work, prospects, employment, etc., in important industries and localities.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-3-1938.) +

Definition of "Wages" in Payment of Wages Act:
Government of Bombay to institute test case. ✓ +

Reference was made at pages 25-26 of our February 1938 Report to the intimation circularised by the Government of Bombay regarding the definition of wages in the Payment of Wages Act. The effect of that definition is to incorporate into wages any bonus that may be offered by the employer for good attendance, good work, good production or matters of that kind; moreover, this bonus becomes payable whether or not the conditions governing this earning of the bonus are fulfilled. The printed Excerpts from the proceedings of the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce point out that

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letters have been received by the Committee from various members firms protesting against the interpretation. It is understood that the Government of Bombay is contemplating the institution of a test case in both Ahmedabad and Bombay, and the Committee has decided to defer any action until the results of these test cases are known.

(Excerpts from the Proceedings of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce during January 1938).

According to the Times of India of 28-3-1938, a test case has been filed against the Arvind Mills, Ahmedabad, to get a ruling on the subject. The Government of India also has been moved in the matter. +

Forced Labour in Hyderabad State:

Paucity of Results achieved through Prohibition Order. +

In earlier reports of this Office references have been made to the action taken by the Government of Hyderabad, to eradicate the Bhagela system of forced labour from the State (vide pages 21-22 -January 1936 report and pages 17-19 - December 1937 report). Commenting on the lack of practical results achieved by these efforts, Mr. P.R.Venkataswamy, Secretary, Youth League of Ambedkerites (an organisation of the section of the depressed classes led by Dr. Ambedkar, the Bombay depressed class leader), Secunderabad, Hyderabad State, says in the course of a press statement issued in the middle of March 1938:

"The lamentable system of forced labour is still in existence in the State. Though a 'firman' was issued by the Nizam abolishing begari (forced labour) yet it exists in an intense form in almost all the districts. The Information Bureau of the State may issue statements from time to time repudiating the contention that begari is in existence. The firman continues to be on the Statute Book lacking practical translation."

(The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1938).
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Forced Labour in Oudh:
The Harwaha System. ✓ +

The following information about the Harwaha system of forced labour obtaining in certain parts of Oudh is taken from an article under the caption: "Serfdom in Oudh: Need for Legislation" contributed by Mr. S.S.Haider to the National Call, Delhi, and published in its issue dated 6-3-1938:

The Harwaha System: The Harwaha system of pledging personal labour is generally resorted to by the majority of the poor and landless classes in Oudh who have no substantial security to offer, for raising money loans. So popular has this practice become that it has now almost grown into an institution with fixed rules and regulations which are, with slight local variations, followed by every Harwaha and his employer. In the eastern districts of Oudh, for example, it is usually in the month of Jeth (May-June), that is, before sowing of the Kharif crops, that opportunities for employment as Harwaha are most abundant. In return for a loan of Rs. 7/- or a slightly bigger amount, the Harwaha, the landless depressed class labourer obtaining the loan, has to work in the three-fold capacity of a field-labourer, a watchman and a domestic servant. Besides the petty amount of Rs. 7/- the Harwaha receives for his daily maintenance further advances in cash or in grain, known in the vernacular as the 'Khawali'. This is returned by him at the time of the harvest when he is entitled to a share of the produce known as 'Bhatta'. Also an equal amount is given to him from the 'Khaliyan', a place where grain is stored. At the end of the year he is discharged, but he may if he likes renew the contract on similar lines. He will be given an advance of Rs. 7/- as before, which is not meant to be repaid by him at the end of the term of his Harwahi.

The Ultikasar System: The Ulti-kasar system does not enslave the Harwaha to the same extent as the system called Sanwaki, which is resorted to by the Harwaha, when, compelled by some necessity like marriage, he seeks a bigger loan. Generally the money advanced in the Ultikasar form of Harwahi does not exceed Rs. 28/- or thereabout. But, as much depends on the merit of the case and the interaction of supply and demand, the Harwaha may contrive to get slightly better terms by way of a larger loan. Though everything in this system corresponds to the previous one—the Khawal, the Bhatta and Khaliyan remaining much the same, the position of the Harwaha undergoes a transformation for the worse as his redemption now depends upon the repayment of the debt. In most cases this is rendered almost impossible by the extremely poor remuneration of his labour, a life-long servitude which may even become hereditary may be the result. At the best the Harwaha can perhaps find a more benevolent master, who, by paying off his debt, might relieve him from the clutches of the farmer and thus serve only as a lesser evil.

(The National Call, 6-3-1938.) +

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Bill to Penalise Free or Forced Labour:

Views of Bombay Chamber of Commerce.

A private member of the Bombay legislature has recently sponsored a Bill seeking to make free or compulsory forced labour a punishable offence.

Main Features of the Bill.- The statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill points out that forced labour prevails in an aggravated form in certain rural areas in the Bombay Presidency where traces of feudalism still survive, and expresses regret that the Government of India refused to ratify the I.L. Convention of 1930 re. abolition of forced labour. It is also pointed out that the principle that no person could be compelled to labour against his will was recognised by Section 374 of the Indian Penal Code, but that the ~~worded~~ wording of the section is so vague that it had failed to root out this evil. As the mischief did not lie in compulsion alone, but in non-payment of wages and often times in inadequate payments, the Bill seeks to make free or compulsory or forced labour an offence punishable with imprisonment or fine. It recognises two ~~as~~ exceptions to compulsory labour. It allows impressed labour provided for in the Indian Forest Act, 1927, and the Bombay Irrigation Act, 1879. As it is but just that such labour ought to be adequately remunerated, the Bill makes provision for such payment.

Views of Bombay Chamber of Commerce.- Consulted in January 1938 by the Commissioner of Labour, Bombay, as to its views on the Bill, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, after going into the question with its Labour Sub-Committee has advised the Commissioner for Labour that it sympathised with the intention underlying the Bill to remedy the existing position as regards forced or compulsory labour, but considered that the question of free labour should be excluded altogether from the scope of the Bill or the permitted exceptions to the definition of free labour so closely defined that no anomalies would arise and this they feared in practice might not be found possible. Whilst the Committee understood from the Commissioner of Labour's letter that it was the definite intention of Government to bring about changes in the age-old conditions governing service rendered in certain rural areas, it was of opinion that any legislation designed to bring about the changes which Government had in view, should be introduced by gradual stages, since it did not appear possible to foresee the repercussions which drastic legislation on the lines proposed in the Bill might have on rural economy.

