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General.

The outstanding political events of the period under review are the Gandhi-Irwin Pact which was signed on 5-3-1931, and the ratification of the Pact by the Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress on 30-3-1931. The agreement between Mahatma Gandhi and the Viceroy and its ratification by the Congress have brought about a truce in the political situation. (The terms of the Pact are set forth in full detail in the cuttings under section "General" accompanying this report).

Apart from the ratification of the Pact, the most important resolutions passed by the Congress was the resolution on Fundamental Rights moved by Gandhi himself in the open session of the Congress on 31-3-1931. The following is the full text of the Declaration of Rights:-

"This Congress is of opinion that to enable the masses what Swaraj as conceived by the Congress will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them.

The Congress therefore declares that any constitution which may be agreed on its behalf shall provide or enable the W Swaraj Government to provide for the following fundamental rights of the people such as: (a) Freedom of association: (b) freedom of speech and Press: (c) freedom of conscience and free profession and practice of religion, subject to public order and morality: (d) protection of culture, language and script of minorities: (e) equal rights of and obligations of all citizens without any bar on account of sex: (f) no disability to attach to any person by reason of religion, caste or creed in regard to public employment, office or power or honour and the exercise of any trade or calling: (g) equal rights of all citizens of access to and use of public wells, public roads and all other places of public resort: (h) right to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulation and reservations made in that behalf.

(1) No person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be entered into sequestered or confiscated save in accordance with law:

(2) Religious neutrality on the part of the State:

(3) Living wage for industrial workers, limited hours of labour, healthy conditions of work, protection against economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment:

- (4) Labour to get free from serfdom or conditions bordering serfdom:
- (5) Protection of women workers and specially adequate provision for leave during maternity period:
- (6) Prohibition against employment of children of school-going age in factories:
- (7) Right of labour to form unions to protect their interests with suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes by arbitration:
- (8) Substantial reduction of land revenue and agricultural rent paid by peasants, and in the case of uneconomic holdings exemption from rent for such period as ~~may~~ may be necessary, relief being given to small zamindars whenever necessary by reason of such reduction:
- (9) Imposition of progressive income-tax on agricultural incomes above a fixed income:
- (10) Graduated inheritance tax:
- (11) Adult suffrage:
- (12) Free primary education:
- (13) Military expenditure to be reduced by at least one-half of the present scale:
- (14) Expenditure and salaries in the civil departments ought to be largely reduced. No servant of the State other than specially employed experts and the like is to be paid above a certain fixed figure which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 500 per month:
- (15) Protection of indigenous cloth by the exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country:
- (16) Total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs:
- (17) No duty on salt:
- (18) Control over exchange and currency policy so as to help Indian industries and bring relief to the masses:
- (19) Control by the State of the key industries and mineral resources:
- (20) Control of usury direct or indirect.

It shall be open to the All-India Congress Committee to revise, amend or add to ~~the~~ ~~foreign~~ foregoing ~~declaration~~ declaration so ~~far~~ ~~as~~ far as such revision, amendment, or addition is not inconsistent with the policy and principle thereof".

The extremist school of Congress opinion which is in a decided minority and which disapproves of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact found expression in the proceedings of the All-India Naujawan (New Life) Conference held at Karachi on 27-3-1931 under the presidency of Mr. Subash Chandra Bose. Mr. Bose, who advocates a socialist

republican form of government for India, outlined the programme of his party thus:- (1) Organisation of peasants and workers on a Socialistic programme: (2) organisation of youth into volunteers corps under strict discipline: (3) abolition of the caste system and eradication of social and religious superstitions of all kinds: (4) organisation of women's associations for getting our womenfolk to accept the new gospel and work out the new programme: (5) an intensified programme of boycott of British goods: (6) countrywide propaganda for explaining the new cult and for organising the new party, and (7) creation of new literature for propagating the new cult and programme.

The Legislative Assembly closed its Delhi Session on 1-4-1931.

Lord Irwin left Delhi for England on 14-4-1931. Lord Willingdon, the new Viceroy, is expected to reach Delhi on 18-4-1931.

References to the I.L.O.

