

120
C1903/35

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE.
INDIAN BRANCH.

Report for October, 1931.

	<u>Contents.</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1.	<u>References to the I.L.O.</u>	1 - 7
2.	<u>India and Geneva Conventions.</u>	
	(a) India and the Recommendation re Prevention of Industrial Accidents.	8 - 10
	(b) Resolution re Draft Convention on Forced Labour.	10 - 14
	(c) Resolution re Draft Convention on Hours of Work in Commercial Offices, etc.	14 - 15
	(d) The Council of State and Geneva Conventions.	16
3.	<u>National Labour Legislation.</u>	
	(a) The C.P. Workmen's Welfare Bill, 1931.	17
	(b) The Bengal Mining Settlement Amendment Act, 1931.	18 - 20
4.	<u>Conditions of Labour.</u>	
	(a) Wages in Burmese Rice Milling Industry.	21 - 24
	(b) Conciliation Committees in Bombay Mills.	25
	(c) Economy Measures in Tata Iron and Steel Co.: General Manager's Statement.	26
	(d) Postponement of Application of Hours Convention to Railways.	27 - 28
	(e) Retrenchment on Railways: Proceedings of Court of Enquiry.	29 - 30
	(f) Proposal to retrench 10,000 railwaymen: Federation meets Railway Board.	30 - 33
	(g) Labour News in Brief.	34 - 35
5.	<u>Industrial Organisation.</u>	
	<u>Employers' Organisation.</u>	
	28th Session of A.I. Railway Conference, 1931.	36 - 37
	<u>Workers' Organisation.</u>	
	(a) 11th Session of A.I. Postal and R.M.S. Conference, Delhi, 1931.	38 - 39
	(b) Trade Union Movement in Burma, 1930-31.	40 - 42
	(c) Secessions from A.I. Postal Union.	43 - 44
	(d) Efforts at Trade Union Unity: Meeting of Madras Sub-Committee.	45
	(e) All India Trade Union Congress Council.	45

Co-operation.

Progress of the Co-operative Movement in India, 1929-30*

The following information regarding the progress of the Co-operative movement in India during 1929-30 is taken from the Statistical Statements relating to the Co-operative Movement in India during the year 1929-30 published by the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics of the Government of India.

The principal types of co-operative societies in India are (a) Central Unions (including Provincial and Central Banks and Banking Unions), (b) Supervising and Guaranteeing Unions (including Re-insurance Societies), (c) Agricultural Societies (including Cattle Insurance Societies), and (d) Non-Agricultural Societies (including Insurance Societies). The number of societies of all kinds increased from 96,091 in 1927-28 and 100,150 in 1928-29 to 104,187 during 1929-30. The number of societies per 100,000 inhabitants rose from 34.9 in 1928-29 to 36.2 in British India and from 43.3 to 45.7 in the Indian States for which figures are given. The total number of members of primary societies in India rose from 3,780,173 in 1927-28 and 4,002,197 in 1928-29 to 4,181,904 in the year under review. The number of members of primary societies per 1,000 inhabitants rose from 14.0 in 1928-29 to 14.6 in 1929-30 in British India and from 16.5 to 17.6 in the nine Indian States, and from 14.3 to 15.0 for the whole of India. The Working Capital for all India rose from Rs. 767,087,000 in 1928-29 and Rs. 826,896,000 in 1928-29 to Rs. 895,178,000 during the year under review. The Working

* Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, India. - Statistical Statements relating to the Co-operative Movement in India during the year 1929-30 - Published by order of the Governor-General in Council. - Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch-1931 Price Re.1 or 1s.9d.- pp.21.

Capital of Co-operative Societies expressed in terms of annas per head of the population rose from 49 in 1928-29 to 53 in 1929-30 in British India and from 33 to 36 in the nine Indian States for which statistics are given and from 47 to 51 in the whole of India.

The financial position of all classes of Societies seems to be sound. In 1929-30, 588 Provincial and Central Banks with a membership of 89,956 individuals and 101,399 societies had reserve funds amounting to Rs.17,602,430, working capital amounting to Rs.309,022,374 and a profit of Rs. 5,127,690. The corresponding figures for agricultural and non-agricultural societies are equally impressive. In 1929-30, 91,786 agricultural societies with a membership of 3,117,627 had reserve funds amounting to Rs.58,438,980, working capital amounting to ~~Rx~~ ~~Rxxx549,980~~ Rs. 349,312,049 and profits amounting to 12,637,990. Similarly, in the case of non-agricultural societies, 10,255 societies with a membership of 1,059,048, had reserve funds amounting to Rs. 13,314,040, working capital amounting to Rs.150,644,304 and profits amounting to Rs. 5,614,787.

(The progress of the cooperative movement in India during 1927-28 is reviewed at pages 56 to 57 of the report of this Office for September 1929).

B. & O. Committee on Co-operation.

The Government of Bihar and Orissa has recently appointed (Resolution No.605 D.R. dated 28-9-31 of the Ministry of Education) a Committee to review the present condition of co-operative institutions and to make recommendations for the improvement of co-operation in the

HK.
province. Mr. John Austen Hubback, M.A.(Cantab), ~~xxxx~~, is the President and Mr. Hassanand Radha Krishna Batheja, M.A.(Oxon), I.E.S., is the Member-Secretary. The Resolution states:-

"A considerable period has elapsed since the working of the Co-operative Department was examined by the Lyall Committee in 1923. During this interval, there has been a wide expansion of the activities carried on by the Department. The Royal Commission on Agriculture in India have recommended that Committees should be appointed by local Governments from time to time to enquire into the working of the movement so that defects may be brought to light and progress on sound lines ensured. The Bihar and Orissa Banking Enquiry Committee also emphasised in their report the need for a Committee on co-operation. Government in the Ministry of Education are accordingly pleased to appoint a Committee on co-operation in Bihar and Orissa.

(Supplement to the Bihar and Orissa

Gazette, 9-9-31. No.36. page 954).

	<u>Pages.</u>
6. <u>Intellectual Workers.</u>	
(a) Medical Council for India. 	46 - 47
(b) Salary Cuts: Protests of Employees' Organisations	48 - 50
7. <u>Economic Conditions.</u>	
(a) The C.P. Money Lenders' Bill, 1931. ...	51 - 53
(b) Emergency Budget of Government of India; Cuts in Salaries. 	53 - 55
(c) Agrarian Unrest in U.P. 	55 - 57
8. <u>Social Conditions.</u>	
1931 Census of India - Revised Figures. ...	58 - 60
9. <u>Public Health.</u>	
(a) Ahmedabad Industrial Housing Scheme: Resolution before Municipality. ...	61 - 62
(b) Health Conditions in Jharia Coal Mines, 1930-31.	62 - 65
(c) Bogipalayam Housing Scheme, Madras. ...	66 - 68
(d) Man Housing of Mill Operatives, Ahmedabad.	68 - 70
10. <u>Co-operation.</u>	
(a) Progress of Co-operation in India, 1929-30.	71 - 72
(b) B. & O. Committee on Co-operation. ...	72 - 73
11. <u>Women and Children.</u>	
(a) 6th Madras Women's Conference, 1931. ...	74 - 75
(b) Creches in Factories in Bombay Presidency.	75
12. <u>Education.</u>	
(a) Industrial Education in Madras Presidency, 1930-31.	76-78
(b) Two Bills to amend Bombay Primary Education Acts.	79
(c) Adult Education Scheme, Bombay. ...	80
(d) Vocational Education in Municipal Schools, Poona.	80 - 81
(e) Amendment of Elementary Education Act, Madras.	81 - 83
13. <u>Maritime Affairs.</u>	
(a) Administration of Bombay Port Trust, 1930-31.	84- 85
(b) Indian Seamen's Grievances: Representation to Government of India. 	86 - 88
(c) Indian Seamen's Union, Calcutta, 1930-31.	88 - 89
(d) The Bombay Port Trust Employees' Union, 1930-31.	89

References to the I.L.O.

The Simla Session of the Legislative Assembly took up for discussion on 2-10-1931 the Recommendation of the 1929 I.L. Conference re: Prevention of Industrial Accidents. The full text of the debates extracted from the Legislative Assembly Debates of 2-10-1931 (Vol. VI, No.8) is given at pages 8 — 10 of this report.

A short summary of the Assembly debate on the question is published in the Hindu of 2-10-1931.

The Council of State took up the above question for consideration on 5-10-1931. A summary of the Council of States debate on the question is published by the Hindu of 5-10-1931 and the Times of India and the Pioneer of 7-10-1931.

...

The Assembly took up for discussion on 3-10-1931 the resolution of Sir James Crerar (Home Member to the Government of India) recommending non-ratification by India of the Draft Convention on Forced or Compulsory Labour, adopted by the 14th I.L. Conference. The original resolution was modified by Mr. B. Das's amendment (see page 12 of this report) was adopted by the House.

A summary of the debate on the question in the Assembly is given at pages 10 — 14 of this report).

Summaries of the debate on the question were published in the Hindu of 4-10-1931, the Times of India of 5-10-1931 and the Labour Gazette, Bombay, of October 1931 (Vol. XI, No.2).

The Council of State took up the above question for debate on 5-10-1931. The full text of the debate in the Council of State is published in the Council of State Debates of 5-10-1931 (Vol. II, No.9).

A summary of the debate in the Council of State is given at page 16 of this report.

... ..

The Legislative Assembly took up for further discussion on 3-10-1931 and adopted Mr. J.A. Shillidy's resolution recommending non-ratification of the Draft Convention Regulating Hours of Work in Offices, Hotels, etc.

(A summary of the debate on the question in the Assembly is given at pages 14-15 of this report).

... ..

In the course of the debates in the Legislative Assembly on 3-10-1931 on the Conventions re: Forced Labour and Regulation of Hours of Work in Commercial Offices, etc., Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions, Muhammadan Rural) made an attack on the League of Nations and the I.L.O.

The full text of Mr. Ziauddin Ahmad's speeches is published at pages 1518-1520 and 1527-1528 of the Legislative Assembly Debates of 3-10-1931 (Vol. VI, No.9).

... ..

The Pioneer of 31-10-1931 publishes a news item to the effect that the Government of India have received intimation from Geneva that the meeting of the Tripartite Technical Advisory Committee on Maritime Questions has been postponed indefinitely.

... ..

The Hindu of 21-10-1931 publishes a brief message from its London correspondent to the effect that the I.L.O. proposes to hold an

Asiatic Labour Conference despite Japan's protest.

The Hindustan Times of 23-10-1931 also publishes a more detailed account of the proposal to hold an Asiatic Labour Conference, sent to it by its London correspondent.

... ..

The Hindu of 20-10-1931 and the Pioneer of 21-10-1931 publish a special cable from Geneva to the effect that a proposal by the Workers' group for an unofficial conference to discuss ^athe 40-hour week was defeated at the last meeting of the Governing Body.

... ..

A communiqué issued by this Office on the questionnaire on the Age of Admission of Children to non-Industrial Occupations was published in the Hindu of 7-10-1931, the Pioneer of 8-10-1931 and the Hindustan Times of 9-10-1931.

Copies of the communique have been sent to Geneva with this Office's minute H2/1200/31, dated 8-10-1931.

... ..

The November 1931 issue of the New World, (Vol. I, No.1) a new monthly edited by Diwan Chaman Lall, publishes at pages 14-17, an article under the caption "The Workers' Cause: A New Social Order, Justice and Equality", contributed by the Director of this Office.

The article is written as a reply to the criticisms levelled against the I.L.O. by Mr. Walchand Hirachand, Employers' delegate to the 15th I.L.Conference.

(For summary of Mr. Walchand Hirachand's criticisms see pages 2-3 of the August 1931 report of this Office).

Volume II of the Report of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for the year 1930 publishes at pages 255-303 the replies sent by the Chamber to the Government of India forwarding their views on all the questionnaires issued by the 13th I.L. Conference, as also on the question of India ratifying the Conventions concerning Seamen's Articles of Agreement, Protection of Workers employed in Loading and Unloading Ships, and the Marking of Weights on Heavy Packages.

Pages 46-64 of Volume II of the Report of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce for the year 1930 contains the replies sent to the Government by the Chamber giving the Chamber's views on the questionnaires issued by the 13th I.L. Conference on the Protection of Seamen in case of Sickness and the Regulation of Hours of Work on Board Ship.

... ..

The September 1931 issue of the Labour Gazette, Bombay (Vol.XI, No.1) reproduces at pages 49-50, the note on the I.L.O. Mission to China under the caption "Factory Inspection in China: International Labour Office Mission", originally published in "Industrial and Labour Information" of 24-8-1931, (Vol. XXXIX, No.8).

... ..

The October 1931 issue of the Labour Gazette, Bombay (Vol. XI, No.2) reproduces at pages 149-152 the full text of the resolution and recommendation adopted by the Fourth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, held at Geneva in 1931, which was originally published in the July 1931 issue of the International Labour Review.

... ..

The October 1931 issue of the Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur, (Vol. IX, No.1) in a note published at page 13, draws attention to

the postponement by the Government of India of the extension of the application of the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1930, and the Railway Servants' Hours of Employment Rules, 1930, (vide pages 9 to 15 of our January 1930 report) to Indian Railways other than the North Western and the East Indian Railways in both or which ^{they have} ~~it has~~ already been applied. The paper makes the following comment on this decision of the Government:-

"It may be pointed out that Washington Hours and Geneva Weekly Rest Conventions do not admit financial stringency as one of the valid grounds for non-enforcement of the ratified conventions. The effect of the present decision is to allow the budget grant of Rs. 2 millions sanctioned for the current year for the purpose of enforcing the Conventions on all the Railways, to lapse and this is not the first year in which the sanctioned grants have been allowed to lapse in this manner. How can the workers have confidence in the bona fides of the Government when, repeatedly alleging some reason or other, they have been postponing the application of the Conventions for over a decade?"

Reference to the postponement of the application of the Act and the Rules is also made in the memorandum submitted by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation to the Railway Court of Enquiry on behalf of the M. and S.M. Railway Union. The memorandum says:-

"The postponement of the application of Washington and Geneva Conventions owing to retrenchment is wholly unjust when regard is had to the fact that the question is now ten years old. We do not admit that the total number of additional men required when the Conventions are put into force will be 591 only. According to our estimates, the number will be in the neighbourhood of 2,500 additional men. Retrenchment has therefore worked as a hardship on the surplus men who could have been easily absorbed in the new posts created for the enforcement of the International Conventions".

The memorandum is published in the October 1931 issue of the M. & S.M. Railway Man (Vol. 3, No.4).

... ..

~~The~~ Indian Finance, Calcutta, of 31-10-1931 (Vol.VIII, No.17), publishes at pages 613-614 a review of the recent I.L.O. publication "International Labour Organisation - The First Decade". The review

was contributed by the Director of this Office.

(A cutting of the Review was sent to Geneva with this Office's minute E.la/1300/31, of 5-11-1931).

... ..

The September 1931 issue of the E.B.Railway Labour Review (Vol.IV No.33) reproduces at pages 19-22 an article under the caption "An Englishman's Impression of the Whitley Report", originally published in the "People", Lahore. In the course of the article, the writer pays a tribute to the work of the I.L.O. in stimulating the conscience of the world in the matter of doing social justice to the workers.

He says:-

"In reading the Report the Englishman's mind is thrown back a hundred years, and often more. Shocking as some of the existing conditions in India are, especially when compared with the situation in this country, ^(England) it is well to remember that a century ago conditions were nearly as bad here, ^{and} as in many ~~respects~~ respects quite as bad, and that it has taken decades of hard and heroic fighting in the field of Trade Unionism, and also of politics, to get rid of the worst evils. India will have to travel much the same road, except that by virtue of what has been accomplished in the more advanced industrial countries and of the stimulus of the conscience of the whole world on these matters, aided by the work of the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, progress will be much more rapid in countries like India which have only latterly entered the field of centralised and mechanised industry".

... ..