(Extracted from Excerpts from the Proceedings during February 1938 of the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce).

Baroda Mill Workers Demand 54-Hour Week. +

At a meeting of the textile mill workers of Baroda held on 23-3-1938 under the auspices of the Baroda Majur Mahajan Mandal, a branch of the Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad, a resolution was passed demanding reduction of working hours in factories in the State from the present level of 60 hours per week to 54 hours, and urging that the Baroda Factories Act should be amended so as to incorporate this reform.

(The Statesman, 24-3-1938).+

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Industrial Organisation.
Employers' Organisations.

All India Organisation of Industrial Employers:
5th Annual Meeting, Delhi, 1938.

The 5th annual meeting of the All India Organisation of Industrial Employers was held at Delhi on 2-4-1938 under the presidentship, in the absence of Mr. G.D.Birla, the president, of Lala Padampat Singhanian.

In his presidential speech, Mr. Birla (the speech was read by Mr. Singhanian) reviewed the political changes in India as well as the main economic trends during 1937. He referred to the labour unrest in industrial centres, which, he said, was due to the new hopes created by the advent of popular ministries. Mr. Birla expressed satisfaction at the appointment of labour enquiry committees by provincial governments and suggested to Bombay employers to accept the recommendations of the Bombay Committee so that they might have a contented labour force.

Demand for Increase in Wages. - As regards the general demand for higher wages, into which enquiry committees are going in several provinces, Mr. Birla pointed out that in raising the level of wages, a few important factors should be taken into consideration.

Consequences of Higher Wages. - Firstly, in the interest of greater employment, which will be seriously jeopardised through rationalisation and labour saving devices, and also through hindrance to industrialisation, and secondly in the interest of the tax-payer, extremely disproportionate wages are not in the wider interest of the country. Higher wages does not eventually come out of the pocket of the industry concerned. If it comes definitely and the whole of it out of the pocket of the employers, then the hen that lays the golden egg will die soon and there will neither be the employer nor the employee. To a great extent, it is the worker himself (higher the wages, less the workers for the same job through labour saving devices and rationalisation), the tax-payer (through protection, etc.), the consumer (who will be compelled to pay higher price for his needs) and the agriculturist (who due to lower purchasing power of the industry will be compelled to sell his raw produce cheaper) who eventually pay the higher wages. The industry is only one of the parties that is affected by higher wages. Substantially it is a clearing house.

Industrial Relations. - If industry is the fount of bread for all, then industrial peace assumes an importance the effect of which could never be exaggerated. Such peace could be achieved only if there were genuine Trade Unions with whom the employer in time of emergency could negotiate. Unfortunately, such a

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condition seems yet to be far off. Not only, except in Ahmedabad, are there no genuine Trade Unions to represent the workers, but some of those which claim to represent labour exist merely for their exploitation for revolutionary purposes. Mr. Birla suggested that the Provincial Governments should, until genuine Trade Unions came into existence, control all questions causing disputes between the employer and the employee and enforce their will on both the parties to prevent lookouts and strikes.

Office-bearers for 1938-39.- The following office-bearers were elected for the year 1938-39 and 1939-40: President: Lala Padampat Singhania; Members of the Committee: Mr. G.D.Birla, Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Seth Walchand Hira Chand, Lala Shri Ram, Mr. Amritlal Ojha, Dr. Narendranath and Lala Ram Saran Das.

(The Hindustan Times dated 3-4-1938. President's speech summarised from printed text supplied to this Office.) +

All India Organisation of Industrial Employers:
Report of Committee for 1937.* +

Membership.- The total number of members on the roll of the All India Organisation of Industrial Employers on 31-12-1937 was 12 Associations representing different industries and 98 industrial concerns, making a total of 110 members.

Meetings of the Committee.- The Committee of the Organisation held two meetings during the year under report, both in New Delhi.

Relations with the I.L.O.; Washington Textile Conference and 23rd I.L. Conference.- After referring to the recommendations made by the Organisation regarding the nomination of the Indian employers' delegate to the Washington Textile Conference, the report deals with the work of the 23rd session of the I.L. Conference. The Committee of the Organisation considered the report of the Indian Employers' delegations to these two Conferences. As regards the suggestion made in the latter report, that the Indian employers' representative, Mr. D.S.Erulkar, should be advised on the question of the reduction of hours of work in the textile industry when it comes before the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation, the Committee decided to express the view that they were opposed to the application of the 40-hour week Convention in India and further that the Asiatic countries must have hours of work different from the non-Asiatic countries in view of climatic conditions, imperfect development of industrial organisations and other special circumstances.

* All India Organisation of Industrial Employers. Report of the Proceedings of the Committee for the year 1937: 1938.
Scindia House, Curzon Road, New Delhi. *fr* ||

Mr. Butler's Indian tour.- The report next refers to Mr. Butler's Indian tour and states that every opportunity was given to Mr. Butler to meet leading Indian employers at the various industrial centres visited by him, particularly, at Calcutta, Cawnpore, Delhi and Ahmedabad.

Tripartite Technical Conference on Coal Mines.- The Committee urged the Government, as soon as the Conference was announced, to send an Indian delegation to the Conference.

(Copies of the presidential speech of Mr. G.D.Birla at the 5th meeting of the All India Organisation of Industrial Employers and the annual Report to the meeting were forwarded to Geneva with our Minute D.1/606 /38 dated 7-4-1938).

11th Annual Meeting of Federation of Indian
Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Delhi, 1938.

The 11th annual session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry was held at Delhi on 1 and 2-4-1938 under the presidentship of the Hon. Sir Rahimtoola M. Chinoy.

The following are the salient features of the presidential address:

Presidential Address.- Sir Rahimtoola, in his presidential address, reviewed broadly world economic, industrial and political conditions and pointed out that the political situation "growing out of fear and absence of goodwill amongst nations" has created an artificial improvement in the industrial activities of several nations with reflected betterment in countries producing raw materials and expressed the view that such artificiality in international trade is bound to bring in its wake depression of a very severe character as increased expenditure on armaments will deplete national resources and prevent countries from contributing their quota towards the maintenance of better economic conditions in years to come. Passing on to conditions in India, he criticised the Government for its policy of concluding important trade agreements without consulting the Indian interests concerned, deplored the growing worsening of the position of Indians abroad, and stressed the need for the adoption by India of a vigorous policy of economic nationalism. The following are relevant extracts from the address.