An article under the caption "The League and India: Social Welfare Work", contributed by Mr. Arthur Davies, an ~~ex~~-Principal of the Madras Law College, is published in the Hindu of 3-3-1931 and the Statesman of 14-3-1931. The writer maintains that India's interest in the Geneva institutions would increase when she gets self-government and points out that India has consistently ~~shown~~ shown till now a genuine interest in the activities of the League and the I.L.O. Referring particularly to India's relations with the I.L.O., the writer points out that India has been an active and important member of the I.L.O. and says that Geneva has inspired recent Indian labour legislation greatly. The article also refers to the visit of Sir Arthur Salter and the Malaria Commission's Indian tour as more recent instances of Geneva's interest in India. The article concludes by stressing the great importance from the League's view point of sustained co-operation between ^{the} Geneva institutions and Asiatic countries.

... ..

The Times of India of 5-3-1931, in the course of an editorial on the decision announced by the Secretary of the American Cotton Manufacturing Association that 83 per cent of the textile industry in U.S.A. has decided to abolish the night work of women and children, takes occasion to point out that the continuance of the practice of the employment of women and children in the U.S.A. is to be attributed to the fact that the country is not a member of the I.L.O. The paper says:-

"If America had been a member of the I.L.O. - membership is not confined to members of the League of Nations - she would have been a signatory to the two Conventions designed to ~~the~~ put an end to every form of night work for women and children except nursing. Both England and India along with many other countries have the signature of these Conventions to their credit. Two important industrial countries - Germany and Japan - still tolerate night work for women and children; but they are not likely to refrain any longer from signing the Conventions as soon as they are faced with forcibly-expressed international criticism. It is also likely that in time a great deal of night work at present undertaken by men in factories and docks will be similarly abolished".

... ..

The Hindustan Times of 11-3-1931 and the Times of India of the same date publish the press communique issued by the Government of India announcing the three items on the agenda of the International Labour Conference to be held in May 1931.

... ..

In the course of his speech on 7-3-1931 made during the debate on the Round Table Conference in the Legislative Assembly, Mr. N.M. Joshi pointed out ^{that} ~~that~~ Indian labour wanted that, if India ~~was~~ were to have a federal constitution, labour matters should be treated as a federal subject instead of remaining a ^{central and} provincial subject as at present. He pointed out that a federation would have no interest at all for Indian workers, if labour legislation and labour matters are not going to be federal subjects. Mr. Joshi also pointed out the necessity of care being taken to ensure that Indian labour is not deprived of the international protection which it gets at present owing to India being a member of the I.L.O. (The speech is published in full in Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol. II, No. 10, pages 1662-1665.)

... ..

The Hindustan Times of 9-3-1931 publishes under the caption "The New Constitution and Fundamental Rights of the Workers", an article contributed by Mr. N.M. Joshi advocating that labour should be made a federal subject and not a provincial one in the future constitution of India. One reason ^{adduced by Mr. Joshi} for demanding that labour should be made a federal subject is that ^{it is only} by doing ^{it that} ~~so~~ ^{only} will India ^{will} be able to discharge effectively her obligations as a member of the I.L.O.

... ..

New India, Madras, of 12-3-1931 (Vol.IV, New Series No.50) publishes at page 2 a short note under the heading "Labour under a Federal ~~Constitution~~ Constitution". The note draws attention to that portion of the Report presented by the Deputy Director of the I.L.O., Geneva, on his American tour where he refers to the inability of Canada to ratify many of the I.L.O. conventions due to labour being a provincial subject in that country, and points out that this aspect should be given adequate consideration in framing the new constitution for India.

The Deputy Director's report is also reviewed in the Servants of India of 5-3-1931 (Vol. XIV, No.10) at page 119.

... ..

The Director of this Office delivered a lecture on "Labour in the New Constitution" at a meeting of the International Fellowship, Delhi, on 23-3-1931. The speaker made a strong plea in favour of the grant of adult franchise under the new constitution, as well as for providing adequate educational facilities to enable the worker to comprehend and exercise his civic rights. The speaker also

stressed the necessity for treating labour as a federal subject. The speech was followed by an animated discussion over the points raised by the speaker.

... ..

The Times of India of 11-3-1931 announces the placing by the Government of Bombay of Mr. N.A. Mehrban of the Labour Office, Bombay, on deputation to study the working of important industrial and labour organisations in Europe, including the I.L.O.