The article contributed by Mr. ~~John~~ John Cliff, Member, Royal Commission on Labour, under the caption "The Workers of India: How the I.L.O. might Help the East", to the August 1931 issue of Headway (Vol. XIII, No.8) is reproduced in the October 1931 issue of the Indian Post, Delhi, (Vol. II, No.10). Copies of the article were supplied to the more important of the Indian newspapers and labour journals by this Office. (For list of other papers which have published the article, vide page 1 of our August 1931 report and page 1

of our September 1931 Report.)

... ..

The Government of India recently published the Report of the delegates of the Government of India to the 15th I.L. Conference as Bulletin No.47 in their Bulletins of Indian Industries and Labour Series. (A copy of the Bulletin was forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute D 1/1297/31, dated 5-11-1931.)

8

India and Geneva Conventions.

India and the Recommendation re: Prevention of Industrial Accidents.

The following extracts are taken from the Indian Legislative Assembly Debates of 2-10-31:-

Mr. J. A. Shillidy (Secretary, Industries and Labour Department): - Sir, on the 7th July 1930, a Resolution moved on behalf of Government was adopted by this House recommending that the Governor General in Council should examine the possibility of giving effect to the Recommendation concerning the prevention of industrial accidents adopted by the Twelfth International Labour Conference, 1929, and that the results of this examination should be placed before this House within 18 months from that date.

In pursuance of this Resolution a letter was addressed to all the major Local Governments and the Chief Commissioner of Delhi asking for their views. The replies have now been received, in the light of which the Government of India have undertaken a further examination of this Recommendation.

While there is a general agreement with the principle underlying the Recommendation, there is considerable criticism of the details. The Recommendation is divided into four parts and comprises no less than 23 Articles covering a very wide field of activities. The preamble to the Recommendation extends its application "to agriculture, taking into account the special conditions of agricultural work". The general view of Local Governments, with which the Government of India are in agreement, is that in some respects the Recommendation goes beyond ~~in~~ what is possible or necessary in the existing stage of industrial development of the country. In particular it is considered that, even with the proviso contained in the preamble, the application of this Recommendation in any form to agriculture, would be inoperative in practice. The use of machinery in agricultural operations is in its infancy throughout India and it would be impossible to take any effective action which would ensure that legislative or administrative orders were carried out. Moreover, it is pointed out that both Parts I and II of the Recommendation presuppose an amount of co-ordination and co-operation between the three parties concerned, namely, Government, the employer and the employee which cannot be expected in existing Indian conditions. Labour in this country is still to a large extent migratory, illiterate and insufficiently organised to be able to undertake the various duties which are implicitly required of it by the Recommendation. In addition, there are certain proposals, particularly those relating to industrial accident insurance, psychological and physiological research, which postulate the existence of organisations and agencies which are either non-existent or still imperfectly developed.

On the other hand, the replies from Local Governments indicate that many of the items in the Recommendation are already in operation

in varying degrees and that, in certain directions, further progress is possible and desirable. Indeed, many of the details involved in the Recommendation also find mention in the report of the Royal Commission on Labour. Thus, although the terms of the Recommendation cannot be accepted as immediately practicable, they may be regarded as forming a standard which employers, employees and inspecting authorities may gradually work up to in the future. Of the four parts into which the Recommendation is divided, Part III dealing with the legislation which each State Member should undertake is the only one on which definite action can be taken by Government. For the remaining parts, Government are dependent on persuasion and must first secure the co-operation of private organisations and associations. So far as legislation is concerned, Government are anxious that it should not be undertaken piece-meal. The Royal Commission on Labour have examined the working of the Factories Act and the Mines Act which are the principal Acts concerned and have made recommendations for their amendment and revision including proposals for industrial safety. The Recommendation of the International Labour Conference will need to be re-examined in the light of the Report of the Royal Commission in Labour, which has only lately ~~been published~~ been published. The examination of the Report is at present being pursued, but until this is completed, Government will obviously not be in a position to take any action. It may also be mentioned that the last reply from a Local Government to the Government of India's circular letter regarding this Recommendation was received only towards the end of June last, and, in view of the numerous criticisms of the details, the time available has been inadequate for arriving at any definite conclusions. As the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour covers the same ground as the Recommendation, the Government of India proposes to proceed with the consideration of the latter simultaneously with the former and to give effect to it so far as may be practicable.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division; Non-Muhammadan): Do I take it that the Government of India, in the light of their examination of the Labour Commission's Report and also these Recommendations, will themselves bring forward legislation without our applying pressure on the Government?

Mr. J. A. Shillidy: I think I explained once before in answer to a question that there were a great many of these Recommendations of the Labour Commission, the decision on which would rest with the Local Governments. There were other matters in regard to which either the Local Governments or the Central Government could take action by executive order. As regards the legislation which the Honourable Member refers to, we are at present engaged in examining the recommendations of the Labour Commission. Some of these recommendations as I said will have to go to Local Governments. There are other recommendations which we have previously examined, the results of our examination having been given to the Labour Commission, and on these we shall certainly try to take action and prepare legislation as soon as possible. I can assure the Honourable Member that no pressure will be required from this House on Government to undertake that legislation.

Mr. B. Das: Does the Honourable Member expect that he will bring in such legislation at the winter session at Delhi?

Mr. J. A. Shillidy: I would be most unwilling to give any promise, but our hope at the present moment is that there will certainly be certain legislation in the Delhi Session.

(Extracted from the Legislative Assembly Debates, dated 2-10-31, Vol. VI - No.8, pages 1408-1410).

Resolution re: Draft Convention on Forced or Compulsory Labour

The following is a summary of the debate which took place on 3-10-1931 in the Indian Legislative Assembly on the question of India's ratification of the I.L.O. Draft Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour:-

The Honourable Sir James Crerar (Home Member) moved the following resolution:

"That this Assembly, having considered the Draft Convention and Recommendations concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, adopted by the 14th session of the International Labour Conference, recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should not ratify the Draft Convention".

After tracing the history of the Draft Convention and the views expressed by the Government of India on the questionnaire on the subject, Sir James Crerar said that the definition of 'Forced or Compulsory Labour' in the Draft Convention was such as to preclude India from ratifying the Convention owing to the difficulty of giving effect to the Convention while keeping in tact the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924. "Under that Act, section 16 empowers the Local Government to establish industrial, agricultural or reformatory settlements and any criminal tribe in respect of which a notification has been issued under section 11 may be placed in any such settlement. The Act further empowers the Local Government to establish industrial, agricultural or reformatory schools for children. The rule-making power in section 20 empowers Local Governments to make rules for the management, control and supervision of industrial, agricultural or reformatory settlements and schools and likewise for the works on which, and the hours during which persons placed in an industrial, agricultural or reformatory settlement shall be employed, the rate at which they shall be paid, and the like. There is a further provision which is important, section 22, which is obviously essential for carrying on this work. It imposes a definite penalty for breach of the rules on the part of a member of the criminal tribe settled in one of these settlements".

The Chief difficulty of the Government of India was that "when a Local Government first registers criminal tribes, or when it institutes a settlement or a reformatory school or the like, it is not taking penal action. That is to say, no sentence is passed on any person concerned. Consequently, though it is necessary that work or service should be exacted, ~~as the consequence of the conviction in a court of law~~ it cannot be said in the terms of the Convention that it is exacted as the consequence of the conviction in a court of law. That is the legal position. There are at present in India some 61 settlements which have been set up under this Act; They have a population of something over 30,000 people at the present time. In addition to members of criminal tribes who are in settlements formed under sections 16 and 17 of the Act, there are, more particularly in the Bombay Presidency, certain free settlements, or colonies which have been set up by the criminal tribes settlement organisations which are not in any sense part of the settlements actually coming under the Act. This is a question of the reclamation of the criminal tribes. In dealing with the stages of dealing with the criminal tribes, there are necessarily in the first instance measures of registration and restriction. The second stage is that of institution of settlements, reformatory schools and the like. The third is a very important development, that in which free settlements are formed which pass out to the normal and useful occupation of citizens - a large number of persons who have passed through the previous stages. In these settlements they are taught agriculture and various useful trades; those that are settled near ~~under~~ industrial towns in process of time take their place in the ranks of free labour and carry on the ordinary work of a labourer in conditions very different from those from which they have emerged. It is the invariable practice to attach schools to these settlements: Sometimes for obvious reasons children are taken away from their parents and are sent to separate schools." According to the Home Member, work of this kind had necessarily to be carried out under conditions of discipline. These settlements and Reformatory schools were stumbling blocks in the way of India ratifying the Convention.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh moved an amendment to the effect that the word "not" occurring between the words "should" and "ratify" in the Home Member's resolution should be deleted. Speaking in support of his amendment for advocating ratification, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh said that the views of the provincial governments on the question of the application of the provisions of the Convention to the Criminal Tribes were at variance with the views expressed by the Home Member. He then quoted the following views of the various provincial governments. The view of the Criminal Tribes Settlement Officer, Bombay, which was endorsed by the Bombay Government was as follows:-

"I do not know if the existence of the settlements is the only difficulty in the way of the Government of India ratifying the Convention, or the amount of pressure which will be exercised upon it to ratify the Convention regardless of difficulties. If the pressure is serious and if the existence of the Criminal Tribes Settlement is the only difficulty in the way of ratification, it is possible that modification in the Criminal Tribes Act might be made to bring the Criminal Tribes Act within the terms of the Convention... "If it be agreed that the spirit of article 2(c) would include persons detained in schools established under Children's Acts or ~~Bor~~ Borstal Acts, cannot it also be argued that settlements too are meant as

training grounds?"

The Madras Government in its report on Criminal Tribes Settlements said: "In practice, however, the measure of compulsion is very small. In the three settlements managed by the Salvation Army the conditions of labour are hardly different from those under which ordinary free labourers work. . . . The wages paid by the Salvation Army are what are usually paid to labourers in the neighbourhood They get their usual daily wages like any other labourer outside and no compulsion or force is used".

The Inspector General of Police, the United Provinces, has remarked: "~~that~~ the settlers cannot be said to be forced to work; the work is there for them to do but they can if they wish take a 'day off' and suffer a loss of wages as do labourers elsewhere. . . . The work in settlements is not regarded as forced labour by the settlers themselves".

And lastly, the Government of Punjab has said: "In the opinion of the Governor in Council the term 'forced or compulsory labour' is misleading when applied to the conditions which obtain in the settlements established for the reclamation of criminal tribes. The labour which is done is not for the pecuniary benefit of the employer" [Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh therefore contended that ratification of the Convention was not incompatible with the enforcement of the Criminal Tribes Act, if the Act could be suitably modified so as to bring it under the terms of the Convention.

Mr. Singh's amendment motion recommending ratification when put to vote was negatived.

Mr. B. Das, (an adviser to the Employers' delegate to the 12th session of the I.L.Conference) then moved the following amendment:

"That for the original resolution the following be substituted:

'While considering that the Draft Convention on forced labour cannot be ratified until Article 2 thereof is modified so as to exclude labour exacted under the Criminal Tribes Act, the Good Conduct Prisoners' Probationary Release Act and other similar social legislation in force in India, this Assembly recommends to the Government of India that they proceed to take action on all other provisions contained in the Draft Convention and the Recommendations as soon as may be practicable'".

In his speech moving the amendment, Mr. B. Das said: "I was present at Geneva along with my Honourable friend Mr. Chetty. We both took part in these debates and we found that the Government of India did not help us properly in the matters that we raised at the International Labour Conference at Geneva and we were contradicted. And because the Government of India had the right of reply at the end we could not give them a reply. I then told a delegate of the Government of India, Dr. Paranjpye, that I reserved my right to reply to them two or three years afterwards on the floor of the Assembly. I have got that opportunity today and I will do it. . . . Sir Atul Chatterjee who was the leader of the Government delegation refuted that, and subsequently Dr. Paranjpye refuted a similar statement made by me and Mr. Shiva Rao at the International Labour Conference. I will quote Sir Atul Chatterji's speech:- 'There is one small point to which Mr. Chetty referred and to which I must make very brief

allusion. That is the question of the position of Indian States in regard to the Draft Conventions and Recommendations passed at this Conference. I think Mr. Chetty has overlooked the fact that this is a matter which has received very anxious and prolonged consideration from the Indian Government, and the position was fully explained in a communication made to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations about two years ago'.

"And I will give you the reply which the Director Mons. Thomas made to this statement of Sir Atul Chatterjee: 'First of all within the framework of the organisation itself there is the problem of the Indian Native States. Will the work partially, but still considerably accomplished in British India for the protection of labour survive if competitive industries exempt from all social charges develop uncontrolled in the Native States? Mr. Chetty has expressed the concern of the employers; Sir Atul Chatterji has explained the difficulties connected with the introduction of protective legislation in the Native States. He recalled the dilemma with which Lord Birkenhead wished to confront us in 1927. Either the ratification will apply to British India only or we shall not ratify at all. We cannot believe that this will be a final solution'. I want the House to note this carefully. Mons. Thomas says: 'We cannot believe that this will be a final solution. We believe that we shall receive help from all quarters in the necessary endeavour to obtain a generalisation of just and humane working conditions in the immense communities of India'.

"Sir, while I am grateful to the Honourable the Home Member for accepting ~~x~~ every Article in the Draft Convention except Article 2 as to work connected with the Criminal Tribes Act and similar social legislation and also the Recommendations, I want a statement either from him or from the representative of the Department of Industries and Labour present as to what steps Government have taken since 1929 to bring the Indian States into harmony with India and whether the Indian States have fulfilled the expectations that the Director of the International Labour Conference expressed. I should also like to know what further negotiations have taken place between the Government of India, the High Commissioner and the office of the International Labour Conference in this matter. Sir, at Geneva I did point out that I strongly resent that Indian ~~Princes~~ Princes should represent India at the League of Nations and I did suggest that a representative of India should challenge their credentials because they do not allow Conventions that are passed in the International Labour Conference to be ratified in their States. Of course we know that in the present circumstances the Government of India have special power and they have reserved power to deal with the Indian States, but I cannot accept any Indian Prince or ruler as my equal or as my representative in international problems when he cannot accept the conditions of work that are laid down at the International Labour Conference. Sir, I hope I will get a reply, or if the Government have slept over it since 1929 I hope they will proceed further in the matter before the reforms are settled at the London Round Table Conference."

"I do not want to quote Dr. Paranjpye's speech any further. But I have one request to make to the Honourable Members of the Treasury Benches. In future, I do not mind the High Commissioner being the leader of the International Labour Conference. But his advisers, both Indian and European, should be persons who are acquainted with the actual conditions of work in India. Otherwise they make statements which at times resemble the bureaucratic observations coming from the Treasury Benches. I am glad that the Honourable the Home Member accepts this amendment. It will save our face before the world and show that we are bringing humanising conditions to our workers and are prepared to abolish slavery or forced labour in all forms both in British ~~xx~~ India and Indian States".

Mr. B. Das's motion was put to vote and was adopted.

(Summarised from the Legislative Assembly Debates, 3-10-1931, Vol, VI, No.9, pages 1509-1525).

Resolution re Draft Convention Regulating Hours of Work
In Offices, Hotels, Etc.,

At pages 9-27 of the Report of this Office for April 1931, was given the text of the debate which took place in the Legislative Assembly on 1-4-1931 on the question of India's ratification of the Convention re: Hours of Work in Commerce. On that date a motion was adopted by the House to the effect that the consideration of the question should be postponed to the Simla Session of 1931. Accordingly the question was taken up for discussion by the Legislative Assembly on 3-10-1931. The following is a summary of the further discussions which took place on 3-10-1931 in the Assembly on the question.

The Resolution originally moved by Mr. J.A. Shillidy, Secretary to the Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India, was as follows:-

"This Assembly, having considered the following Draft Convention and Recommendations adopted by the Fourteenth Session of the International Labour Conference:

- (1) Draft Convention concerning the regulation of hours of work in ~~hotels, restaurants and similar establishments~~ Commerce & Offices;
- (2) Recommendation concerning the regulation of hours of work in hotels, restaurants and similar establishments;

(3) Recommendation concerning the regulation of hours of work in theatres and other places of public amusement; and

(4) Recommendation concerning the regulation of hours of work in establishments for the treatment or the care of the sick, infirm, destitute or mentally unfit, recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should not ratify the Draft Convention nor accept the Recommendations".