Trade Agreements.- Criticising the Government of India's methods in committing India to important trade agreements without consulting the Central Legislature and the different interests concerned, Sir Rahimtoola referred to the International Sugar Agreement, the Indo-Japanese and Indo-British trade agreements. On the first, he expressed strong condemnation of the Government for committing India for a period of five years "to an irrevocable agreement under which the Indian sugar industry was denied the

privilege of even attempting to enter into the International free export market for sugar", and for ratifying the agreement against the definite verdict of the Legislative Assembly. Regarding the Indo-Japanese agreement, it was pointed out that the Government of India failed to maintain constant contact with Indian industrial and agricultural interests which were mainly to be affected under the terms of the agreement, and that the Agreement has resulted, first, in the Indian cotton trade being subjected to a number of handicaps under the plea of foreign exchange control introduced by the Government of Japan, and secondly, in the absence of safeguards against the manipulations of the Japanese Cotton Spinners' Association; he also regretted the abandoning, on the flimsy plea of the out-break of the Sino-Japanese conflict, at an advanced stage of the departmental inquiry initiated by the Government on the subject of according adequate protection to minor Indian industries threatened by Japanese competition. Regarding the Indo-British trade negotiations, he deplored the undue delay and the secrecy in which the negotiations are enveloped and demanded that all such agreements should in future be submitted to the Central Legislature for ratification.-

Position of Indians Abroad.- Referring to the growing worsening of the position of Indians abroad, he pointed out that attempts were being made in various parts of the British Empire, and more particularly in Kenya, Tanganyika, Zanzibar and South Africa, to exclude Indians from their legitimate rights, and demanded that the Government of India should fight vigorously for the rights of Indians abroad.

Reformed Constitution and Stimulation of Agriculture and Industry.- Welcoming the advent of provincial autonomy and the advent into power of Congress Ministries in 7 out of 11 Indian provinces, he expressed the hope that the autonomous Ministries would take adequate steps to stimulate both agriculture and industry. Deploring the lack of effective improvement in commodity prices in India, ~~and~~ despite the insistent need for raw materials in the industrial countries of the world, he criticised the Government for its lukewarmness in not assuring to the agriculturist a proper return for his labour. He said: " In India, both in respect of agricultural produce and industrial products, it is a question of under-consumption rather than over-production.....The Government must stimulate consumption which is only possible if the purchasing power of the Indian masses improves. The family budget of the Indian agriculturist must be balanced by securing for him better prices. The question of fuller utilisation of his produce in the country itself must be investigated by all Provincial Governments.... A policy of economic nationalism, therefore, in some shape or form, is best suited to a country like India with its abundance of raw materials, ample natural resources, unlimited internal market and enormous manpower..... If the Indian agriculturist is to live as a human being, industrial development on an enormous scale throughout the country is essential.....Industry, under the Government of India Act, is a Provincial subject and if a sincere effort is made in full co-operation with the commercial interests in the +

country to increase the purchasing power of the masses, it will indirectly influence the tariff policy of the Central Government. ... The agriculturist requires cheap and quick transport for the movement of his produce and the indigenous industry is in no less need of such facilities. Every effort will have to be made towards securing these facilities by proper co-ordination of different modes of transport."

Relief of Agricultural Indebtedness.- While conceding the need for according a certain measure of relief to the agriculturist in respect of indebtedness, he pointed out that mere relief from past liabilities will not make the agriculturist immune from future liabilities and that such artificial adjustments by law are abnormal and may defeat the very object in the long run. The question of rural finance requires well thought-out planning and he recommended the bringing into operation the machinery of co-operative societies for the financing of certain operations of the agriculturist.

Role of Money-Lender.- The total rural indebtedness of India estimated by the Central Banking Enquiry Committee at Rs. 9,000 millions; he pointed out, must now be reckoned at double that figure of Rs. 18,000 millions owing to the fall in commodity prices; the working capital of all co-operative societies in India comes up scarcely to Rs. 970 millions and commercial banks do not play any active part in rural credit. In the circumstances, the balance, Rs. 10,000 millions and over has to come from money lenders and therefore their services have to be retained on reasonable terms.

(Summarised from a copy of the presidential address forwarded to this Office by the Secretary of the Federation. A copy of the speech was forwarded to Geneva with this Office minute D.1/606/38 dated 7-4-1938.)

Resolutions: Below is given a summary of the resolutions on labour subjects and other matters of interest to this Office adopted, among others, at the session.

Labour Legislation: Mr. Govardhandas G. Morarji moved the following resolution on labour legislation:

This Federation desires to emphasise—

- (a) the imperative necessity of co-ordination of Factory and Labour legislation in the different provinces so as to make it uniform as far as possible and to prevent any unfair competition between industries located in different provinces, and
- (b) that the Governments, Central and or Provincial, should, as in other countries, bear their fair share of the expenditure incurred in labour welfare work, instead of imposing the whole burden on the industries.

The resolution was adopted.

Resolutions were also passed (1) urging the development of Indian shipping by securing a share of empire trade for it; (2) condemning the recommendations of the Railway Enquiry (Wedgewood) Committee and the freight policy of railway managements; (3) protesting against the increased postal and telegraph rates between India and Burma; (4) urging the institution of a proper industrial research scheme with a view to develop the economic resources of the country; (5) demanding the setting up of suitable machinery for reviewing the development of indigenous industries and for evolving a well thought-out plan for their systematic expansion; (6) regretting the

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decision of the Government of India * to suspend the enquiry into Japanese competition with Indian small industries and urging the completion of the enquiry so that adequate protection may be given to the industries concerned, and permanent machinery may be set up to safeguard the interests of small industries; (7) urging the Government of India to take steps to secure and maintain for Indians in British Colonies and possessions a position of equality with other British subjects; and (8) criticising the Government for ratifying the International Sugar Agreement.

Office-bearers for 1938-39.- The following were elected office-bearers of the Committee of the Federation for the year 1938-39: Mr. Jamshed N.R. Mehta - President; Dewan Bahadur Ratnasabapathy Mudaliar - Vice-President; Mr. A.L.Ojha, Mr. Debes Chandra Ghose, Mr. M.A. Master, Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Mr. G.D.Birla, Lala Padampat Singhania, Mr. J.C.Setalvad, Mr. N.L.Puri, Mr. C.C.Ghia, Mr. Karamchand Thapper, Mr. Mahomed Ismail, Mr. Guru Prasad Kapur, Lala Gurusharan Lal, Mr. Brijlal Biyani, R.B.Shivaratan G. Mohatta, R.S. Hayavadana Rao, Sir Rahimtoola Chinoy, and Mr. A.D.Shroff - members; Mr. D.N. Sen was elected Honorary Treasurer.