... ..

The Pioneer of 26-3-1931 reproduces an article published in the February 1931 issue of the "Industrial Review" (organ of the Trade Union Congress, London) under the caption "Shorter Hours demand before the I.L.O." The copy of the above article was forwarded to the Pioneer by this Office.

... ..

The Pioneer of 27-3-1931 publishes a communique forwarded by this office reviewing the I.L.O. publication, "Unemployment and Public Works".

... ..

The Hindustan Times of 30-3-1931, the Times of India of 31-3-1931 and all papers publish brief reports of the passing of the resolution moved by Sir Joseph Bhore, Member, Industries and Labour, in the Council of State on 28-3-1931 recommending the Government of India not to ratify the I.L.O. Draft Convention concerning the regulation of hours of work in commerce and offices, and the Recommendation

concerning hours of work in hotels, restaurants and similar establishments, in theatres and other public places of amusement, and in establishments for the treatment of the sick or the mentally unfit. A full account of the debate in the Council of State on this resolution is given at pages 12-14 of the report of this office for this month.

... ..

The Statesman of 29-3-1931 publishes a review of the book "The Industrial Efficiency of India" by Mr. R.K. Das of the I.L.O., Geneva.

... ..

New India of 26-3-1931 (Vol. IV, New Series No. 52) publishes at pages 10-12 a ^A/₂ "Note on Unemployment" contributed by the Director of this Office. The note deals with the efforts of the I.L.O. to explore the causes of unemployment with a view to devise adequate solutions for unemployment.

... ..

New India of 26-3-1931 (Vol IV, New Series No.52) publishes at pages 5 to 6 a letter from its London Correspondent Mr. Basil P. Howell, in the course of which the report submitted by the Indian employers' delegation to the 14th Labour Conference is reviewed. The writer draws the attention of Indian trade unions to the proposal for maintaining a permanent delegation of Indian employers at Geneva, and advises them to closely watch developments. It is suggested that the advantages secured through a permanent delegation of employers at

Geneva would give employers' delegations to I.L. Conferences a decided "pull" over workers' delegations.

... ..

Indian Finance of 21-3-1931 (Vol. VII, No.11) publishes at page 380 the Geneva communique on "Population and Unemployment". A copy of the communique was forwarded to the journal by this office.

... ..

The March 1931 issue of the Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur, (Vol. VIII, No.6) publishes at pages 114-115 the latter portion of the article "Labour Legislation in India" by Mr. R.K. Das which appeared in the November 1930 issue of the International Labour Review. The first portion of the article was published in an earlier issue of the Indian Labour Journal.

... ..

The March 1931 issue of the Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur, (Vol. VIII, No.6) publishes extracts from the speech delivered by Mr. T.G. Russel in the Council of State on the introduction of the Railway Budget, for 1931-32. In the course of the speech ~~of~~ Mr. Russel referred to the steps taken by the Government of India to make hours of work on Indian Railways conform to the Washington Hours Convention. (A summary of Mr.Russel's speech is given in the section of this report dealing with Conditions of Labour, vide pages 19—21).

... ..

The February 1931 issue of the M.& S.M. Railwayman, Madras, (Vol. II, No.8) publishes an editorial article under the caption

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"Retrenchment Menace" in the course of which the journal challenges the Government of India's statement in ^{its} the annual report ^{to} of the I.L.O under clause 418 of the Peace Treaty that there is no industrial unemployment in this country. The article further accuses the Government of taking no action on the Washington Unemployment Convention which India has ratified.

The article is reproduced at pages 121-125 of the March 1931 issue of the Indian Labour Journal (Vol. VIII, No.6).

... ..

The March 1931 issue of the Indian Labour Journal (Vol.VIII, No.6) publishes at page 126 Mr. N.M. Joshi's estimate of the Round Table Conference from the labour point of view, a reference to which was made in the ^{an} earlier report of this office (vide, page 7 of the February 1931 report).

The same issue of the Indian Labour Journal publishes the full text of the speech delivered by Mr. B. Shiva Rao at the plenary session of the Round Table Conference, a reference to which was made at pages 6-7 of the February 1931 report of this office.

... ..