To this resolution Mr. N.M. Joshi had moved in the April session the following amendment: "that the word 'not' occurring between the words ~~should~~ 'should' and 'ratify' be deleted and the word 'and' be substituted for the word 'nor' occurring between the words 'convention' and 'accept'.

Mr. B. Sitaramaraju, speaking in support of the resolution and against the amendment, said that the ratification of the Convention was undesirable for the following reasons: (a) The Convention did not really benefit the employees but had simply given the government greater powers of control; (b) India is primarily an agricultural country and commercial offices are very few; (c) The number of exceptions are so many that those who come under the provisions are ~~very~~ few; (d) Mr. Joshi stated that offices containing less than 50 employees may be exempted from any legislation that may be passed on the subject. Such action would mean that the employees affected by the Convention would be ~~very~~ ^{few} few in this country. (e) The question of minimum wages is closely connected with the question of hours of work and the Whitley Report is of opinion that it is not possible for India to fix any minimum wage. Hence legislation on one subject without corresponding legislation on a closely related subject is not advisable. (f) The cost of maintaining a staff of inspectors to enforce any law based on the Convention will be out of proportion to the benefit that will be derived by the enforcement of the Convention.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad also spoke in support of the resolution and made a strong attack on the League of Nations and the I.L.O.

Mr. S.G. Jog, speaking in support of Joshi's amendment, said that the Government should have split up their resolution into two, one to deal with the Convention and another to deal with the Recommendations attached to the Convention. Mr. Jog was of opinion that the Recommendations which requested the government to investigate into the conditions of work of employees of hotels and restaurants, theatres and places of public entertainments, should be given effect to.

Mr. Shillidy in his reply pointed out that the Recommendations were to enquire into the professions named in order to see if the Draft Convention could be applied to them also and that since the present ~~proposal~~ proposal was that the Draft Convention should not be accepted by India the necessity for conducting the enquiries into particular professions did not arise.

Mr. Joshi's motion recommending ratification of the Convention when put to vote was negatived.

The original Resolution was then put to vote and it was adopted.

(Summarised from the Legislative Assembly Debates, 3-10-1931, Vol. VI, No.9, pages 1525-1531).

The Council of State and the Geneva Conventions.

The Council of State took up for discussion on 5-10-1931 the Recommendation concerning the Prevention of Industrial Accidents and the Convention re. Forced or Compulsory Labour.

Recommendation re. the Prevention of Industrial Accidents. The Honourable Sir C.P. Ramaswami Ayyar (Law Member to the Government of India) made a statement on the subject similar to that made in the Assembly on 2-10-1931 by Mr. J.A. Shillidy (see pages 8-10 of this report). The text of the statement made in the Council of State is published at pages 205-207 of the Council of State Debates of 5-10-1931 (Vol.II No.9).

Resolution re. Draft Convention on Forced or Compulsory Labour.

The Honourable Mr. H.W. Emerson (Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department) moved the following resolution in the Council of State on 5-10-1931:

"This Council, having considered the Draft Convention and Recommendations concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, adopted by the 14th Session of the International Labour Conference, recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should not ratify the Draft Convention".

The above resolution, modified as follows, was accepted by the House:

"While considering that the Draft Convention on forced labour could not be ratified until Article 2 thereof is modified so as to exclude labour exacted under the Criminal Tribes Act, the Good Conduct Prisoners' Probational Release Act and other similar legislation in ~~force~~ force, this Council recommends to the Government of India that they proceed to take action on all other provisions contained in the Draft Convention and the Recommendation as soon as may be practicable".

(The full text of the debate on the question in the Council of State is published at pages 207-209 of the Council of State Debates of 5-10-1931 (Vol. II, No.9). For summary of debates on the question in the Assembly see pages 10 & 14 of this report.)

National Labour Legislation.

The C. P. Workmen's Welfare Bill, 1931.

At pages 19-25 of the March 1929 report of this Office, the full text of the Central Provinces Workmen's Welfare Bill introduced by Mr. R.W.Fulay, M.L.C. (adviser to the Indian workers' delegate to the 15th I.L. Conference) with the Statement of Objects and Reasons was given. The Bill was introduced in the C.P. Legislative Council on 21 & 22-1-29 and a motion for circulation to elicit public opinion was carried on the latter date. The Bill evoked great opposition from factory owners and when it was moved on 24-8-31 to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, the House was of opinion that sufficient attention was not paid to the Bill and hence its consideration was postponed. The Bill lapsed with the dissolution of that Council.

According to the Central Provinces Gazette of 3-10-31, (No. 40 Part VII pages 87-90), Mr. Fulay has introduced an identical Bill in *the* present C.P. Legislative Council on 29-8-31 and a motion to circulate the Bill to elicit public opinion thereon was carried on the same date.

(For full text of Bill and Statement of Objects and Reasons see pages 19-25 of March 1929 report of this Office).

K.

The Bengal Mining Settlements (Amendment)

Act, 1931. (Bengal Act IV of 1931).

Act II 1912. An Act to amend the Bengal Mining Settlements Act 1912.

Whereas it is expedient to amend the Bengal Mining Settlements Act, 1912, for the purposes hereinafter appearing;

V. And Whereas the previous sanction of the Governor General has been obtained under sub-section (3) of section 80A of the Government of India Act to the passing of this Act;

3
V

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. (1) This Act may be called the Bengal Mining Settlements Short title and (Amendment) Act, 1931. commencement.
(2) It shall come into force on such date as the Local Government may, by notification in the Calcutta Gazette, appoint.

2. In sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Bengal Mining Amendment of Settlements Act, 1912 (hereinafter referred to section 1 of Ben. as "the said Act"), the words "including the Act II of 1912. Sonthal Parganas" shall be omitted.

3. In section 2 of the said Act for the figures "1901" the Amendment of figures "1923" shall be substituted. section 2.

4. After sub-section (4) of section 10 of the said Act, the Amendment of following sub-section shall be inserted, section 10. namely:-

"(4a) The expenses due from any owner in respect of any mine shall, subject to the prior payment of the land-revenue (if any) due to the Government thereupon, be a first charge upon the said mine, and upon the movable property (if any) found within such mine and belonging to the said owner".

5. In section 11 of the said Act - Amendment of (a) clauses (d) to (i) of sub-section (2) shall be section 11. omitted, and (b) in sub-section (5) for the words and figures "section 9 of the Indian Mines Act, 1901" the words and figures "section 10 of the Indian Mines Act, 1923" shall be substituted.

6. After section 11 of the said Act, the following section Insertion of new shall be inserted, namely:- section II A.

- "11A. (1) A Mines Board of Health may, after previous publication, make by-laws -
- Power of Board to make by-laws.
- (i) defining the duties of owners, agents and managers of mines in respect of a mining settlement, and of all persons acting under them;
 - (ii) defining the matters in respect of which notices, returns and reports shall be furnished by owners, agents and managers of mines, the form of such notices, returns and reports, the persons and authorities to whom they are to be furnished, and the particulars to be contained in them;
 - (iii) defining the plans (if any) to be kept by owners, agents and managers of mines within a mining settlement, and the manner and places in which they are to be kept for purposes of record;
 - (iv) providing for the supply of filtered, boiled or other water and for sanitation and conservancy in the mining settlement;
 - (v) providing for the taking of measures to prevent the outbreak or spread of and to combat epidemic and other diseases in the mining settlement;
 - (vi) providing against the accumulation of water (other than water in mines) in the mining settlement;
 - (vii) regulating the construction and sanitation of residential buildings within the mining settlement;
 - (viii) prescribing standards of accommodation in cases where accommodation is provided for persons employed in mines within the mining settlement;
 - (ix) defining the medical assistance to be provided by the owners of mines within the mining settlement for the labourers employed under them;
 - (x) providing for the prevention or abatement of nuisances affecting the public health committed by any persons within the limits of the mining settlement; and
 - (xi) generally for carrying out the purposes of this Act and for promoting the safety, health and welfare of persons employed in mines within the mining settlement.

(2) By-laws made under this section shall not take effect until they have been confirmed by the Local Government and published in the local official Gazette".

7. In section 12 of the said Act -
 Amendment of section 12. (a) in clause (a) after word "rules" the word "by-laws" and
 (b) in clause (c) after the word "rules" the words "and by-laws" shall be inserted.

8. In sub-section (3) of section 15 of the said Act -
 Amendment of section 15. (a) in clause (a) after the word "rule" the word "by-laws" shall be inserted; and
 (b) in clause (b) for the words " rule or order there-under" the words "rule, by-law or order made there-under" shall be substituted.

9. In sections 16,17 and 18 of the said Act, for the words
 Amendment of sections 16,17 and 18. "rule or order thereunder" the words "rule, by-law or order made thereunder" shall be substituted.

(The Act Received the assent of the Governor General on 17-10-31).

(Extracted from the Calcutta Gazette, dated 5-11-31, No.45 of 1931, part III, pages 56-57.).

Conditions of Labour.The ^{Milling} Burmese Rice Industry**

The following information regarding the wages in Burmese rice mills is taken from a recently published report on the subject based on an enquiry under-taken by the Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner, Burma. The report incorporates the results of enquiries made into the earnings of wage-earners in rice mills in Burma during three different periods. The first period is March 1928 which is taken to show the amount of employment and the earnings at the height of the busy milling season which normally lasts from January to May in any year. The second period is November 1927 which gives the corresponding information for the slack season when either the minimum amount of milling is being done or the mills have been closed down with the exception of a skeleton staff to keep things in order. The third period is March 1914 which has been taken to give some kind of comparison between present day earnings and pre-war earnings.

Number of Rice Mills: According to the Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in Burma during 1928, there were 608 rice factories in that year in Burma which came under the provisions of the Act. The number of rice factories which furnished completed returns for the inquiry on which the report is based was 520 and consequently the report covers only these 520 rice factories.

* Report on Wages in Rice Mills in Burma by A. J. Page, B.A., F.S.S., I.C.S., Director of Statistics and Labour Commissioner, Burma. Rangoon: Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, Burma-1931 Price Rs. 2 = 3s. = pp. 94.

Number of Workers: According to the Factory Report for 1928, there were 41,327 workers employed in the rice mills of Burma. Of these, 12,187 represent the number of men employed on a monthly basis. The remaining 29,140 represent the number of maistry coolies employed in the mills as well as the number of daily paid men and daily and monthly paid women.. Those paid on a monthly basis mostly belong to the engine room staff, boiler staff, mill staff, mill workshop staff, paddy staff and rice staff.

The Total Wage Bill: (Monthly Paid Employees) :- The total amounts earned by monthly paid men on the three different dates are shown in the following table:-

March 1928				November 1927				March 1914.			
No. of men	Amount Rs.	As.	P.	No. of men	Amount Rs.	As.	P.	No. of men	Amount Rs.	As.	P.
12,187	341,914	4	9	8,597	249,218	8	5	4,044	84,494	3	9

For all-Burma these figures show that the average monthly amount earned (excluding overtime and concessions) per head was Rs.20.89 in March 1914, Rs.28.99 in November 1927 and Rs.28.06 in March 1928. Comparing the two periods March 1924 and March 1928, there has been a nominal increase in earnings of 34.3 per cent. As no index numbers of cost of living have been maintained for any centres outside Rangoon, the report states that it is impossible to deduce any all-Burma figure to show the change in real wages. Taking the Rangoon figures alone, the average earnings per head at the three given dates were Rs.20.75,

Rs.30.88 and Rs.29.08. The nominal increase in earnings as between March 1914 and March 1928 is seen to be 40.14 per cent.

Real Wages:- The index numbers of the cost of living in Rangoon of the four principal communities to which the rice mill workers belong in 1914 and 1928, according to the tables published in the Burma Gazette, were as follows:-

	Burmese.	Tamils, Telugus & Oriyas.	Hindustanis.	Chittagonians.
March 1914	92	96	98	93
March 1928	134	136	148	136

An unweighted arithmetic mean of these figures gives a figure of 95 for March 1914 and of 138 for March 1928. A rough percentage increase of 45.26 in the cost of living of workers in Rangoon is thus indicated, but, the report states that, it must be clearly borne in mind when comparing this figure with the 40.14 per cent. increase in wages given above, that the difference between the two figures is not great enough to ^{one}Merable to come to any definite conclusion that in March 1928 the increase in the cost of living was greater than the increase in nominal wages measured by a pre-war standard.

Hours of Work. - From the returns supplied by 511 mills from which definite information was obtained, it appears that in March 1928 the hours of work in 11 mills were from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. (12 hours), ~~xxxx~~ in 6 mills from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. (10 hours), in 107 mills from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. (11 hours), and in 310 mills from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. (12 hours). 21 mills started at 6-30 a.m. and closed at times varying

from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. , 49 mills started at 7 a.m. and closed between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., 5 mills started at 8 or 8-30 a.m. and closed between 3-30 p.m. and 6 p.m., whilst 2 mills did not open till as late as 10 a.m. and closed at 3 p.m. respectively. *Of the 571 mills, 26 worked 10 1/2 hours; 302, 10 hours; 11, 9 hours; 67, 9 hours; 6, 8 1/2 hours; and 34, 8 hours.*

Overtime Earnings:- According to the information furnished in the returns, the amount of money earned by overtime work in the month of March 1928 was not considerable. In most cases overtime work was paid at the same rate as for ordinary work judging by the figures based on information supplied by 156 mills.

Concessions in Addition to Wages:- Concessions granted to rice mill hands may be free quarters, free rice, cheap rice, free cook, free water, light or fuel, free medical treatment with medicines. In a few cases free board and lodging and even clothing were given. The following figures show the relative prevalence of the various concessions. Out of 476 mills which have furnished particulars regarding free quarters, 354 report that free quarters are provided for every one, 50 report that all except certain sections of the staff have the privilege whilst the remainder give free quarters only to such employees as the power house ^{staff} or boiler staff or to durwans. The mills in the Tharrawaddy Group seem the most generous in this respect, 156 of them providing accommodation for all or some of their staff. Fifty-two mills report that they give free rice to all or some of their staff. Eighty mills give cheap rice, 69 of them giving it to all their staff. The concession of free water is only reported by 35 mills. These mills are situated in places where a local supply of good water is difficult to be obtained. Free light was supplied in 41 mills, free fuel in 15, medical treatment and medicines in 9. The number of mills which give free board and lodging or free clothing were very few.

K.

Conciliation Committees in Bombay Mills

An experiment to establish Committees in Bombay textile mills representing the workers as well as the mill management, which would serve to ^{give} speedy redress to ~~the~~ grievances of the former and prevent lightning strikes, undertaken by the Currimbhoys group of mills, Bombay, has excited controversy in labour circles.

Conciliation Committee. - The Currimbhoys own about 13 mills in the city and recently the management of certain of these mills have moved in the matter of establishing a Committee in each mill consisting of 60 members representing the workers. The Committee would be presided over by the mill manager, but the secretary would be elected from among the workers. The grievances of the workers from each department would have to be placed before the Committee twice regularly every month, and the Committee would then consider them and take steps to give redress.

Such a Committee has already been established in the Kasturchand Mill, the manager of the mill having taken a lead in the matter. Besides this, it is also proposed to start co-operative credit societies with a view to advance loans to workers on easy terms.

(Labour Gazette, October 1931.

Vol. XI - No.2., Page 138.)

Economy Measures in Tata Iron & Steel Co.:

General Manager's Statement.

The General Manager of the Tata Iron & Steel Company, Jamshedpur, issued a statement on 26-9-31 regarding the present economic depression and how it affects the future of the company, and particularly how it will affect the wages of the workers. The following are extracts from the statement:-

"On September 15 we had 38,818 tons of pig iron, 57,389 tons of finished steel and 23,641 tons of semi-finished steel in stock. This company had to pay for the raw materials, coal and labour to produce this ~~material~~ stock. At the same time, this represents Rs.7 millions tied up in these stocks. In spite of these facts, it is still the policy of the management not to interfere with the wages of the low paid men. It has rather been the policy to do away with high-paid staff, wherever possible, and to make whatever savings we could on this account. We regret to notice, however, that outsiders are coming here, as they think that the present is an opportune moment for capturing illiterate men. They speak of grievances which the management refuse to redress. These grievances are entirely imaginary and exist solely in the minds of a handful of men. The world trade during the past week has gone from bad to worse and it is doubtful what the future holds in store for us. We hope we can keep operating at the same rate we are now doing, but if we cannot sell our steel, we will not be able to keep going at the present rate, because we cannot afford to stock any more steel and it is out of the question for us to pay our workmen with bars, angle iron and pig iron, instead of rupees."