Co-opted Members.- The following members were co-opted to the Committee: Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Mr. A.R. Dalal (of Tatas, Calcutta), Mr. D.P.Khaitan, Rai Bahadur Ramsaran Das, Mr. Chunilal B.Mehta and Mr. M.L.Dahanukar.

(The H.T., 2 and 3-4-1938.) +

Indian National Committee of the International Chamber
of Commerce: 9th Meeting, 1938, Delhi. +

The 9th annual meeting of the Indian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce was held at Delhi on 1-4-1938 under the presidentship of the Hon. Sir Rahimtoola M. Chinoy. The following are the salient features of the presidential address:

World Economic Conditions, 1937.- The major part of the year 1937 has undoubtedly recorded a steady progress in the recovery of international trade since the depression period of 1929-32. The impetus to world recovery was due more or less to enormous expenditure on armaments which have brought in an improvement in prices of certain raw materials and rapid development ~~in prices~~ of certain ~~raw materials~~ industries. The industrial production of the world, including U.S.S.R., which was at its lowest ebb in 1932 being only 69 (1929-100), rose to 111 in 1936 and though exact figures are not available for the whole of 1937, figures for the first six months give sufficient indication that the improvement was maintained in most of the industrial countries. This is partly due to a series of reciprocal trade agreements negotiated by the United States of America and the stability brought about in monetary standards by the Tripartite Monetary Agreement of September 1936. The index of wholesale

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prices for the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. also steadily rose. After October, 1937 the shadow of a slump is cast on many of the industrial nations and that too, in spite of the feverish activity of the armament industries all over the world. India too is beginning to lose even the slight ground gained by her in the earlier part of 1937.

Anglo-American Trade Talks.- The efforts of the U.S.A. in creating greater international co-operation by adjustment of tariffs are now directed towards negotiating a trade agreement with United Kingdom. Both these countries followed an aggressive policy of high protectionism which was in contradiction with the requirements of international co-operation. A great deal of interest and concern centres round these Anglo-American trade negotiations.

Increasing Production.- At the last Biennial Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce, held at Berlin, increased production of goods for wider consumption and thereby raising the standard of life was urged, and it was pointed out that any attempt to prevent an increase of production would seriously mar the progress of increased trade between nations. India's position vis-a-vis the industrialised countries is peculiar in view of the fact that she has been trying for years to fully utilise her raw materials by developing major and minor industries with a view to supply her own requirements. When a general resolution on world economic reconstruction came for deliberation before the Resolutions Committee, therefore, the Indian delegation put forth the view that the raw materials producing countries should have a prior claim to their raw produce.

International Exchange at Stable Rates.- Dealing with the need for introduction of a system of free international exchange at stable rates, discussed at the biennial congress, Sir Rahimtoola pointed out that a serious effort was made in 1936 under the Tripartite Monetary Agreement by the Governments of the United Kingdom, U.S.A., and France, and though a number of other countries adjusted their currency on the basis of that agreement, but that there are signs indicating renewed tension in the international monetary relations so far as parities are concerned. As long as uncertainty exists in world monetary conditions as to the future value of a currency, whether in terms of gold or some other leading currency, it would not encourage co-operation in international trade. So far as India is concerned, it is needless to point out that there can be no stable exchange with a deliberately overvalued currency. The recent tendencies of India's export trade are sure to give an anxious moment to any one seriously considering the position of India in world trade. India being a debtor country with no investments abroad to pay for her liabilities to the United Kingdom has mainly to depend upon her export trade with foreign countries. A situation is likely to arise in the near future when it will no longer be possible for this country to meet her liabilities abroad through her favourable balances arising out of her export trade. It is, therefore, necessary that India's currency policy should be reviewed to suit the new requirements of international trade. He also condemned the Government of India for permitting an

enormous amount of gold to be exported from the country.

Mr. Van Zeeland's Report.- Referring to Mr. Van Zeeland's report on quotas and other obstacles to international trade, Sir Rahimtoola remarked that though Mr. Van Zeeland may find many persons agreeing with him in principle on such questions as reduction in tariff, in practice most of the countries would not follow his advice. Economic nationalism has taken such deep root as the basis of economic policies of most of the countries of the world that there can be no longer any international free trade.

Office-bearers for 1938.- The following were elected office-bearers for 1938: President: Mr. Jamshed N.R.Mehta; Vice-President: Mr. Amritlal Ojha; Members: Sir Rahimtoola M. Chinoy, Sir Purshotandas Thakurdas, Messrs. G.D.Birla, Shri Ram, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Padampat Singhania, C.S.R. Mudaliar, Ramsaran Das, A.D. Shroff, Chunilal B. Mehta, J.C.Setalvad and M. Muhammad Ismail.

(The Hindustan Times, 2-4-1938. President's speech summarised from printed text supplied to this Office.)

(A copy of the presidential speech was forwarded to Geneva with our Minute D.1/606./38 dated 7-4-1938.)

Annual Meeting of Bombay Chamber of Commerce, for
1937-38. ✓

The annual general meeting for 1937-38 of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce was held at Bombay on 23-3-1938, with Mr. G.H. Cooke, the President of the Chamber, in the chair.

Summary of Presidential Address.- In his presidential address, Mr. Cooke said that in 1938 trade conditions are likely to be less favourable for India than in 1937. The falling away in the export and price of raw cotton as a result of the Sino-Japanese conflict and world over-production, is likely to affect the whole trade of Bombay Port and Bombay Presidency particularly.

Labour Legislation: (a) Recognition of Trade Unions.- Referring to labour legislation, he said that the Chamber was much exercised over the extensive labour legislation programme projected by the Government of Bombay. Regarding the question of recognition by employers of trade unions, which the local Government raised in September 1937, the Chamber conceded the desirability of building up responsible organisations of employees, provided such organisations were under the efficient ~~control of the workers themselves~~. But as this stage can only be reached gradually, the Chamber was of opinion that the existing Labour Officer system might advantageously be further developed in the meanwhile.