Referring to the reduction in wages and other economies effected in steel plants in other countries, the statement says:-

"We expect all the low-paid men in this plant to give us that same support for the coming year as they did in the past year, and if they do, we see no reason why this Steel Company should not keep operating. The United States Steel Corporation has announced a reduction of 10 per cent in wages commencing October 1. The Steel Corporation is an amalgamation of about 20 of the largest steel plants in the United States employing approximately 800,000 men. The Bethlehem Steel Corporation and the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company have adopted a similar ten per cent wage cut which will affect 250,000 men. The General Motors Corporation are reducing the wages of their employees from 10 to 20 per cent, and the United States Rubber Company is making a nine per cent wage reduction and have reduced the working days to five days a week."

(The Statesman, 1-10-31).

Postponement of Application of Hours
Convention to Indian Railways.

The Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1930, and the Railway Servants' Hours of Employment Rules, 1930 (for text of the Act and rules, see page 9-15 of the Report of this Office for January 1930), were passed by the Government of India to give legal effect to India's ratification of the Washington Hours Convention. By the end of 1930, the Act and the rules thereunder were applied to the North Western and East Indian Railways, and it was the intention of the Government of India to extend gradually their application to the other Indian Railway ~~at~~ systems. Recently, the Government of India has decided, in view of the present necessity for retrenchment in expenditure, to postpone the application of the Act to other Railways. It may also be pointed out here that it is definitely understood that one of the recommendations of the Railway Retrenchment Sub-Committee appointed by the Government of India (vide pages 51-52 of the Report of this Office for June 1931) is to the effect that the further application of the Act and the Rules are to be postponed for the present. Commenting on this decision of the Government of India, the Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur, of October 1931 (Vol.IX, No.1) says:

"The Railway Board in their circular letter No.40-L, dated the 29th March 1930 to the Agents, Class I Railways, stated that 'the Government of India desire that the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1930, should come into force as quickly as possible on each Railway and in no case later than 28th February 1932. They are confident, moreover, that it can be applied on certain railways before the expiration of this time.'" Up to now, the Hours of Employment Regulations have been said to be in force only on the North Western and East Indian Railways. According to the official estimates, nearly 9,500 employees have to be employed additionally to implement the Hours of Employment Regulations. It is indeed surprising that the Government of India have gone back on their previous understanding by issuing a new circular that 'owing to the present financial stringency the Government have reluctantly decided to postpone the

21
the application of the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act (XIV of 1930) to the Burma, Bengal Nagpur, Bombay Baroda and Central India, Bengal and ~~the~~ North Western ~~Railways~~, Rohilkhand and Kumaon, Assam Bengal, Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways to a date later than the 31st March 1932 and the question as to the date by which the Act should be applied towards the close of this year".

It may be pointed out that ~~the~~ Washington Hours and ~~the~~ Geneva Weekly rest conventions do not admit financial stringency as one of the valid grounds for non-enforcement of the ratified Conventions. The effect of the present decision is to allow the budget grant of Rs. 2 millions sanctioned for the current year for the purpose of enforcement of the Conventions on all the Railways, to lapse, and this is not the first year in which the sanctioned grants have been allowed to lapse in this manner. How can the workers have confidence in the bona fides of the Government when, repeatedly alleging some reason or other, they have been postponing the application of the Conventions for over a decade?". (The Indian Labour Journal, Vol.IX, No.1, p.13).

IHK.

Retrenchment on Railways: Proceedings of Court of Inquiry.

Reference was made at pages 30 to 31 of the report of this Office for September 1931 to the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry appointed to inquire into the question of retrenchment on railways. The Bombay sittings of the Court which began on 9-9-31 concluded on 8-10-31. The Court re-assembled at Madras on 12-10-31 to pursue its enquiries with regard to the retrenchment on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway and the South Indian Railway.

The South Indian Railway Administration was represented at the Court of Enquiry by Sir Jamshetjee Kanga, Advocate-General, Bombay, Major Wagstaff, Railway Board, and Mr. K.P.Velu Pillai, General Staff Officer, South Indian Railway. On behalf of the All-India Railway-men's Federation, Messrs. Jamnadas Mehta, and V.R.Kalappa were present, besides the office-bearers of both the (S.I.R. and M.& S.M.) Employees' Unions. The Court of Inquiry held its last sittings at Madras on 23-10-31.

The following is a list of the principal official witnesses examined during the Madras sittings:-

Mr. G.Charlton, Deputy Agent, M & S.M.Railway; Mr. R.H. Martin, Deputy Agent, S.I.Railway; Mr. R. Lean, Deputy Mechanical Engineer, M.& S.M.Railway ; Mr. H. Lingard, Chief Engineer, M.& S.M. Railway; Mr. A.F.Clay, Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer, M.& S.M.Railway; Mr. W.E.Harrison, Chief Auditor and Accountant, M. & S.M.Railway; Mr. T. Pinder, Works Manager, Locomotive Works, Perambur; Mr. K.P.Velu Pillai, General Staff Officer, S.I.Railway. Besides the official witnesses, the Court also examined a number of individual witnesses.

The Court will reassemble at Calcutta and will begin its sittings there on 3-11-31. In Calcutta the Court proposes to take up the cases of the East Indian and Assam Bengal Railways first and thereafter the cases of the other administrations, i.e., Bengal-Nagpur and Eastern Bengal Railways.

After visiting Lucknow and Lahore the Court is expected to return to Bombay by the middle of December when Sir Jamshedjee Kanga, Advocate-General, and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta will address the Court on behalf of the Railway Administrations and the All-India Railwaymen's Federation respectively. Thereafter the chairman and members of the Court will draft their report which is expected to be submitted to the Government of India in some time in February 1932.

Proposal to Retrench 10,000 Additional Railwaymen:

Federation Meets Railway Board.

While the Court of Inquiry appointed to investigate the question of retrenchment on railways is holding its sittings at Madras, the Railway Board, after consultation with the Agents of the various railways, decided upon discharging a fresh batch of 10,000 employees, in addition to the 35,000 odd men already discharged. The following is the text of the telegram ~~in this~~ sent in this ~~connection~~ context on 14-10-31 by the Railway Board to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, President of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation:-

"The Board reviewed the situation in consultation with the Railway Agents and have considered it necessary to discharge about 10,000 employees. The Board before issuing orders will consult the

Federation and suggest a meeting between the Federation and the Board on the 27th at Delhi, provided the date is not inconvenient to the Railway Court of Inquiry". (The Statesman, 15-10-31).

The following is the text of the reply telegram sent by Jamnadas Mehta on 15-10-31 to the Railway Board:-

"I deplore your proposals for fresh retrenchment and regard them as a declaration of war while the truce has been agreed to by the appointment of an inquiry court. Your measures of previous ~~x~~ retrenchment are under investigation by a competent court and out of deference to the court both sides are bound to suspend any aggressive action. This has been the common practice and the only right attitude to take if investigations under Trade Disputes Act are to ~~take~~ anything (vide Labour Commission's report page 168). The understanding of July 7, was before the appointment of the court but that appointment has fundamentally altered circumstances.

Until the court has reported it would be as wrong for you to initiate further retrenchment as it would be for the Federation to declare a strike. I would therefore, strongly urge you to cancel the proposed Delhi meeting. Subject to this protest I am prepared to meet you on 30th instant and I am lodging protests before the court and the Industries Department". (The Hindu, 15-10-31).

The action of the Railway Board in proposing a fresh reduction of 10,000 employees, has elicited vigorous protests from all organisations of railway employees. In this connection, Mr. V.R.Kalappa, Acting General-Secretary of the A.I.R.Federation, issued the following communiqué on 24-10-31:-

"The public have already been apprised of the threatened retrenchment of another 10,000 and odd more railwaymen. We have since received another telegram from the Railway Board intimating ~~of~~ a further increase of 400 surplus men bringing the total number to 10,471.

The ~~rail~~ affiliated Unions have strongly condemned the policy of the Railway Board and ^{asked} the Federation to boycott the Court of Inquiry in the event of its failure to stop the threatened retrenchment. The railwaymen had their own misgivings about the Court of Inquiry when terms of reference have been so restricted as to make it impossible for the public to be in "possession of the fullest information" on the dispute. Yet the Federation agreed to co-operate and lead evidence before the court in order to put the Government in the wrong. ~~The~~

The decision of the Railway Board to retrench a second lot of 10,471 men while the Court of Inquiry is still investigating, goes to prove beyond all doubt that the appointment of the Court was a decision to gain time and a mere palliative to tide over a crisis arising out of the ballot for a general strike. Had the railwaymen resorted to ^{the} strike weapon early this year, nothing more disastrous than what they find today would have happened.

So far 32,655 permanent and 7,849 temporary employees have been thrown ~~into~~^{on the} streets. Add to this the economic loss sustained by the demoted, numbering 4,392 and 1,20,000 workshop men on short-time. This will be further augmented by the wage-cut recommended by the Retrenchment Sub-Committee. These, in spite of the loyalty and devotion of ~~the~~ workers and frequent negotiations with Railway Administrations by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and its affiliated Unions! Any victimisation consequent upon failure of a general strike could not be worse. Instead of waiting for any more surprises and never-ending threats of retrenchment and wage-cuts from the employers, the workers should get ready for action, though belated. (The Hindu, 26-10-31).

The meeting of the representatives of the A.I. Railwaymen's Federation with the Railway Board to discuss the new retrenchment proposals took place at New Delhi on 30-10-31. The Federation's representatives were Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, President, Diwan Chamanlal (N.W. Railway), Mr. V.R. Kalappa, Secretary, Mr. Purushotam Tricumdas (G.I.P. Railway), Mr. T.V.K. Naidu (South Indian Railway), Mr. N.A.V. Raman (B.B. & C.I.), Mr. N.N. Chatterjee (E.B. Railway) and Mr. Marcel Fernandez of the Council of Action. The Railway Board was represented by Mr. Russell, Chief Commissioner, Mr. Hayman and Mr. Parsons, Financial Commissioner.

Mr. Russell at the outset explained that the Federation representatives had been invited for a discussion as retrenchment on the railways was an all-India problem.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta argued that it was not necessary to have invited them when the retrenchment proposals had not been submitted to the Railway Unions as required by the terms of the Simla agreement. He further explained that the procedure was to submit the proposals to the Unions, in detail, and invite their views.

HHK.5.

The Railway Board submitted a statement showing the number of staff found surplus at present on the railways. Their figure is arrived at after making very full allowance for wastage up to the 13th April 1932, suspension of recruitment, retirement as far as possible of persons beyond or nearing the age of superannuation, and the working of short time in the workshops to the extent of one and a half days a week. The revised figure of 7,500 is made up as follows: N.W. Railway 825, East Indian 1,325, G.I.P. 1,550, East Bengal 675, Burma Railways 150, B.B. and C.I. 1,075, B.N. Railway 1,525, M. and S.M. 350, and Assam-Bengal Railway 25. No figure was given for the South Indian Railway. Of the total of 7,500, 3,500 are on the line staff and 4,000 on the workshop staff.

It is understood that as a result of the discussion that followed it has been agreed that retrenchment proposals of each railway would first be submitted in detail to the respective recognised railway unions which would reply direct to the Agents and then if necessary the Federation would meet the Railway Board. (The Hindu, 31-10-31).

K.

Labour News in Brief.

Kalol Navjivan Mill Strike, Ahmedabad. - The strike of operatives of the Throstle Department of the Kalol Navjivan Mills, Ahmedabad, ended on 15-10-31, as the Agent accepted the demand of the operatives for wages similar to those paid to operatives of other mills. The Agent also agreed to recognise the labour union that has been formed in Kalol as a branch of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association. (The Times of India, 17-10-31).

Demand for 10 hour day in Bhavnagar Mill. - The operatives of the Krishna Kumar Mills in Mahuva, Bhavnagar State, have gone on strike on 17-10-31 in pursuance of their resolution to go on strike, if the Mill did not introduce a 10 hour day by the 15-10-31. The Mill authorities, it is stated, ask more time for consideration. The strike ended on 19-10-31, the management agreeing to the 10 hour day demanded by the operatives. (The Hindu, 20-10-31).

Strike in Indore Mills: Conciliation Board Appointed. - The strike of the operatives in the Bhandari and S.T.E. Mills in Indore has been called off, as the State has decided on 19-10-31 to appoint a Conciliation Board to enquire into the grievances of the operatives. (The Hindu, 20-10-31).

Strike of Women 'Bidi' Makers, Sangli. - About 1,000 women bidi (country cigarette) makers of Sangli went on strike in the last week of September. An extensive trade in tobacco is carried on in Sangli and there are several factories in which bidi making is the main business of the capitalists. These bidis are exported to distant places in the Bombay Presidency.

The main reason for the strike appears to be a reduction in the wages of the operatives, against which the women labourers strongly protest. (The Times of India, 6-10-31).

Ahmedabad Chawls: Threat of Non-payment of Rents. - The joint Board of representatives of the Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, passed a resolution on 1-10-31 calling upon the owners of chawls, Ahmedabad, to make suitable provision for water, light, latrines, etc. and to consider the question of non-payment of rent in those cases where such provision is not made after due notice. The Board also passed a resolution asking the Municipality not to permit construction of chawls with one room tenements and to compel owners of chawls to provide water, light, etc. (The Times of India, 3-10-31).

Proposed Cuts in Wages of Domestic Servants. - Since heavy cuts in pay and increased income-tax proposals together with enhanced customs duties have been recently announced by the Government of India the question of a reduction in the wages now given to domestic servants,

K.2.

which has been mooted from many centres, has been receiving considerable attention at the hands of both civil and military officials, of the Government of India. The question of more economy in certain directions by officers of their forces is a matter in which both the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Air Marshal Commanding the Royal Air Force are already interesting themselves. A majority of the large business concerns, banks, leading hotels and other institutions, have already imposed cuts upon their staffs and employees. As soon as the question has received further consideration by the various authorities and also by house-holders, it seems likely that cuts will be proposed on a sliding scale for domestic servants in every city, town and station in India. It is believed that army circles will favour Rs.15 as the minimum pay which should be adopted for a reduction of 8 annas, while a salary of Rs.50 would be reduced to Rs.46 and so on. (The Hindu, 10-10-31)

Whitley Recommendations: A Madras Plea for Action. - The following resolution has been given notice of ~~M~~ by Mr. C. Basudev, M.L.C., on 6-10-31, for discussion at the next meeting of the Legislative Council:-

"This Council is of opinion that the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour in India are calculated to improve some of the conditions of the Industrial workers in this country and their relations with their employers, and therefore deserve to be implemented by suitable legislation or executive action or by other methods, as the case may be, within a reasonable period of time, and requests the Governor-~~General~~ in-Council (1) to instruct the Labour Department to prepare a programme under which such of the recommendations as lie within the competence of the Madras Government and the Statutory and other bodies within the Madras Presidency, to be carried out within a period of 3 years; and (2) to announce such programme for the next session of the Council". (The Hindu, 6-10-31).

Special Officer to give Effect to Whitley Recommendations. - Mr. A.G. Clow, I.C.S., is shortly rejoining the Industries Department as Special Officer on duty as Joint Secretary to the Department. Mr. Clow will be particularly engaged in framing legislative schemes to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour whose suggestions have already been before Local Governments for some time for examination. It may be possible to bring forward a few Bills during the ^{next} normal winter session in ~~at~~ Delhi, ^{which} extending from January to March 1932, as the result of this examination. The full measure of legislative proposals will take longer to mature. (The Times of India, 22-10-31.).

IK.

Industrial Organisation.

Employers' Organisation.