(b) Social Insurance Scheme.- Referring to the comprehensive system of social insurance, which in the first place would provide for leave with pay for workers during periods of sickness, which the local Government projected, he said that, after ~~examining~~ examining these proposals most carefully, the Chamber advised Government that in ~~their~~ their opinion the proposals were too comprehensive to be translated into immediate practical legislation and that both labour and industry must be given the opportunity of adjusting their position to new conditions arising out of each step of advancement in labour legislation, before further measures, the immediate results of which must inevitably tend to retard the scope of employment and the capacity of industry, were introduced. The Chamber stated, however, that of the proposals in view, it regarded sick leave with pay to be the most feasible and likely to be of the most benefit to labour. At the same time, it expressed the opinion that no scheme to which Government and the worker did not make a contribution would be administratively practicable.

Interim Report of Textile Committee.- Referring to the Interim Report recommending increased wages submitted by the Bombay Textile Inquiry Committee, he said that the Chamber was perturbed because decisions so vital, both to the scope for employment in the Province, and to the prosperity of Bombay's leading industry, were taken by Government upon the grounds set out in the report without at least the correction of the

mis-statement made regarding the reduction in the quota of Japanese piecegoods which has an important bearing on the conclusions reached by the Committee and adopted by Government. (See pages 16-19 of this report for views of other Employers' organisations on the Interim Report.)

Finally, defining the Chamber's attitude to progressive labour legislation, he said that it was always ready to lend support to all legislative measures tending to improve the lot of the worker, without permanently reducing the scope of his employment.

The Governor's Speech.- Sir Roger Lumley, the Governor of Bombay, who was present at the meeting, in his address referred to the labour policy of the Government of Bombay, and said:

Increased Wages means Increased Efficiency.- "Government realises, that the worker is dependent upon industry, and that it would be doing a poor service to labour if any legislation passed for his benefit lessens the field of employment or hinders the development of industry. This is an aspect of the problem which has not been lost sight of, but it has also to be remembered that industrial peace and a contented labour force are invaluable assets to all employers, counting for more, in the long run, than a reasonable increase in labour costs. The cost of labour in relation to the article produced is, within certain limits, a matter under the control of an employer and, although wages may be increased, it does not follow that labour costs need be increased in the same proportion. The effect may be to stimulate employers to obtain the highest possible value for the money they are paying to labour with the result that the individual worker gains and the employer does not lose."

Obligations of Workers.- "At the same time, labour must understand that higher individual wages may hasten the enforcement of efficiency schemes and rationalisation and a closer scrutiny of muster rolls. Employers cannot always pass on the extra cost to the consumer, especially when they are selling their production in fierce competition with factories in other parts of India where labour policy is not so enlightened as it is in Bombay."

Committee for 1938-39.- The following were elected to the Committee of the Chamber for 1938-39: Mr. R.W.Bullock, Mr. W.L. Clement, Mr. W.J.Cullen, Mr. S.Fuchsmann, Mr. R.C.Lowndes, Mr. R.Scherer, Mr. J.J.H. Walls.

(The Times of India, 24-3-1938.) ✓
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Progress of Trade Unionism in Orissa, 1936-37.* ✓

According to the annual report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, in the province of Orissa for the year ending 31-3-1937, the only trade union working at the end of the year in the province was the Rice Mill Labour Association, Rambha, with a membership of 18. No trade union was registered during the year under report, nor was there any case of refusal of registration of any trade union. No appeal was preferred in the Court against the orders of the Registrar of Trade Unions, and consequently no subsequent appeal was preferred in the High Court against the decision of the lower courts. There were no federations of trade unions in existence in the province, and there were no developments of interest relating to the trade union movement to report. Orissa was separated from Bihar, and constituted into a separate province on 1-4-1936. +

Progress of Trade Unionism in C.P. and Berar 1936-37.* ✓

The annual report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, for the year ending the 31st March 1937 in the Central Provinces and Berar shows that 16 trade unions and one Federation were on the rolls during the year. The total membership of all the unions at the beginning and end of the year stood at 7,348 (9,147 in the previous year) and 6,133 (10,815 in the previous year), respectively. No political fund was maintained by any of the registered trade unions. One new union and one federation of trade unions were registered during the year. The registration certificates of two unions were cancelled as the unions ceased to exist.

* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926 (XVI of 1926), in the Province of Orissa for the year ending 31st March 1937. - Press Officer, Govt. Press Orissa, Cuttack. 1937. - Price Annas 2. - pp.2

+ Govt. of the Central Provinces and Berar - Annual Report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926 for the year ending the 31st March 1937 - Nagpur: Govt. Printing, C.P. & Berar 1938. - Price Annas 6. - pp.7

No appeals were filed by the unions during the year under report against any decision of the Registrar. Government has decided to continue the free audit of accounts of ~~the~~ trade unions by the auditors of the Co-operative Department as a permanent measure. During the year, five unions availed themselves of this facility. The Registrar of Trade Unions was appointed Returning Officer for the newly constituted Trade Union Labour Constituency in which seven of the registered trade unions at Nagpur, including the Nagpur branch of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union, participated in voting for one seat in the Provincial Legislative Assembly.

Joint Session of A.I.T.U.C. and N.T.U.F. - Nagpur

17 and 18-4-1938: Restoration of Trade Union Unity. ✓

A joint Session of the All India Trade Union Congress and the National Trades Union Federation will be held at Nagpur on 17 and 18-4-1938; it is anticipated that the session will lead to unity being re-established in Indian trade union ranks. Mr. R.S. Ruiker is the Chairman, Messrs. R.W. Fulay and V.R. Kalappa, the Vice-Chairmen, and Mr. P.M. Naidu, the General Secretary, of the Reception Committee.

(The Indian Labour Journal, 6-3-1938.) +

Indian Motor Transport Workers' Union formed. ✓

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Calcutta Motor Transport Workers' Union held at Calcutta on 25-2-1938, it was resolved to extend the activities of the Union, to consolidate in one Union the various motor transport workers' associations and that the Calcutta Motor Transport Workers' Union should itself be merged in an Indian Motor Transport Workers' Union in order that the latter body might be in a position to speak for and represent the ^{motor transport workers of the country.} ~~country.~~ Mr. S.K. Banerjee, the President of the Calcutta Motor Transport Workers' Union, was elected President of the all-India Union. The office of the new Union is located at 195, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-3-1938.) +

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All India Kisan Committee:

Meetings at Haripura on 17, 18 and 20-2-1938. ✓

Meetings of the All-India Kisan Committee were held at Vithalnagar, Haripura (where this year's session of the Indian National Congress was held), on 17, 18 and 20-2-1938, under the presidentship of Prof. N.G.Ranga, to consider certain urgent problems of the Kisan (agricultural workers) movement.