28th Session of A.I. Railway Conference, 1931

The 28th session of the All-India Railway Conference met at Simla on 10-10-31 under the presidentship of Mr. D.S. Burn, Agent, G.I.P. Railway and concluded on 14-10-31. Starting as a comparatively minor gathering to deal with wagon interchange between the different railways, the conference gradually accumulated new categories of business until it has now become a yearly meeting of all the heads and principal officers of the numerous railway administrations, and the occasion of exceedingly important consultations between the Railway Board, the Railway Member of Government and the representatives of each separate railway.

Mr. Burn in his presidential address dealt with various subjects of importance to Indian railway administrations.

Gross Earnings of Railways:- Referring to the gross earnings of Indian railways, Mr. Burn said:- "The gross receipts of all the State-owned railways (excluding strategic lines) were only slightly more in 1928-29 than in 1927-28 and ⁱⁿ 1929-30 there was a drop of Rs. 15.6 millions, equal to 1.5 per cent. on the previous year's figures. The gross receipts in 1930-31 were Rs. 74.9 millions or 7.4 per cent. less than in 1929-30, while up to the middle of August 1931 there was a further decline estimated at Rs. 35.1 millions or 10 per cent. as compared with the same period of 1930-31. In 1931-32 up to the end of August the results of economy on the principal State-owned railways, excluding depreciation, amounted to a reduction of Rs. 23.0 millions or slightly more than 10 per cent. of the expenditure for the corresponding period of the previous year. A total amount of Rs. ~~22.4~~ 624 millions over and above interest charges, etc. was earned by all State-owned railways excluding strategic lines from 1924-25 to 1929-30 inclusive. During the same period the average annual increase in interest charges was Rs. 14.4 millions. The revised estimates for 1930-31 disclosed a probable inability to meet interest charges, etc., of Rs. 29.3 millions."

Economy Measures. - Referring to the steps taken to ensure economy, Mr. Burn said: "The necessity for drastic economy needs no

arguing. The railway objective is to increase net revenue. There are two ways of achieving this, to decrease expenditure and to increase earnings and both methods have been adopted. Passenger train services have been ~~is~~ cut down to a minimum having regard to reasonable facilities being given to the public. The goods services are regulated automatically and are reduced as traffic decreases, goods trains being^{not} run unless full loads are available. Departmental train mileage has been curtailed. Reduction in shunting mileage follows reduction in train mileage. Passenger, goods and halt stations have been closed where they could be dispensed with."

"The pe=riod between repairs of coaching and goods stock has been extended. The maintenance of structures has been limited to preserving them from deterioration. The painting programme of bridges and other works has been revised. The expenditure on permanent way has been cut down. There has been a decrease in supply of stores and stationery; in some instances the quality has been reduced. Innumerable ways have been ~~is~~ found of saving cost on small items of expenditure."

Retrenchment of Staff. - Re this question, Mr. Burn said: "Nearly all the measures given above involve the retrenchment of staff, and in addition the greatly improved organisation and facilities of railways have decreased the number of men necessary efficiently to work them. Labour costs on Indian railways amount to about 50 per cent. of the working costs. It has been necessary to dispense with the services of a large number of men. As many as possible of those not required in the posts they occupied have been given the opportunity of taking service in lower paid posts. The staff have shown admirable patience and fortitude in facing the situation which has been forced upon the Administrations through conditions which prevail throughout the world"

"The position of railways is extremely serious, The limit has nearly been reached in effecting economies and yet the saving falls short of the reduction in revenue. It is necessary to increase rates and fares where this can be done. This is not, of course, an opportune time to introduce any general increase in rates, but increases should be made where they can be introduced without affecting the movement of traffic."

(The Times of India, 12-10-31)

The conference considered the annual report of the Electrical section of the Association and passed resolutions on such subjects as the illumination of railway premises, headlight equipment for locomotives, and rules for the safe working of electrical equipment. (The Pioneer, 16-10-31).

Workers' Organisations.

11th Session of A.I. Postal & R.M.S. Conference.

Delhi , 1931.

The 11th session of the All-India Postal & R.M.S. Conference was held at Delhi on 31-10-31 & 1-11-31 under the presidentship of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, M.L.A. Meetings of the Council of the All-India Postal and R.M.S. Union and the Council of the All-India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union were also held at Delhi on 31-10-31. The following were some of the more important subjects on the agenda of the Council of the All-India Postal and R.M.S. Union:- (1) Preparation of Agenda for the 11th Conference. (2) Adoption of the Annual Report. (3) Retrenchment. (4) Amalgamation or Federation of the Sectional Unions. (5) Communal movements. (6) Propaganda (7) Budget and Finance. (8) Centralisation of the All-India Special Reserve Fund. (9) Amendment of Rules. (10) Resolutions. The principal issues which engaged the attention of the Conference were the economy measures, namely, cuts in salaries and reduction in personnel recommended by the Post and Telegraph Retrenchment Advisory Sub-Committee and the separatist tendency exhibited by certain Muslim postal employees who had started a union of their own on a communal basis.

The following is the summary of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's presidential address:-

Victimisation of Lower Staff. - Mr. Jamnadas Mehta declared that in the name of economy, the Government was penalizing the hard-worked and underpaid employees of the Postal Department, and added that "compared to our national income, we pay a much heavier rate for our postal and telegraphic service, than any other country, and compared to the work they do, the post office subordinates are among the lowest paid staff in the world". The President quoted from the observations

HK.2.

Bombay
 of the ^{Mr.} Postmaster-General, Bewoor, regarding the R.M.S. Staff and D.L.O. Staff, to show that the lower staff could not be reduced in personnel nor could the leave reserve be reduced. The first step towards retrenchment should be a reduction in the number of the superior officers, and also in their salaries and allowances, particularly of the telegraphists who were the pet children of the Government.

Extravagance Condemned. - Mr. Mehta endorsed the recommendations of the Union before the Retrenchment Committee, and pointed out some cases of what he characterised as the extravagance of the Department, such as, expenditure of over Rs.80,000 on the radio section in the Director General's Office, and the fact that to check the work of ten ledger clerks in the savings bank section of the Calcutta G.P.O., they maintained, ^{on the staff of G.P.O. he said} that the department was not working at a loss, if it received a subvention for incurring expenditure for military and political purposes. Then again, the department was being charged interest on the amount of the capital works built from its own revenues, which was a case of unabashed usury.

Proposals of Retrenchment Committee: As for the Retrenchment Committee's proposals, Mr. Mehta observed that the time-honoured practice of robbing those least able to stand the burden, was practised. The pay of the future entrants was to be lowered in the case of the clerks by twenty-five per cent and of officers by twelve to thirteen per cent, a discrimination which was revolting in its inhumanity and extravagance. The postmen and lower grade staff were to receive ten to fifteen per cent lower salary. Referring to the proposed ten per cent cut and income tax on salaries between Rs.1,000 and Rs.2,000, Mr. Mehta said "Nero fiddled when Rome was burning. These modern Neroes outbid the old tyrant in all their ways. They make a show of reducing their own income by ten percent, but immediately qualify the cut by making it inclusive of the new income tax so that as a matter of fact, the sacrifice they will make will be a mere bagatelle!"

Communal Unions Condemned. - Mr. Mehta appealed to the members of the Assembly to throw out the Finance Bill proposals and he asked the Union to fight the menace at all costs. He hoped any sectional discord would not be allowed to stand in the way of their success and that Sir Hubert Sams' excellent advice against communal unions would be taken to heart.

(The Hindu 31-10-31)

(A fuller account of the proceedings of the Conference and of the resolutions passed will be given in our next monthly report).

Trade Union Movement in Burma, 1930-31.*

The following information regarding the progress of trade unionism in Burma during 1930-31 is taken from the Report on the Working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, in Burma during the year ending the 31st March 1931, issued by the Registrar of Trade Unions, Burma.

Legal Changes:- The following two changes were made in Indian trade union law in the course of the year under review:

(1) ~~11~~ Extension of the objects on which the general funds of a registered Trade Union may be spent to (a) the financing of industrial and technical research connected with the industry concerned; (b) the opening out of new markets for any material dealt with by the industry concerned (Government of India, Department of Industries and Labour, Notification No.L-1766, dated the 26th March 1931). ^(vide page 18 of the March 1931 Report of this Office) (2) Regulation 7(2) of the Burma Trade Union Regulations, 1927, was amended so as to provide that the Registrar should require a trade-union applying for transfer of its head office to Burma to alter its name if that is identical with or closely resembles the name of any other registered trade-union in Burma (Government of Burma's Miscellaneous Department Notification No.59, dated the 30th July 1930). ~~(Vide page 18 of the Report of this Office for March 1931).~~

* Report on the working of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, in Burma during the year ending the 31st March 1931 - Rangoon: Superintendent Government Printing and Stationery, Burma - 1931. Price As.8=9d. pp.3+9.

Registered & Unregistered Trade Unions and Federations. -

There is only one registered trade-union in Burma, namely, the Burma Motor Drivers Association, registered on the 28th October 1927. This Association started with 100 members at the beginning of the year under review and had 106 members in its register at the close of the year. The union had no political fund. No federations of trade-unions have yet been registered and none ~~Registered Federations~~ have yet applied for registration.

Trade Unions of Government Servants:- The Burma Railway

Employees Union which came into existence on 30-4-1930 submitted an application for registration. The question whether associations of Government Servants are to be registered as trade unions, was referred to the Government of India but no definite orders on the subject were received during the year. Letters received from the Government of India on this subject in 1928 recorded the view of the Government of India that it was inadvisable that associations of government servants should apply for registration as trade-unions; but the letters conveyed no orders on the subject. The ~~unions~~ ^{of the union} attention was drawn to the above desire of the Government of India and was asked to say whether it wished to withdraw its application. As the union did not wish to withdraw its application, its rules are now being examined with reference to the requirements of the act.

General Remarks:- According to the report, there were 28 un-registered unions in respect of which particulars were available. Although so few trade-unions have been registered or applied for registration in Burma, it must not be supposed that the spirit of

IK.3.

combination is not developing amongst Burmans. The advantages of registration of trade-unions are not known amongst the workers who constitute the unions and are probably not fully appreciated even by those who organize those workers and persuade them to form trade-unions. The report states that it is not in any case to be expected that a distribution of copies of the act and of the regulations under it would have any effect in stimulating the registration of trade-unions; more effective would be the publication of short articles in newspapers, each article dealing with a single salient point.

(The progress of Trade Unionism in Burma during 1928-29 is reviewed at pages 49-50 of the October 1929 report of this Office).

Secessions from A.I. Postal Union:
Director General's Appeal for Unity...

There has been recently observable a tendency among postal employees belonging to the All-India Postal and R.M.S. Union to break away from the Union and to form separate unions formed on a communal basis. In this manner within the last year there had sprung into existence two distinctly communal unions of postal employees, namely, the All-India Muslim Postal and R.M.S. Union with its head-quarters at Delhi and the Sikh Rights Protection Society with its headquarters at Lahore. This tendency to form communal unions cuts at the very root of trade union organisation and the management of the All-India Postal and R.M.S. Union is becoming very much perturbed over these developments. It would appear, however, that a halt has been ~~called~~ called to the progress of communal tendencies within the rank of postal trade-unionists owing to ^{an} ~~an~~ appeal for unity issued by Sir Hubert Sams, the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, in the course of which it is definitely stated that communal unions will not be recognised by the Government. This appeal ^{from} ~~from~~ the head of the department, coupled with the threat of non-recognition, is producing good effects. It is understood that proposals are afoot for effecting a merger of the communal unions with the All-India Postal and R.M.S. Union and that an independent Committee nominated by the Unions concerned will arbitrate over the issues at dispute, prior to a final settlement. The following are relevant extracts from the appeal for unity issued by *The* Director General:-

"During the course of the year, there has been a marked tendency

to secede from the Postal and R.M.S. Union, which has been recognised by the Department and is, therefore, entitled to its support. I hold no brief for the Union. On the other hand, I do not subscribe to the principle of divide et impero. If the Department must have a recognised union, I want to see it united, (a disunited union is a contradiction in terms) efficient and reasonable. As I see the position, the following are the definite disadvantages of Unions and Associations formed on a communal basis:-

(a) They will not be recognised by the Department. They cannot, therefore, send delegations to the authorities, nor will their references be answered or considered.

(b) They can do nothing that the recognised Union cannot do. Whatever advantages in the way of pay, conditions of service or stoppage of abuses that the recognised union has gained or may in future gain for the staff, apply to the whole staff and not to any particular communal portion of the staff. The principal object of a communal union can only apply to recruitment with which a Union has no concern. If recruitment is not effected in accordance with the orders of the Government, that is the concern - I may add, the anxious concern - of the Director-General. It is also the concern of the various political communal associations, which can and do bring pressure to bear on the authorities in this respect. But it is definitely not the concern of a Service Association. Nor is a Service Association permitted to interest itself with postings or with promotions. This being the case, a communal association or Union can gain no good by its formation.

(c) The greatest evil of a communal Union is that it must inevitably tend to foster the communal spirit. The higher an official rises in the department, the more responsibility he has to shoulder and the more men he has to control. If such an official is known to be a member of a communal association, is it humanly possible for him to command in his subordinates the same confidence and respect as he could do if he were known to belong to a union which has at heart the welfare of all without distinction of creed or community?

(d) I, therefore, appeal to all the staff of the department to abandon what is, I think, a suicidal policy and to refrain from joining any association or union formed on a communal basis. Our aim must be to make the recognised union truly representative of the great body of the staff concerned and as far as possible, composite of the main communities forming that body in so far as it may not at present be so; in other words, that all the staff should feel that they have a voice in its conduct, and that the management is not confined to any one community alone."

(The Indian Post, October 1931,
Vol.2, No. 10).

Efforts at Trade Union Unity:
Meeting of Madras Sub-Committee.

At a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Trade Union Unity, held on 11-10-31 at the Madras Branch of the M. and S. M. Railway Employees' Union, Periamet, it was decided that after holding one more meeting the Committee should close all evidence and proceed to draft the Committee's report to be placed before the All-India Trade Union Unity Conference to be held in December 1931. It is understood that among the subjects considered were (1) how far there was room for political action within the trade union movement and, if so, whether it should be Liberal, National, Socialist or Communist; (2) whether international affiliations should be permitted or merely tolerated and (3) whether the re-united All-India Trade Union Congress, if that was possible, should accept affiliation from local federations or directly through every union constituting those federations. The venue of the All-India conference would be decided at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee in the third week of November.

(The Hindu, 17-10-31).

All-India T.U. Congress Council.

The General Secretary, All-India Trade Union Congress, Calcutta, has issued the following communique under date 16-10-31:

"During the Christmas week of 1931 the Executive Council of the All-India Trade Union Congress will meet in Bombay for the disposal of several important issues now before the Congress. It is understood that the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Conference will also be held at the same time. The Trade Unions will, therefore, forward their proposals and resolutions which they desire to be discussed at the Council meeting, and also the names of their representatives who are to serve on the Council for the current year."

(The Times of India, 21-10-31).

Salary Cuts: Protests by Salaried Employees' Organisations.

The decision of the Government of India to make a ten percent cut in the salaries of government servants announced by Sir George Schuster on 29-9-1931 (see pages 53-55 of this report) has elicited ^{strong protests} from the organisations of salaried employees in India. Below are given the more important of ^{the} resolutions passed on this question by some of the prominent organisations of salaried employees in India:-

Imperial Secretariat Association, Simla. - At an extraordinary general meeting of the above Association held at Simla on 12-10-31, the following resolutions were passed:-

Resolved that, while fully appreciating the gravity of the emergency that has necessitated the decision arrived at by the Government of India that there should be a general cut in the salaries of Government servants, this Association considers

(1) That a cut at a uniform rate of ten per cent, inclusive of surcharge, on income-tax, contravenes the expressed desire of the Government that the sacrifice required of its servants should be on an equitable basis;

(2) That, in order to make the sacrifice equal to all classes of Government servants and to ensure that some Government servants are not forced to forego or curtail necessities while others continue to enjoy luxuries even on a reduced scale, the cut in salary, irrespective of surcharge on income-tax, following the principle on which tax on incomes is levied and the principle followed by His Majesty's Government in the application of which no administrative difficulty has been experienced, should be on a graduated scale, a higher percentage being applicable to higher salaries; and

(3) That in any case the cut should be confined to salaries and that no revision or cut in allowances at present admissible to members of the Secretariat establishment be made so long as the specific conditions necessitating their grant continue to exist.