The following are some of the more important resolutions adopted:

(1) No General No-Rent Campaign. - This Committee condemns the vicious propaganda carried on by a section of the press and the public accusing the Kisan Sabha and its leading workers of launching a general No-Rent campaign, especially in Bihar, U.P., G.P., and Surma Valley.

(2) Agrarian Income under Rs. 500/- per year to be exempt from Taxation. - This Committee reiterates the principles that, first, the amount required for maintaining the Kisan and his family in comfort should constitute the first charge on the product of his labour; second, rent and revenue should be assessed on an income tax basis, exempting minimum net incomes of Rs. 500 and less of Kisans from payment of any dues; and third, pending the adoption of laws and measures in fulfilment of these demands, Kisans will be fully justified in demanding exemptions from payment of rent and revenue, when these demands cannot be met except by selling their rights in land or by incurring debts or by cutting down their minimum maintenance charges.

(3) Liquidation of Landlordism without compensation. - This Committee is convinced on a review of the latest developments in the agrarian struggle that the liquidation of landlordism, involving the abolition of all systems of landlordism is the urgent and immediate task of the Kisan movement. It is further of opinion that no reform of tenancy laws can substantially alleviate the woes and oppression of the Kisans so long as vast areas of land remain vested in non-cultivating landlords. It therefore calls upon all Kisan Sabhas to concentrate their best attention on the abolition of all feudal systems of landlordism root and branch without paying any compensation.

(4) Cancellation of Debts. - This Committee deeply regrets that no adequate measures have been adopted since the inauguration of the new constitution in most of the provinces to declare a complete moratorium on agrarian indebtedness. Even in the provinces where the Congress is in office, this demand though embodied in the Faizpur agrarian programme, remains mostly unfulfilled because of the failure of the Congress Ministries to resist the opposition of vested interests. Debt relief and moratorium legislation as passed

by some of the Ministries is so halting and niggardly as to grant practically no relief from attachments and sale of lands, crops, cattle and other movable properties of the Kisans. The Committee authorises the President and Secretaries to fix an early date for the observance of an All India Kisan Debt Cancellation Day.

§ (5) Congress Attacks Condemned.- This Committee condemns the attacks levelled persistently at the Kisan Sabhas, by some responsible Congress leaders. It takes a serious view of such criticism emanating from Congress circles inasmuch as it constitutes a breach of the Karachi and Faizpur resolutions on recognition of peasant unions, and splits the United Front between anti-Imperialists in and outside the Indian National Congress. The Committee reiterates its resolve, even in face of this grave provocation, to support and strengthen all genuine anti-Imperialist struggles that might be carried on by the Congress with a view to build up a United Front and develop the struggle for the National Democratic Revolution.

(The Comrade, Calcutta, 5-3-1938.) +

Labour Programme of Congress: Organising
Workers through Gandhi Seva Sangh: Discarding
of Class War Ideology. +

At the Conference of the Gandhi Seva Sangh held at Delang, Berboi, Orissa, from 25 to 27-3-1938, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a prominent Congress leader and a member of the Sangh, sponsored a scheme for organisation of Indian workers under Congress auspices through the Gandhi Seva Sangh and for Congress mediation in industrial disputes. The main features of the Gandhi Seva Sangh's scheme are given below.

Copying Ahmedabad Model.- The success of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association founded by Mahatma Gandhi, with the working of which Sardar Patel has close acquaintance, is understood to have led him to adopt this Association as the model of similar Associations to be formed all over the country under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Although the activities of the Sangh since its inception have been mainly concentrated on the propagation of Khadi (hand-woven cloth), it may be pointed out that there is nothing in its constitution preventing extension of activities in other spheres. In November 1937, the Sangh decided to take up the question of labour and with this purpose set up a Labour Committee for studying labour problems at various labour centres. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is the President of the Committee, and Messrs. Jairamdas Doulatram and Shankerlal Banker, its secretaries.

Formation of New Labour Unions.- One of the first steps in the labour programme of the Sangh will be to establish Labour Unions on the model of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association, wherever labour is unorganised (For a description of the methods of work of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association see Whitley Report pages 336-337). The next move, will be to approach the existing trade union organisations for cooperation and co-ordination of activities. According to the special Correspondent of the Amrita Bazar Patrika at Berboi, in the event of hostility being shown by existing unions under non-Congress or Communist influence, the Sangh may not hesitate to establish its own unions.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24 to 27-3-38).

Sardar Patel against Class War Ideology.- The following information about the policy and methods of work of the new Labour Unions is taken from an interview given on 29-3-1938 by Sardar Patel to the Associated Press of India.

Difference in Outlook.- Sardar Patel pointed out that while the basic policy of the A.I.T.U.C. was class war, the Labour Unions proposed to be organised by the Gandhi Seva Sangh would be on the lines of the Ahmedabad Labour Association, in which the idea of class war was excluded and emphasis was laid on truth and non-violence. The new organisation would lay great emphasis also on these principles and strive for a peaceful solution of all labour troubles. It would not rule out strikes, but would regard strike as a last resort and would be definitely opposed to sporadic strikes.

Method of Work.- Workers belonging to the Gandhi Seva Sangh will undergo training for about six months. They will be given a good grounding in economics, particularly labour economics, and will also get practical experience for the same period in the Ahmedabad Labour Union, after which they will take up the work of organising labour with confidence and in right earnest. The idea is to begin with cotton textile labour, but when a sufficiently large number of workers are trained they might extend their activities to other sides of labour such as docks, jute and mines. The workers are expected to be life workers attached to the Sangh. They will place truth and non-violence in the forefront of their activities and work for a peaceful solution of labour troubles.

Agricultural Workers.- Turning to kisans (agricultural workers), Mr. Patel said that the Congress was really the biggest organisation for them. In a predominantly agricultural country like India, increase in Congress membership necessarily meant increase in kisan representation in the Congress. No other possibility was open. The kisans therefore did not need a separate organisation. The Congress itself was their biggest union.

(The Hindustan Times, 30-3-38). +

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Intellectual Workers.

Improvement of Service Conditions of Journalists:
16th Annual General Meeting of Indian Jour-
nalists' Association, Calcutta. †

The 16th annual general meeting of the Indian Journalists' Association, Calcutta, was held at Calcutta on 20-3-1938, with Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose, President of the Association, in the Chair.