Resolved that the Home Secretary be requested to receive a deputation of the Imperial Secretariat Association consisting of not more than four members in order to afford them an opportunity of representing personally the hard-ships involved in the present flat rate of 10 per cent proposed by the Government as cut in salaries. (The Hindu, 12-10-31.)

Non-Gazetted Government Officers' Association,

Madras Presidency.

The following resolutions were passed at a general body meeting of the Association held at Madras on 27-10-31:-

This association of the Non-Gazetted Officers of the Madras Presidency begs to represent that "prima facie" there is no case for any cut in their salaries and that, if at all it is necessary to effect any cut for the purpose of balancing the budget, they should come up last for consideration for the undermentioned reasons:-

(a) In connection with the general revision of pay and allowances, the Non-Gazetted Officers of this Presidency did not get any appreciable relief by way of enhanced pay and new allowances and were denied the benefit of their past services being counted for the purpose of fixing their initial pay in the revised scales, as the funds available had almost been consumed in affording relief to the superior services. (b) This association has been agitating for a committee of enquiry to revise the salaries of the Non-Gazetted Officers year after year without any effect so far. (c) The present fall in the prices of food-stuffs cannot be taken as sufficient reason to cut the salaries of the Non-Gazetted Officers, as these generally belong to the Middle Class whose other necessaries like milk, labour, medical relief, rent of houses, have not shown any decrease in prices. (d) An enquiry into the life of any Non-Gazetted Officer will show how far he is living in comfort or discomfort. A casual look into the accounts of Government Servants' Co-operative Societies will convince anybody that he is always in need. (e) Non-Gazetted Services employed under the Government of India were given higher scales of pay, with the benefit of counting their past service in fixing their initial pay while the Non-Gazetted Officers of the Local Government were denied such benefits.

This Association begs to represent to the Government that, in case there is to be any cut in the salaries of the Non-Gazetted Officers, those drawing a pay of Rs.125 or less should be left out of account, and the cut in the higher salaries should be on a graduated scale, the maximum cut not exceeding 5 per cent.

This Association begs to represent that there should be no reduction in the present scales of pay for future entrants as the minimum wage demanded by the association long ago has not yet been granted to them.

This association requests the Retrenchment Committee and the Government to eschew altogether from the scope of their deliberations connected with the retrenchment the question of reduction of establishment in offices which are not completely wiped off, as the present non-gazetted strength of all offices is pitched at the absolute minimum, consistent with efficiency and volume of work.

All-India Government Employees' Federation.

A meeting of the All-India Government Employees' Federation was held at Bombay on 24-10-31, when a resolution was passed protesting against the proposed uniform cut of ten per cent. in the salaries of all Government servants. It also urged Government to introduce a graduated cut with exemption for salaries below Rs.100. Another resolution protested against the proposed lowering of the income-tax level.

Mr. S.R.Davar, who presided over the meeting stated in the course of his speech, that "one failed to understand the equity of exempting the high-salaried officers from additional income-tax and at the same time bringing in the humbler class within the reach of that by lowering the scale of non-taxable income from Rs. 2,000 to Rs.1000". The low standard of living of clerks and other sub-ordinate employees was most undesirable as it reduced efficiency, destroyed health and lowered the morals of the people. Besides, the depreciation in currency and the rise in prices caused as a result, prices had further risen due to increased taxation on the necessaries of daily life. The claim that the cut should be graduated according to the actual salary drawn was therefore, most reasonable and just.

The meeting also resolved that a special joint conference representing all employees of the Imperial, Local and Semi-Government bodies, should be held in Delhi just before the November session of the Indian Legislative Assembly, began in order to protest against the Government proposals. (The Times of India, 27-10-31).

Economic Conditions.

The C.P. Money Lenders Bill, 1931.

Mr. R.W.Fulay, M.L.C. introduced a Bill (C.P.Bill No.XVII of 1931) in the Central Provinces Legislative Council on 29-8-31 to regulate the profession of money lending and to provide for the licensing of the persons who carry on money lending business. A motion for the circulation of the Bill to elicit public opinion on the Bill was carried on the same date.

The salient feature of the Bill is that every money lender in the province has to take a money lender's licence and the Bill enjoins him to regularly record and maintain an account of all transactions relating to loans, for each debtor separately, to furnish each debtor, every six months, with a legible statement of accounts, and to give a written receipt for all sums received from his debtors. The word "Loan" is defined in the Bill as

"an advance whether of money or in kind at interest and shall include any transaction, which the court finds to be in substance a loan, but it shall not include (a) a deposit of money or other property in a Government post office bank or any other bank or in a company or with a co-operative society, (b) a loan to or by or a deposit with any society or association registered under the Societies' Registration Act, 1860, or under any other enactment, (c) a loan advanced by Government or by any local body authorized by Government, (d) a loan advanced by a bank, a co-operative society or a company whose accounts are subject to audit by a certified auditor under the Companies Act, (e) a loan advanced to a trader, (f) an advance made on the basis of a negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, other than a promissory note, (g) a transaction which is in substance a mortgage or sale of immovable property."

The following are extracts from the Statement of Objects and Reasons for introducing the Bill:-

The Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee have found that there is a certain percentage of dishonest and unscrupulous money lenders who resort to underhand usurious methods for preying upon unsophisticated

and illiterate persons. They have, therefore, recommended that to prevent such money lenders from habitual misbehaviour, some legislation was necessary. At the same time, it cannot be denied that money lending has a utility of its own. The present Bill is designed to give effect to the recommendations of the Banking Enquiry Committee. The Bill is based on the Punjab Regulation of Accounts Act and the Money Lenders Act of Great Britain. The aim has been to secure, as between certain classes of money lenders and debtors, an improved system of keeping accounts which will give the latter the means of ascertaining periodically how their accounts stand and how they are composed. At the same time, the Bill designedly avoids any unnecessary degree of regimentation which might tend unduly to harass the lender and to constrict the facilities for credit so useful in the rural system of economy. Secondly, by expecting certain classes of loans it expressly avoids interference with accounts connected with trade and commerce. The definition of a loan embodies the experience gained by the courts in England in dealing with attempts made by money lenders to evade the Law. The penalty for non-compliance with the provisions of the Bill is in keeping with the spirit of the times. Licensing has been so kept that practically every honest money lender will have no difficulty in having a license. The penal provisions of the Bill are specially designed to counteract the evil and menace of the wily petty money lender and the Pathan money lender (petty money lenders usually dealing with the poor people).

(The full text of the Bill is published at pages 109 -114 of the Central Provinces Gazette, 3-10-31, No.40 Part VII).

Legislation Against Usurious Money Lending in India.

The following brief note on legislation against usurious money-lending in India is taken from an article published in the October, 1931 issue of the Anglo-Gujarati Quarterly Journal of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay (Vol. XXIV No. 4- pages 215-217).

(1) The Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act. - The most prominent legislative measure to protect the cultivators against usurious money-lenders is the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act. The Act was passed in 1879 and since then has been amended several times. Almost the whole of it is now applicable throughout the Bombay Presidency. The Act authorises the courts, in suits by or against agriculturists, to examine the history of the debt with a view to determine the sum that is rightly due to the creditor and also to reduce unreasonable rate of interest. According to public opinion, the Act has not proved successful and has done more harm than good. It has ~~xxxxx~~ created a feeling of distrust between debtors and creditors. Honest money-lenders prefer to

1.3.

refrain from granting loans to agriculturists who are thus put at the mercy of rapacious money-lenders who contrive to evade the provisions of law and charge very high rates of interest. Many influential bodies and persons acquainted with the working of the Act have demanded its repeal.

(2) Usurious Loans Act (1918). This Act is applicable to the whole of India. By it the courts are empowered in suits for recovery of debts to go behind the matters at issue and to enquire into the justness or otherwise of the rate of interest and other terms of the loan granted. The Act is very cleverly avoided and, as observed by the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India (1928) in their Report, "the Act is practically a dead letter in all provinces".

(3) The Punjab Regulation of Accounts Act (1929). - This is the most recent attempt to check usury by legislation. The Act assigns to the creditor the duty of maintaining and furnishing a separate account for each debtor, of transactions relating to the loan and of sending to each debtor in a prescribed form and language a half-yearly statement of accounts. The entries in books of accounts are made admissible as evidence for proving the transactions to which they relate. Penalties are prescribed for non-compliance with the provisions of the Act. The Act came into force from 1st July 1931. In 1928 when the Bill was introduced in the Punjab Legislative Council, the Indian Agricultural Commission had examined the provisions of the Bill and had recommended the principles underlying this Bill to the consideration of other local Governments.

Emergency Budget of G. of I : Cuts in Salaries.

Sir George Schuster, Finance Member, Government of India, introduced the Indian Finance (Supplementary and Extending) Bill to supplement the Indian Finance Act, 1931 (see pages 43-45 of March 1931 report and pages 69-71 of April 1931 report). The purpose of the Bill was to introduce an Emergency Budget for the 18 months period 1-10-1931 to 31-3-1933. The following are the main features of the Emergency Budget necessitated by the financial depression prevailing in the country:-

Temporary Surcharge on Existing Duties and Taxes. - There will be a temporary surcharge of 25 per cent on all existing duties and

4.

taxes, including income-tax and supertax but not including export duties. The surcharge on the income-tax for the present year will be $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the whole year's income. The exemption limit will be reduced and a tax of four pies in the rupee will be levied on incomes between Rs.1,000 and Rs.2,000 a year. The tax will be imposed at the rate of two pies for the current year and four pies for next year.

Higher Postal Rates. - Postal rates will be increased to $1\frac{1}{2}$ anna minimum (instead of one anna) for each inland letter and postcards nine pies instead of 6 pies.

Cuts in Salaries. - Emergency cuts in pay, wherever the Central or local Governments have the power to make the cut, will be 10 per cent on all salaries above Rs.40 a month, with the proviso that the question of the pay of the police will not be settled until after further consultation with provincial Governments. The Viceroy has voluntarily cut his salary by 20 per cent and Members of the Executive Council have cut their salaries by 15 per cent.

Legislation re Guaranteed Salaries. - His Majesty's Government have undertaken to introduce legislation in Parliament at the first opportunity to reduce the salaries which are guaranteed by the Government of India Act.

Expected Yield from Cuts in Salaries. - For the present year the cuts in civil pay are expected to yield Rs. ~~35~~ 3.5 millions and cuts in military pay Rs.2.5 millions. So far as concerns the cuts in pay of Government officials, Sir George Schuster said that if further increases of income-tax were to be added the result would be unfair. It is therefore proposed that increases of income-tax, both by way of surcharge on existing rates or owing to the reduction of the exemption limit, shall be merged in any general cut imposed on these salaries. On Army expenditure the minimum cut in two years is expected to reduce expenditure from Rs.550 millions to Rs.474 millions. For next year the civil retrenchment measures will yield Rs.25.0 millions, military retrenchment measures Rs.45.0 millions, cuts in civil pay Rs.11.5 million, cuts in military pay Rs.7.5 million. The total of cuts in pay and retrenchment next year is Rs.89.0 millions.

Increased Import Duties. - The following are increases in import duties:- Artificial silk, piecegoods, from 20 per cent (present rate) to 40 per cent. Artificial Silk yarn, from 10 per cent (present rate) to 15 per cent. Brown sugar, from Rs.6-12-0 a cwt. to Rs.7-4-0 a cwt. Boots and shoes: the duty will be 20 per cent or 4 annas a pair whichever is the higher. Camphor, 20 per cent to 40 per cent. Electric bulbs, 20 per cent to 40 per cent. As regards all these articles the surcharge will be levied on the increased duty. The new duties include 10 per cent on machinery and dyes and half an anna per lb. on raw cotton.

Government Facing Huge Deficits. - The total anticipated deficit for the current year and 1931-32 was nearly Rs.400 millions,

according to

said Sir George Schuster. The provisions of the Emergency Budget would ~~this year and~~ reduce it to Rs.100 millions this year and realize a surplus of Rs. 50 millions next year. The net deficit for the two years will be met by reduction of provision for debt reduction. Referring to the cuts in salaries, Sir George Schuster stressed the fact that there was no intention that these should remain operative after March 31, 1933.

Consideration Postponed to Special Session. The

attempt made by members of the opposition to oppose leave to introduce the Finance Bill was defeated by 57 votes to 43. The Finance Member, however, agreed to postpone consideration of the Bill to a special session to be held in November 1931.

(The Statesman, 30-9-31).

Agrarian Unrest in U. P.:

Threatened ~~of~~ No-Tax Campaign.

The prevailing financial depression and phenomenal fall in prices of agricultural products have been responsible for the creation of a great deal of agrarian unrest in India. The prevailing discontent has found its most intense expression in the United Provinces, where all classes of tenants have been, since last September, carrying on a concerted agitation for remission of rents. Despite the truce which followed the successful termination of the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations and the comparative lull in political activity consequent on the willingness shown by the Congress to participate in the Round Table Conference,

the agrarian unrest in the United Provinces is bidding fair to develop into a political and economic issue of the first magnitude which if allowed to gather force, would seriously threaten the continuance of the political truce. The U.P. Government, in response to the demands of the agriculturists of the province led by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, have already granted a certain percentage of remissions in rent payments, but the Congress party, which has taken the leadership of the tenants, is disputing the fairness of the rates allowed and is insistently pressing for further remissions, failing which the initiation of a no-tax campaign is threatened.

A Conference of the tenants of the Allahabad district, attended by over 3,600 peasants delegates, was held at Allahabad to discuss the question on 23-10-31 under the presidentship of Mr. P.D. Tandon. All the Congress leaders who spoke exhorted the tenants to arrive at a decision in favour of a no-rent campaign after deep deliberation and thought ^{that} for the brunt of the campaign would have to be borne mainly by the tenants but, at the same time, they expressed the view that, in their opinion the distress to which the tenants were reduced would only be relieved eventually by a weapon as effective as Satyagraha. Mr. Tandon announced that they had already received the blessings of Mr. Gandhi on the struggle that they were contemplating on account of inadequate remissions. Mr. Gandhi had cabled in reply to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that he (Mr. Nehru) might do what he considered best to meet the situation.

The following is a summary of some of the more important of the resolutions passed by the Conference:-

In the opinion of this Conference, the remission in rent announced for Allahabad district for the year 1339 Fasli is entirely inadequate and will not remove the misery of the tenants, which has ~~been~~ increased during the last one year and a half in prices. It will be impossible for the tenants to pay the rents demanded from them after allowing remissions. For the whole district the average of present remission per rupee is only 2 annas 7 pies while the price of food-grains during the last 2½ years has fallen by 55 per cent. In justice rent should also be reduced by 55 per cent on account of the slump in prices.

The poverty of the tenants in Allahabad district has increased, as is strongly evidenced by the fact that during the last 30 years the area of land under cultivation has decreased whereas the population has increased.

It is the considered opinion of the Conference that the principle which the Government has sanctioned in regard to rental remission is unsuited to the special conditions of this district. To reduce the rents merely to the level of 1900 A.D. is not just. As the District Congress Committee has already said the rents of 1898 A.D. should be reduced by 20 per cent. and a further remission of 10 per cent. should have been given in the reduced rents on account of rise in the cost of cultivation.

This Conference places on record the view that in case the Government does not adopt suitable measures for meeting the conditions of the tenants, then the tenants of the whole district will oppose the Government by resorting to the no-rent campaign and in this matter they will gladly carry out the instruction of the District Congress Committee in this behalf.

This Conference heartily approves of the application made by the District Congress Committee to the Provincial Congress Committee for permission to start Satyagraha in the shape of a no-rent campaign in Allahabad district. (The Pioneer, 25-10-31)

It is understood that the U.P. agrarian situation was one of the principal items on the agenda of the Congress Working Committee which met at Delhi on 27-10-31. The Pioneer of 30-10-31 states that steps are being taken by the authorities of the Allahabad District to avert the possibility of a no-tax campaign being started and that in order to understand better the Congress view-point and to find a solution for the problem they have decided to convene a conference to which the leading Congress-men of the district will be invited.

IHK.

Public Health.

Ahmedabad Industrial Housing Scheme :

Resolution Before Municipality.

At pages 21-24 of the September 1930 report and pages 40-41 of May 1931 report of this Office, references were made to a scheme which was under the consideration of the Ahmedabad City Municipality for the sanitary housing of the workmen of the city. A further step towards the attainment of the object was taken recently, when Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, the secretary of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association and the chief sponsor of the housing scheme, moved the following resolution at a meeting of the General Board of the Ahmedabad Municipality which was held on 27-10-31:

This

"~~The~~ Board resolves to alter the taxation schedule of terminal tax relating to cotton and iron, and that it shall be 1 anna and 3 pies. The alteration of the taxation schedule shall be notified for inviting public objections. The Standing Committee is requested to review the objections received and submit a report thereon for final adoption of the rules by the General Board and for obtaining sanction of the Government. (The alteration in the terminal tax is to finance the housing scheme)."

"This Board further resolves that a Special Trust Fund be created with the approval of the Commissioner. There shall be two parts of accounts: (i) revenue expenditure and (ii) capital expenditure. The former part shall show all receipts from the extra terminal tax from cotton and iron, and also the house-rent on the credit side, and all debt charges (interest and sinking fund) cost of management of the estate, and municipal taxes &c. on the debit side. The latter part shall deal with capital borrowings and expenditure therefrom."

"A loan application should be prepared by the Chief Officer for a loan of Rs.450,000 and submitted in the usual way to Government, in which the additional sources be pointed to Government, and it be made clear that the Municipality intends to introduce a hire purchase system, to the extent possible, to recoup the cost from tenement-owners, and that in case the net rental realised within five years is sufficient to meet the debt charges of the present loan, and the Municipality does not wish to extend the scheme for reason of the experimental scheme having failed to serve the intended purpose, the taxation will be reconsidered and the taxation schedule will be revised by remission or reduction."

"The Municipal Engineer be requested to prepare detailed plans, specifications and estimates making due provision for the needs and usages of the various communities, with regard to the situation and the type of the buildings, keeping in view that the cost of each dwelling, including the price of land, shall not exceed Rs. 1,000 and to submit within a month the same for approval of a Committee consisting of Seth Ranchhedlal Amrutlal and Messrs. Narmadashanker D.Mehta, Balvantrai Thakore, Narmawalla and Gulzari Lal Nanda. The chief officer shall submit to the same committee draft administrative regulations for the management of the estate".

Moving his resolution, Mr. Nanda traced the history of the movement to afford better housing for the working classes of the city and pointed out that the proposal moved by him was agreeable to all the parties. The millowners, he said, had declined to do anything in this respect on the ground that it was the business of the Municipality to provide sanitary houses for its population. While he did not agree with the attitude, he was not at present prepared to pick up a quarrel over the issue and he would be quite satisfied if the Municipality acted according to his proposal.

After some discussion on the subject, the Board adjourned, deciding that further discussion should be taken up at a subsequent meeting.

¶

(The Times of India, 30-10-31).

Health Conditions in Jharia Coal Mines, 1930-31.

Jharia Mining Settlement. - The population of the Jharia Mining Settlement in 1929 (Calendar year) was estimated to be 511,049 and in 1930 to be 518,031. There were 14,556 births (7,471 males, 7,085 females) during 1930 as against 12,598 (6,500 males, 6,098 females) during 1929. The rate of birth per mille was 28.09 for 1930 as against 24.65 during 1929. There is an apparent increase of 3.44 in the birth

rate. The report states that there is probably no real increase, the higher figure being due to improved collection of birth statistics. Till recently the Board was relying too much on the Birth Registers in the Police Stations. Orders were, therefore, issued early in 1930 that, while the Police Registers might always be consulted, the Board's staff were to make independent enquiries in the collieries and villages and collect statistics on their own initiative. In 1930, there were 8,380 deaths (4,394 males, 3,986 females) in the Settlement as against 8,882 (4,700 males, 4,182 females) in 1929, the rate per mille being 16.28 in 1930 and 17.38 for 1929. The rate of increase of population, that is, excess of birth rate over death rate was 11.91 in 1930 as compared with 7.27 in 1929.

Note on Colliery Population.-

From the Monthly Reports

submitted by Collieries, the ~~Average Daily Labour Force~~ employed in 1930 was 63,244 as against 61,816 in 1929. Of these, 31,336 men and 8,594 women were underground workers and 16,942 men and 6,372 women were above ground workers. *as against 39,350 (27,567 males, 11,783 females) underground workers and 22,466 (15,350 males, 7,116 females) above ground workers in 1929.* The figures show a marked decrease in the number of women working in collieries. The total number of births during 1930 among the colliery population was 1,586 (824 males, 762 females) as against 1,554 (816 males, 738 females) in 1929. The rate per mille was 16.72 in 1930 as against 16.76 in 1929. The total number of deaths in 1930 among the colliery population was 1,314 (732 males, 582 females) as against 1,435 (788 males, 647 females). The death rate per mille in 1930 was 13.85. During 1930, there were 118 cases of Cholera and 42 deaths, and 381 cases of Small-pox and 21 deaths in the Settlement. 518 accidents were reported during 1930, of which 133 were fatal, 284 cases were reported as recovered, and 101 were minor accidents,

as against 103 fatal accidents, 284 cases reported as recovered and 105 minor accidents in 1929.

Dhanabad Municipality. - The Jharia Mines Board of Health undertakes the administration of the Food and Drugs Adulteration Act, the control of epidemic diseases and all vaccination work within the Municipality. Sanitary conditions leave much to be desired. According to the report, the financial condition of the Municipality is largely responsible for this state of affairs, but the management of the municipality is also to some extent to blame.

Water Supply. - In 1930, ten collieries were connected to the Jharia Water Board mains, bringing the total number of connected collieries to 152. Forty-two still remain unconnected for various reasons but chiefly because they are small collieries and cannot afford a connection. Constant efforts are being made to induce the remaining collieries to link up with the Jharia Water Board's supply.

Housing. - The Board decided at its August 1930 meeting to revise ^{its} ~~their~~ attitude towards the housing problem on Collieries. In spite of the fact that the five years' programme initiated by the Board in 1923 (according to which every colliery was to replace annually 20 per cent of its non-standard housing and complete the work by 1927-28) was suspended and a general moratorium granted in 1926, there has continued to be a marked improvement in housing conditions. The Board decided that the moratorium should cease from February 1931 and that the better type of houses approved by the Board should be granted permanent licences. Non-standard houses which failed to secure approval were to be granted temporary licences, it being the policy of the Board to ensure that such type of houses ^{were} ~~were~~ completely demolished by May 1936. A third type

of houses which were condemned as unfit for habitation, the Board decided, should be demolished by June, 1931. Of a total of 31,891 houses on 1-1-31, 21,127 belonged to the first group, 10,438 to the second group and 326 to the third group.

Food Adulteration. - The campaign against the sale of adulterated or impure food-stuffs has been carried on with unabated vigour. In the latter months of the year, the percentage of samples which turned out to be genuine appeared to be appreciably higher, which was encouraging. There was a good deal of protest against the standard of pure ghee fixed in the Bihar and Orissa Food Adulteration Act. Certain defects in this Act were also pointed out. The matter has been represented to Government. In 1930, under the Food and Drugs Adulteration Act, 101 prosecutions were undertaken of which 85 resulted in convictions.

Maternity Scheme. - In November, 1930, the Board embarked on a Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme at a cost of Rs. 4,000 for one year. A Maternity Supervisor is employed by the Board to superintend the work of the midwives engaged by the Agents of certain adjacent Collieries near Kendwadih. There has been some difficulty in obtaining suitable midwives, but the work proceeds more smoothly month by month as the troubles inevitable at the beginning of such an undertaking are overcome.

(Extracted from the Annual Report of the Jharia Mines Board of Health for 1930-31 published in the supplement to the Bihar and Orissa Gazette, No. 40 dated 28-10-31. Pages 1098-1118)

(The Health conditions in Jharia Coal Mines during 1929 were reviewed at pages 5 to 8 of the January 1931 report of this Office).

Public Health.

Bogipalayam Housing Scheme, Madras.

At page 69 of the report of this Office for September 1931, reference was made to a scheme for abolishing the slums in Madras undertaken by the Madras Municipality. The scheme was inaugurated on 22-10-1931 by the opening of 180 houses which were recently constructed by the Municipality at Bogipalayam. The Bogipalayam housing scheme was begun two and a half years back, and out of a grant of Rs. 251,000 given by the Madras Government, about Rs. 180,000 have already been invested in the scheme. The scheme, as originally planned, was to acquire bit by bit the Bogipalayam cherries (slums) and as fresh houses were built, to persuade the inhabitants to vacate the insanitary areas, which were then to be raised, levelled, and drained. The rent of the new houses has been fixed at Rs.2 per house. In this connection, it may be noted, that the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Madras, provides similar dwelling houses for their employees at Rs. 1-8-0 for each house. (The Hindu, 23-10-1931).

Note on the slums of Madras. The following information regarding the slums of Madras is taken from an article on the subject contributed to the Hindu of 8-10-1931 by Mr. S.R. Venkataraman, a Member of the Servants of India Society.

Number of Slums.- The Madras slums are, chiefly industrial; a result of the influx of villagers seeking work in mills or factories. According to the figures furnished by the Corporation authorities, there are as many as 158 slums in the City of Madras. It has recently been computed that nearly fifty slums have not been included in the ~~sanitary survey of the slums that is now being carried out by~~ Corporation list. There are, therefore, about 200 slums distributed all over the city. The bigger ones consist of about 500 houses and of about 1,000 families; ^{and} the smaller ones consist of about 20 houses and of about 50 families. The Royal Commissioners on Labour in India say that, "in a city like Madras there are 25,000 one-roomed dwellings, sheltering 150,000 persons or one-fourth of the population. The general shortage of houses is so acute that many hundreds of

workers are entirely houseless and live on the streets or on the verandahs of godowns in the vicinity of the harbour".

Ownership of slums.- The slums in the city may be generally classified under three headings according to ownership. They are owned by either the Government, the Corporation or by private land-owners. For purposes of municipal administration, the slums owned by the Government and the Corporation are treated alike. That is, the Corporation can effect improvements in these cheries (slums) when funds are available, and can provide the fundamental civic services in these cheries or slums, like the provision of water taps, lights, latrine, bathrooms, etc. In privately owned slums, the Corporation is not in a position to effect sanitary improvements, because it is objected to by the government auditor. Out of the 158 cheries, 15 per cent. are government cheries, 13 per cent. Corporation cheries, and 72 per cent. privately owned cheries. As a rule, the cheries owned by the government and the corporation are better kept and attended to than the privately owned cheries from the point of view of sanitary arrangements, though they are far from being satisfactory.

Conditions in Slum Areas.- A standard hut constructed by the Corporation to house its menials, like the scavengers and sweepers, contains a living room about 8 feet by 10 feet with a verandah in front which has no roof. There is a verandah at the back which is roofed and is being used as a kitchen. The dimensions of the verandah will be about 4 feet by 10 feet. Besides this, there is a small courtyard at the back which is used for bathing and other domestic purposes. According to the writer of the article, this is scarcely sufficient to accommodate an average family of five members. But in the case of those sweepers and the scavengers, no family seems to consist of less than five members and the average in their case may go up to six or even seven members for a family. On inquiry it was found that each hut consisted of more than one family and some of the sweepers and scavengers had sub-tenants from whom ~~also~~ they collected rents. Numerous huts were found in which as many as four ~~families~~ families were living.

Privately owned cheries are the worst in this respect. They are very insanitary and the Corporation does not think it is its duty to attend to their sanitary needs. Out of the 115 private cheries on a rough calculation, about 30 of them belong to religious or communal bodies. The rest are owned by Mahomedans, Hindus and Christians.

Social and Economic Status.- It is also worth while to consider their social and economic status. Most of the people living in the cheries are poor labourers. They occupy the lowest position economically and socially. They lead a hand to mouth existence. Their poverty does not permit them to live in good locality in decent houses, but drives them to the slums where they construct a small house or hut at a cost of Rs. 10 or 15, or more according to their means. Those who are not in a position to build huts live in rented huts. People owning huts in private cheries pay to the land holder ground rent ranging from annas eight to Rs. 2 in the case of thatched buildings. The owner of a hut with a view to supplement his income lets a portion of his hut for rent making thus overcrowding in the cheri still worse.

The Madras Sanitary Welfare League. - The Sanitary Welfare League which has been recently started by those interested in the civic problems of the city, is conducting sanitary surveys into the condition of each slum. The League has the following objects:- (1) to carry on a campaign of sanitary education to investigate and assist in bettering conditions of living in the city; (2) to bring together persons and bodies interested in the sanitary improvement of the city, and to co-ordinate their work; (3) to focuss public attention on the main problems of sanitary improvements and to bring to the notice of the municipal authorities the sanitary needs of different localities in the city. Since it was started, about 20 workers have come forward now to work on behalf of the League. A questionnaire from the point of view of sanitation has been prepared and out of the 158 cherries, nearly 35 have been surveyed. After the survey is completed the information thus got is to be made available to the public in the form of a report.

(The Hindu, 8-10-1931).

Housing of Mill Operatives, Ahmedabad.

The Labour Office, Bombay, conducted an inquiry early in 1931 regarding mill chawls (cheap houses for labourers) in Ahmedabad. An inquiry of a similar nature was undertaken by the Labour Office in 1926 and the present inquiry brings up to date the data collected on this subject. The following information is summarised from the report:-

Extent of Housing Facilities. - Out of 69 mills working in Ahmedabad, 34 provide housing accommodation for some of their employees. The total number of workers in all the mills is about 70,000, of whom the workers in the 34 mills providing housing are 40,668, or nearly 58 per cent. No mill provides housing accommodation for all its members. The total number of tenements made available by mills is 3,708, of which 3,057 or 82 per cent. are one-roomed, 567 or 15 per cent. two-roomed, and the rest contain three or more rooms. Of the total number of tenements, only one per cent. is reported to be vacant. All the tenements are not necessarily occupied by the workers in the mills to which the tenements belong. The chawls are generally situated in close proximity to the mills.

Rents. - As regards rents, it is seen that the average rent for one-roomed tenements is Rs.3-5-3, for two-roomed tenements it is Rs.4-8-6 and for three roomed tenements, Rs.5-15-5.

rate

The most predominant rent is between Rs.4 and Rs.5. As compared with the rents prevailing in 1926, there is a rise of 2.3 per cent. in 1931 in the case of one-roomed tenements, of 1.2 per cent. in the case of two-roomed tenements, while the rents have remained the same in the case of three and four-roomed tenements. The rent charged by the mills to their operatives is usually appreciably below the economic rent.

Outsiders. - All the tenements are not occupied by workers in the same mill to which the tenements belong. No less than 892 tenements or 24.1 per cent. of the total are occupied by outsiders who do not work in the landlord's mill. Only seven mills have a rule to the effect that the tenements must be operated ^{operated by the} at the mill and only six of these mills observe the rule strictly. In the case of ~~the~~ ^{chawl,} one mill no tenant works in that same mill. In another only 2.8 per cent. and in a third only 5.5 per cent. of the tenements are occupied by workers in the landlord's mill.

Conditions of Tenancy. - In the majority of mills no special conditions are enforced. Only the usual terms of regular payment of rent and giving a month's notice before vacating are said to be applicable. In one mill no notice is necessary on either side and tenants may vacate and may be asked to vacate at any time. Another mill insists upon fifteen days' notice on either side. A third mill has a printed foot-note to every rent receipt to the effect that the only object of the chawls is to facilitate the safe and smooth working of the mill and whoever creates any mischief by drinking or otherwise will be evicted without notice. A fourth mill, which does not let out the chawl to outsiders and lets it to its workers at one-fifth of the economic rent, enforces the following conditions:- "The workmen employed in the mills and dwelling at the mill chawls should vacate the rooms three days prior to leaving the Company's service. The salary due will be paid after the room has been vacated. If the employee does not vacate the room after leaving the Company's service, he will have to pay such rent as will be determined by the Manager and the Manager is authorised and empowered to take possession of the room in what manner he thinks fit."