Conditions of Service of Working Journalists.- Mr. Bose, in his presidential address, referred to the insistent need for improving the conditions of service of working journalists in respect of salary, hours of work, leave rules, holidays, provident fund benefits, etc. He referred, in this connection, to the agreements entered into by the National Union of Journalists, Great Britain, and various newspaper employers' associations in that country (agreement of 16-3-1921 between the Union and the Newspaper Proprietors' Association; agreement of 31-3-1921 between the Union and the Press Association, Ltd., The Central News, Ltd., and the Exchange Telegraph Co. Ltd.; ~~agreements of 15-3-1929 and 18-5-1931 between the Union and the Newspaper Society, Ltd~~), pointed out that these agreements, taking due note of changing conditions, secured for working journalists' decent scale of salaries and fair conditions of service, and urged that collective agreements on similar lines should be promoted in India. He also referred to the Journalists' Benefit Fund, which is to be the nucleus of a substantial fund to afford benefit in case of death, sickness and unemployment, maintained by the Association, and appealed for greater support for the Fund.

Office-Bearers for 1938-1939.- President: Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee. Vice-Presidents: Sjts. (1) Sj. Mrinal Kanti Bose, Tushar Kanti Ghose, Prafulla Kumar Sarkar, Sachindra Prosad Bose, Kishoreee Mohan Banerjee, and Maulana Md. Akram Khan. Secretary: Sj. Bidhu Bhsan Sen Gupta of the "United Press."

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-3-38) †

U.P. Jails Reforms Committee. ✓

The Government of the United Provinces have appointed in March 1938 a U.P. Jails Reforms Committee of eleven members with Mr. Gopi Nath Srivastava, Parliamentary Secretary, as Chairman, and the Judicial Secretary to the U.P. Government as Secretary. The subjects coming under the purview of the Committee include, among others, superintendence and staff, classification of prisoners, prison labour and manufacture, offences and punishment, reformatory influences, hygiene and medical administration, and general conditions. The Committee is to report by 15th April 1938.

(Summarised from a Press Statement dated 2-3-1938 issued by the Director of Public Information, United Provinces.) +

The Bihar Prohibition Bill, 1938. ✓

The Government of Bihar has introduced in the current session of the Bihar Legislative Assembly, the Bihar Prohibition Bill, 1938, which seeks to implement Government's policy in regard to the prohibition of liquor, tari and intoxicating drugs.

The Bill is modelled on the corresponding legislation recently enacted by the Madras legislature. It gives Government authority to introduce prohibition in selected areas of one or more excisable articles, with power to extend it to other areas ~~and in respect of all such articles as time and experience enable such extensions to be made.~~ It penalizes all traffic and consumption of liquor, tari and intoxicating drugs, but provides:- (i) for the exemption of rectified spirit or drugs required for medical, scientific and industrial purposes; (ii) the grant of personal permits to those who in the opinion of Government may be specially exempted and permitted to keep and consume liquor or drugs; (iii) the issue of licenses to clubs and other institutions to possess liquor and issue it to its members; and (iv) for the exemption in regard to the liquor required for bona fide religious purposes. The concession referred to in (ii) and (iii) will be made only in very exceptional circumstances.

The Bill makes provision not only for the effective prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution of offences against the Act, but also for the collaboration of anti-drink committees and honorary workers with the officers charged with

the duty of controlling the administration of the Act.

(Summarised from text of the Bihar Prohibition Bill, 1938, published at pages 112-144 of Part V of the Bihar Gazette dated 9-3-1938.) ✓

Prohibition in Ahmedabad from 20-5-1938:

Co-operation of Textile Labour Association. ✓

The Whitley Commission had recommended that in all large cities and industrial areas a general policy of restricting the facilities for the sale of liquor should be adopted. Further, the new Congress Ministries have adopted a general scheme of prohibition as part of their social programme for the country. As a preliminary to the introduction of total prohibition, the Bombay Government has declared that after 20-5-1938 prohibition ~~should~~ be enforced in Ahmedabad (cantonment, municipal area, and 27 adjacent villages).

Co-operation of Textile Labour Association.- At present in Ahmedabad there are 18 country liquor shops, one in the Cantonment, and 17 within Ahmedabad municipal limits. There are also about 7 opium shops, two toddy shops, 5 foreign liquor shops, 2 hotels, and 4 bars where wine is served. All these will not be allowed to sell liquor after 20-5-1938. To make the prohibition scheme a complete success the authorities are in close touch with the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association. It is understood that the Textile Labour Association intends to use the existing country liquor shops as shops for the sale of tea, milk, bhajias, curd, ice-cream, etc. In addition, the local authorities have recruited a strong preventive staff, including 25 'women searchers', to enforce prohibition. The fact that both Hindu and Muslim sentiment is against the drink habit and that Mahatma Gandhi is keen on prohibition will, it is expected, make the prohibition experiment a success.

(The Times of India, 22-3-1938). ✓

The C.P. and Berar Prohibition Act, 1938:
Application to certain Industrial Areas as from 1-4-38. ✓

The Central Provinces and Berar Prohibition Act, 1938, received the assent of the Governor on 24-3-1938. The Act applies to the whole of C.P. and Berar, but in the first instance, it shall come into force as from 1-4-1938 in selected areas of the province, namely, Saugor District, Narsinghpur Sub-Division, Akot Taluq, (Akola district), the towns of Hinganghat, Bandera, and Katnimurwara, (all ~~three~~ industrial areas), in which except for sacramental, medicinal, scientific and industrial purposes traffic in liquor will be prohibited, including its manufacture, sale and consumption. There are also provisions in the Act for the formation of anti-drink committees, which will assist the authorities in enforcing the law and carrying on propaganda.

(The text of the Act is published at pages 418-437 of Part III of the C.P. and Berar Gazette dated 25-3-1938). +

Public Health.
Health of Calcutta Students:
Report for 1936-37 of Students' Welfare Committee,
Calcutta University. ✓ +

The following information about health conditions of students in Calcutta is taken from the report for 1936-37 of the Students' Welfare Committee set up by the Calcutta University.

Incidence of Defects.- The medical board attached to the Committee visited nine institutions during the year 1936, and examined the health of 2,205 students. This brings the total number of students examined till 31st December, 1936 to 34,266. The proportion of students found to be suffering from defects requiring immediate attention was 53.6 as compared with 63 p.c. for 1935 and 56 p.c. for 1934. The following table gives an analysis of the findings of the medical examination.

General Defects Chart.

Names of diseases.	Figures for college students. (350 students) in p.c.	Figures for school students (1768 students) in p.c.
Defective vision.	29.8	33.4
Malnutrition.	32.5	36.0
Enlarged Tonsils.	7.5	14.7
Caries (Dental).	9.5	12.3
Skin diseases.	9.8	9.5
Lung disease.	4.9	3.0
Enlarged Liver.	2.6	7.2
Enlarged Spleen.	3.27	1.7
Pyorrhoea.	0.65	0.11
Heart disease.	2.95	3.11

Malnutrition.- There has been a decline in the incidence of diseases under all heads except malnutrition and heart disease. The slight increase in the incidence of malnutrition and heart disease, among both the college and school students, can partly be explained by the fact that a larger number of schools which draw their students from families "carrying on with difficulty or with just enough for subsistence", were visited during the year.

Determining Food Values.- A scheme for determining the food values of Bengali cooked dishes was initiated in August 1937, to help the Committee in devising suitable dietaries for the Bengalee student. This work is being conducted under the direct supervision of Dr. Bireschandra Guha, D.Sc.(Cantab), Sir Rashbehary Ghose Professor of Applied Chemistry.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika,
16-3-1938).. +

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Women and Children.

6th Biennial Conference of National Council
of Women in India, Delhi, 7, 8 & 9-3-38. ✓

The 6th Biennial Conference of the National Council of Women in India was held at Delhi on 7, 8 & 9-3-1938, Mrs. Brijlal Nehru presiding.

Secretary's Report.- The report presented by Mrs. Keron Bose, the Secretary, dealt among other subjects, with the work of the Legislation Committee, the Standing Committee on Education, the Standing Committee on Food Enquiry, the Child Welfare Committee and the Art Committee of the N.C.W.I.

Education Committee.- The Education Committee, in suggesting careers for women, has suggested physical training, nursing, training in beauty culture and dentistry as providing good openings. The Committee also studied with interest the proposals made at the Wardha Conference (vide pages 73-75 of our October 1937 Report) on the subject of reforms in education urging compulsory primary education and vocational training to be introduced on a large scale, and was of opinion that the suggested reforms should be introduced speedily.

Food Committee.- The Standing Committee on Food Enquiry studied the problem of nutrition in relation to the cost of a balanced diet. The Committee has found that there is enough evidence that malnutrition and food deficiency are widespread throughout India. The Committee is of opinion that although some of the malnutrition apparent is due to ignorance, the chief factor responsible for it is poverty and it can only be remedied by raising the standard of living. The most important problem facing those who wish to improve nutrition is how to improve the production of food stuffs and the quality of milk without increasing the price of these necessaries of life. The Food Committee's report included three samples of balanced vegetarian diets. The first diet was for people of means and cost about Rs. 20 per month. The second diet cost from Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 per month and had to be balanced by using skimmed milk powder, rice polishings and oil cakes. In the third diet soya beans had to be added to the substances used in the second diet, and the cost was about Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 a month.

Resolutions Adopted.- The Conference adopted resolutions: (1) appreciating the steps taken by the Government of India regarding the problem of health and nutrition, and urging that the Government keep the following purposes in view: to promote a good and cheap supply of milk, to ensure the supply of hand pounded rice in all markets, to increase the production of green

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vegetables and to wage a campaign against all adulterated foodstuffs; (2) urging the Government to provide a Maternity and Child Welfare Service as part of their public health service; (3) recommending that to further the cause of women's education it was necessary to include women representatives on the various education committees and boards.

(The Hindustan Times, 8 to 10-3-38, and the Statesman, 10-3-1938). +

Hours of Work of Indian Seamen: Views
of Bombay Chamber of Commerce.

In December 1937 the Shipping Master, Bombay, requested the views of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce in regard to the Draft Convention concerning the question of "Hours of Work on board Ship and Manning", which was adopted by the 21st (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference held at Geneva in October 1936.

After referring the matter to the Shipping and Export Sub-Committee, the Committee advised the Shipping Master that they saw no objections to the proposals.

(Excerpts from the Proceedings of
the Bombay Chamber of Commerce
during January 1938.)

(The proposals of the Government of India on the subject and the views of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce are given at pages 40-41 of the report of this Office for February 1938.)

Minimum Pay of Rs. 50/- per month:

Bombay Seamen's Demands.

A meeting of the seamen of Bombay was held at Bombay on 20-3-1938 when several demands relating to the improvement of conditions of work of the seamen of the Presidency were formulated. Among others, resolutions were passed formulating the following demands:

(1) Seamen's Recruiting Bureau and Advisory Committees.- That the Government of India should, in view of the bribery rampant in the present system of recruitment of seamen, set up without delay Advisory Committees, along with the establishment of the Seamen's Recruiting Bureau recommended by the International Labour Conference

(2) Bombay Lines to Recruit Bombay Seamen.- That the Government of Bombay should bring pressure to bear on the British India and other shipping lines of Bombay to recruit seamen from the port of Bombay in all ships that sail from Bombay, and thus place

the seamen of Bombay on an equal footing with the seamen of Calcutta in this respect.

(3) Regulation of Hours of Work:Overtime Pay.- That the Government of India should take early steps to regulate hours of work of seamen and to make necessary provisions compelling the shipowners to pay seamen extra remuneration for overtime worked by them.

(4) Minimum Wage of Rs. 50/- per month.- That the Government of India should recognise the need for fixing a minimum wage for Indian seamen, and that the minimum wage should be fixed at not less than Rs. 50/- per month.

Among the labour leaders who addressed the meeting in support of these demands were Mr. S.V.Parulekar, M.L.A. (Servants of India Society) and Mr. Dinkar Desai (S_ervants of India Society).

(The Bombay Chronicle, 24-3-1938)+

Standing Committee

to advise Government of India Labour Department.

The following non-official Members of the Indian Legislature have been elected by the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects with which the Department of Labour is concerned:

(1) The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir K. Ramunni Menon (Council of State), (2) The Honourable Khan Bahadur Syed Ihtisham Hyder Chaudhury (Council of State), (3) Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer (Legislative Assembly), (4) Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya (Legislative Assembly), and (5) Mr. N.M.Joshi (Legislative Assembly).

(Notification No. G.101 dated 9-3-1938 of the Department of Labour, Government of India, published at page 308, Part I, Gazette of India, dated 12-3-1938.) ✓