Right of Eviction. - The question of eviction assumes a serious aspect at the time of prolonged strikes. Two mills, which had prolonged strikes, felt the necessity for eviction. In one case all the tenants vacated without giving much trouble to the mill. In another case the tenants would not vacate although legal notice was given. Civil suits were filed against half a dozen tenants and the Court made them vacate. A similar trouble arose in the same mill during the progress of the same strike. All the tenants had been served with notice to vacate. An Inspector of the Labour Union was prevented by two watchmen of the mill from entering the mill chawl although he went in the company, and at the request, of a resident of the chawl. A criminal complaint was filed against watchmen as a test case and the Magistrate decided that the tenants could not be considered as trespassers during the period of notice to vacate, that they had a right to invite their friends and relatives

5.

to the chawl and that the invited friend although he might be working against the interest of the mill, had certainly a right to proceed to his friend's house.

(The results of the inquiry are published in full at pages 58 to 66 of the September 1931 ^{issue} of the Labour Gazette., Vol XI-No.1).

Women & Children.

6th Madras Women's Conference, 1931.

The sixth session of the Madras Annual Constituent Conference of the All-India Women's Conference on education and social reform was held at Madras on 24 & 25-10-31 under the chairmanship of Mess. E. McDougall, Principal, Women's Christian College, Madras. The following are some of the more important of the resolutions passed by the Conference.

1. World Peace. - The women of this Conference, realising the vital importance of disarmament for the peace and the happiness of the world, urge the women of India to give their whole-hearted support and sympathy to the World Disarmament Conference to be held in Geneva in February 1932.

2. Factory Inspectresses. - This Conference urges the immediate appointment of Inspectresses of Factories as laid down in the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India.

3. Child Labour. - (1) This Conference deplures the appalling conditions of labour in the Beedi factories and all other unregulated industries. (2) It welcomes and gives its whole-hearted support to Mr. Arasu's Bill for periodical inspection and regulation of Beedi (country cigarette) factories. (3) It urges immediate abolition, by law, of employment of children under 12 years of age in all unregulated industries.

4. The Madras Children's Act. - This Conference urges the amendment of the Madras, Children's Act, so that the seduction of minor children for immoral purposes either by parents or by others should be made punishable under law, as also the offence of juvenile begging.

(a) This Conference welcomes and gives its wholehearted support to Mr. F.E. James' Bill called the Madras City Beggars' Bill (1931).

(b) It is of opinion that the passing of the Beggars' Bill, though urgently necessary, will lay on the community, the responsibility for concerted efforts to provide homes and infirmaries for disabled and diseased beggars, and authorises the Constituent Committee of the All-India Women's Conference to appoint a Special Committee to make a survey of the existing institutions in Madras which might be used for this purpose.

(c) It draws the attention of the public to the undesirability of promiscuous and indiscriminate charity and strongly recommends that money now given to casual beggars be given towards the support of

existing institutions and the endowment of a fund for the provision of Beggar Homes and Infirmaries.

5. Compulsory Education for Muslim Girls. - This Conference urges upon the Muslim public and the Corporation of Madras, the desirability of extending the Scheme of Compulsory and Free Elementary Education to Muslim girls in the City of Madras.

6. Abolition of Devadasi Service. - This Conference draws attention to the fact that in Mysore, Travancore, Cochin, and Pudukottah States, the Devadasi service in temples has been totally abolished, and calls upon the Trustees of temples in Madras city to follow their example without delay.

7. Traffic in Women and Children. - (1) This Conference greatly deploras the limitations of the Act for the closure of brothels, the application of which is proposed to be restricted to the city area, and appeals to the Government to extend its operation to the whole of the Presidency.

(2) It appeals to the public and the Government for financial support to start "Rescue Homes" as has been done in Calcutta and Bombay.

(3) It is strongly of opinion that women probation officers should be appointed to assist the police department in the operation of the Act during the investigation for the rescue of minor girls.

(The Hindu, 24 & 25-10-31).

Crèches in Factories in the Bombay Presidency.

At pages 82-87 of the report of this Office for July 1930, a summary was given of the report of the Labour Office, Bombay, on the Mill crèches in Ahmedabad. A previous enquiry into this subject was made in 1926 and its results were published in the December 1926 issue of the Labour Gazette. Information regarding the present position of crèches in factories in the Bombay Presidency is the subject of a pamphlet published under Government auspices by ^{D.} T. G. ^m Cama, Inspector of Factories, and T.W. Johnstone, Chief Inspector of Factories, Bombay Presidency. A summary of the pamphlet is given at pages 153-157 of the October 1931 issue of the Labour Gazette, Bombay, (Vol. XI-No.2).

Maritime Affairs.

Administration of the Bombay Port Trust, 1930-31.*

The following information regarding the conditions of work ~~of work~~ ~~workers~~ in the Bombay Port is taken from the Administration Report of the Bombay Port Trust for the year 1930-31:-

Income and Expenditure.- The actual receipts of revenue for the year amounted to Rs. 24.927 millions. The actual expenditure for the year was restricted to Rs. 26.099 millions.

Import Trade.- The cargo handled at the docks and bunders amounted to 5,860,000 tons, a decrease of 828,000 tons as compared with the volume of the previous year. Imports accounted for about 50.3 per cent. and exports 49.7 per cent. of the total tonnage.

^{that} Export Trade.- In the export trade, the most noticeable feature was, in spite of the severe depression prevailing throughout the year, the export of raw cotton (Bombay's staple export commodity) remained about the same as ~~px~~ the previous year, viz., 2,722,000 bales in 1930-31 as against 2,793,000 bales in 1929-30. Increases in exports occurred under petrol (135,000 gallons), seeds (28,000 ~~gi~~ ~~gallons~~), groundnuts (14,000 tons) and twist and yarn (7,000 tons). On the other hand there were decreases under coal (22,000 tons), iron (17,000 tons), bulk liquid fuel (18,000 tons) and manganese ore (124,000 tons).

Vessels in harbour.- Vessels which entered the docks or were berthed at the Harbour Walls (excluding ferry steamers) totalled 1,970 with an aggregate tonnage of 4,773,492 net register, as against 1,965 vessels with a tonnage of 4,895,326 in the preceding year. The dry docks were occupied during the year by 156 vessels as against 169 vessels in the preceding year, 1929-30. The total tonnage decreased to 517,783 tons, being 44.721 tons less than the previous year.

Total Staff.- The total approximate number of staff employed during the year under review was 9,671 as compared with 11,236 during 1929-30 and 11,591 during 1928-29. Of these, 191 were permanent staff receiving salaries over Rs. 300 per mensem; 676 clerical staff and 1,127 out-door staff receiving salaries from Rs. 50 to Rs. 300 per mensem; 440 were permanent inferior staff on salaries under Rs. 50 per mensem; 932 temporary staff getting between Rs. 50 and Rs. 300; 2,851 temporary staff getting below Rs. 50 and 3,454 were daily paid workers.

Conditions of Dock & Labour.- The Docks Hamallage (Labour) Department met all demands for labour during the year. The attendance of the labourers continued to be satisfactory and was not affected by any industrial dispute. The average number of labourers engaged daily was 2,016 and the highest number of employed on any single day was 4,259. The total tonnage of goods handled during 1930-31 amounted to 3,650,241 tons, the inclusive labour charges averaging 3.86 annas per ton as against 4.05 annas per ton in 1929-30.

* Bombay Port Trust. Administration Report, 1930-31. *M. 55.*

Housing Conditions.- 329 of the 1,994 permanent superior staff, 126 of the 440 permanent inferior staff and 3,104 of the 7,237 temporary staff have been housed by the end of 1930 by the Port Trust. This represents a total housing of 36.8 per cent. of the total staff by the Port Trust. In consequence of the curtailment of the Capital programme, no further expenditure was incurred during the year on staff housing.

Fires and Accidents in Docks.- There were 11 fires at the docks, wharves and sheds and on board vessels and craft while in the docks. None were serious or involved loss of life. The number of accidents to persons in the docks was 566, of which 17 were fatal, 83 serious and 466 slight. Of the fatal cases, 4 were caused by falling into holds or ~~light~~ lighters, 6 by falling into dock basins, 1 by breakage of slings, and 6 were due to other causes. 6 accidents to vessels in the docks occurred during the year, none of which was serious. In 3 cases, Port Trust officials were held to blame.

Compensation for Injuries.- Following the practice obtaining on the Railways, the Board decided that Port Trust employees, incapacitated for further service on account of injury sustained while on duty, should be eligible for grant of retiring gratuity under the Trustee's rules in addition to the benefits admissible under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Maternity and Child Welfare Centres.- The Maternity Home and Infant Welfare Centre at the Port Trust dock labourers' quarters at Wari Bunder was well patronised during the year under report. The Infant Welfare Centre catered for the needs of 798 children of whom 161 came from the chawls and 637 from outside. The extension to the Maternity Home sanctioned last year was completed and opened in June 1930 at a cost of Rs. 10,157. The Report states that 14 beds are now available and the demand for admission continued to be heavy. The total number of admissions during the year was 455, of whom 54 were occupants of the chawls 49 were wives of Port Trust employees living outside the chawls, and 352 were outsiders living as far as Jacob Circle, Parel and Worli. The number of births registered was 403. The Trustees sanctioned the installation of electric fans in the Maternity Home and the provision of fly-proof doors and windows. Grants were also sanctioned for the initial cost of equipment and recurring expenditure in connection with ante-natal treatment of venereal disease in expectant wives of Port Trust employees.

(The report of the Administration of the Bombay Port Trust during 1929-30 is reviewed at pages 55 to 59 of our report for September 1930).

Indian Seamen's Grievances:

Representation to Government of India.

In pursuance of a resolution of the Councils of the Indian Seamen's Union and the Indian Quartermasters' Union, Mr. M. Daud, M.A., B.L., Bar-at-Law, President of the Unions, interviewed Mr. A. Raisman, I.C.S., Joint Secretary to the Government of India, Commerce Department, at Delhi on 26-10-1931. Mr. Daud raised (i) the question of introducing free and open system of selection for the seamen of all ratings including sailors, stokers and trimmers, etc; (ii) abolition of Government licensed shipping brokers as recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour in India; (iii) removal of undesirable persons from the Shipping Office at Calcutta; (iv) extension of the present three months optional period in the Seamen's Articles to 6 or 9 months with the usual 25 per cent. increment after 12 months of service; and (v) removal of the climatic bar at present imposed upon Indian seamen.

In placing these points for the consideration of the Government, Mr. Daud pointed out that bribery and corruption were still prevalent in the system of Indian seamen's recruitment and that the men of the lower ratings were forced to part with at least three months' wages in one year's service only for the purpose of being engaged on board ships. The Seamen's Recruitment Committee recommended the abolition of the present system as far back as 1922, and advised the setting up of a State Engagement Bureau on the lines of the recommendations of the International Labour Conference at Genoa in 1920. He ^{asked} ~~pressed~~ that, pending enforcement of the above, a free and open "muster" system for engaging seamen of all the lower ratings should be immediately introduced. Regarding the second point, he said

that it was high time that the brokers should be abolished as their presence in the system ^{is} ~~is~~ no longer necessary. As to the third point, he insisted upon the removal of undesirable persons from the Shipping Office, Calcutta, who were boycotted by the Union and whose licences were cancelled by the Government. These men created disturbances amongst the rank and file of seamen and were instrumental in bringing about more corruption in the already rotten system of engagement. As regards the fourth point, Mr. Daud said that the Union ~~will~~ ^{would} have no objection if the optional period be extended from three to six or nine months with the usual 25 per cent. increment in the wages.

Mr. Raisman, Joint Secretary, Commerce Department, Government of India, gave a sympathetic hearing and expressed his sympathies for Indian seamen, and promised to look into their grievances, and, after consulting other authorities, he promised that he ~~will~~ would communicate the Government's decision to the Unions within a short time. He further said that Government's Order in 1929 on the enforcement of the recommendations of the Seamen's Recruitment Committee were communicated to the Shipping Master, Calcutta, which spoke of selection of the leading ratings ~~xx~~ from registers to be maintained for the British India Line by the British India ^{S. N. Co.} and for other Lines by the Shipping Office. Regarding the lower ratings, they were also to be selected by the Marine Superintendents or the Ships' Officers for the British India ^{Co.} with the aid of the Serangs and the Butlers; and for other Lines by the Marine Superintendents or the Ships' Officers as each case may require.

In reply, Mr. Daud pointed out that in respect of the British India the words "with the aid of serangs or butlers" should be omitted, and the lower ratings also should be selected independently of the Serangs and the Butlers. And regarding other Lines, the Shipping Master, Calcutta, might be asked to enforce the Governments' Orders by which the seamen of the lower Ratings might be engaged independently of the higher ratings and without paying any bribes. Mr. Raisman promised to look into the matter.

It is also learned that Mr. Daud and Mr. Aftab Ally, President and General Secretary respectively of the Indian Seamen's Union, interviewed on 29-10-1931 at Calcutta Captain Thomas Kidd of the Bank Line, Ltd., and Captain Fitchet of the City Line of steamers and discussed with them the above matters raised with the Government of India, and ^{that} some understanding has been arrived at between the said Lines and the Union.

(Advance, Calcutta, 31-10-1931).

The Indian Seamen's Union, Calcutta: (Report for 1930-31).

On 31-3-1930 the total membership of the Union was 8,401 and an addition of 5,518 new members was made during the period under report, which brought the total membership to 13,919 on 31-3-1931. The subscription collected during the year amounted to Rs.15,216 and the balance with the Union after meeting the current expenses is 7,257. The Union tried to impress upon the mind of the employers that their interests would be better served by meeting the demands of the seamen but the seed of co-operation and good-will which was expected of them did not come forth. The grievances of the seamen

were duly placed in a detailed memorandum before the Royal Commission on Labour. Among the other activities of the Union, ~~the~~ was the rendering of accident, sickness, legal, medical, funeral, educational, unemployment and general benefits to the needy members during the period covered by the report. The Union also rendered valuable assistance in realising due compensation for accidents, and cancellation of unlawful fines to many of the members free of cost. The Union negotiated with the Bombay and other seamen's unions in connection with the formation of an All-India Seamen's Federation. During the year, the Union continued its affiliation with I.T.F., Amsterdam. During the period under review the Union was affiliated to the Indian Trades Union Federation. Mr. Fazlur Rahaman, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Union was nominated as an adviser to the Indian Workers' Delegate to the 15th session of the International Labour Conference.

(The Trade Union Record, October 1931,
Vol. II, No.8).

The Bombay Port Trust Employees' Union, 1930-31.

The ~~strength of~~ membership ^{of the Union} which ~~was~~ ^{under review} at the beginning of the year ~~was~~ 1,661, stood at 1,084 at the end of the year. The reduction in membership was due to discharges, retirement and arrears of subscription. The Union paid Rs. 325 to its members as benefit for retirement and Rs. 44 as death benefit. The Union disaffiliated from the All India Trade Union Congress and affiliated itself to the Indian Trades Union Federation. The Union tried without success to persuade the Port Trust authorities to provide quarters to the cranemen. As the result of negotiations carried on by the Union about 100 workshop hands who had been discharged were ~~not~~ allowed to work by turns. The following resolutions regarding the Constitutional changes were passed by the Union and were forwarded to the Government of India:-
 "(1) That the future Constitution for India should declare and guarantee to the workers, freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of association and right to strike. (2) The Constitution should provide for adult franchise as the basis of elections to the legislatures. (3) The Labour legislation and administration should be federal subjects. (4) The Federal Government should have the power of ratifying Conventions and secure its enforcement throughout the whole of Federal India". (The Trade Union Record, October 1931,
Vol. II, No.8).