The March 1931 issue of the Indian Labour Journal in its Notes and News columns publishes a note on the recent inquiries conducted by the I.L.O. on Unemployment.

... ..

The Abstract of Proceedings of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for February 1931 publishes the reply sent by the Chamber to the Government of India regarding the Chamber's views on giving effect to

the Recommendation adopted at the 12th International Labour Conference on the subject of the prevention of industrial accidents.

... ..

The March 1931 issue of the Indian Post, Delhi, (Vol.II, No.3) publishes at pages 83-88 an article under the caption "Organised Labour and the Body Politic" contributed by Mr. S. Keshoram, a member of the Staff of this Office. The article deals first with the influence of the I.L.O. on trade unionism all over the world and next with the bearings of the social tendencies of the I.L.O. on the future ~~constitution~~ constitution of India. (A copy of the March 1931 issue of the Indian Post was forwarded with this office's minute H 4/327/31, dated the 16th April 1931.)

... ..

India and the Regulation of Hours of Work in Commerce
and Offices, Hotels, Restaurants, etc.

Council of State Proceedings.

The following extracts are taken from the Council of State debates of 28th March 1931:-

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore (Industries and Labour Member): Sir, I beg to move the following Resolution:

"That this Council 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 Commerce and 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."

Sir, in moving this Resolution I should like to explain that we are bound, in ordinary circumstances within one year and in special circumstances within 18 months of the date of the Conference at which these Draft Conventions and Recommendations are adopted, to bring them before the Indian Legislature for ratification or for authoritative non-acceptance, In pursuance of that obligation I am making this motion today. So far as the Convention is concerned,

Sir, I think the matter is a fairly simple one. If we accept a Convention we have to accept it in toto. We cannot adhere to one part of it and dissociate ourselves from another part of it. If therefore any part of a Convention, however small a portion of the whole it may be, - if any part of such a Convention is unacceptable to us we have no option but to reject the entire Convention. Now, I think that the House will agree with me that so far as this particular Convention is concerned, we have no option but to reject it. Before we begin to think of regulating hours of work in establishments and employments so varied as those which fall within the ambit of the elastic formula adopted in the Convention, we should have information, which we do not possess, in regard to the conditions prevailing in the numberless variety of cases which it is proposed to cover in the Convention under the designation of Commercial and Trading Establishments. If we desired any justification for our contention we should find it in the attitude of the Labour British Government which has refused to ratify this Convention until it has examined the conditions prevailing in the various classes of occupation covered by the Convention and in which the hours of employment are as yet unregulated. I come next, Sir, to the case of the Recommendations. These Recommendations are that special inquiries should be made to ascertain the conditions prevailing in hotels, restaurants, boarding houses, clubs, cafes and similar establishments which are exclusively or mainly engaged in providing board and lodging or supplying refreshment for consumption on the premises, in theatres, music halls, cinemas and places of public amusement generally, whether indoor or outdoor, and in establishments for the treatment or the care of the sick, infirm, destitute or mentally unfit. The reasons, Sir, why I am advising this House not to accept

these Recommendations are briefly these. Inquiries in regard to the conditions prevailing in so varied a list of establishments and under-takings would necessarily involve heavy expenditure. That expenditure must fall upon Provincial Governments and I think it would be unfair without their consent to bind them to such investigation. So far as we are able to forecast the views of Provincial Governments, there seems little likelihood that they will agree to such enquiry. Moreover, Sir, unless we have definite prima facie evidence to suggest the need for such an enquiry - and I ~~may~~ may say definitely we have no such evidence - we feel that we should not be justified in starting a roving investigation which may unsettle the relations of employer and employed, on the mere chance of our finding defects. There is a strong and growing labour movement in this country. There are trade unions whose vigilance in matters pertaining to conditions of work can be relied on. There ^{are} provincial Legislatures and Local Governments who are not unmindful of the claims of labour to fair and just treatment. If any of these authorities brought to our notice the existence of conditions necessitating investigation we should certainly take cognisance of the matter. The point that I wish to emphasise here is that the non-acceptance of these Recommendations does not commit us to inaction. If ^{at} any ~~any~~ time prima facie evidence were placed before us which we considered would warrant an investigation, we should certainly reconsider our position.

Sir, I move.

The motion was adopted.

(Extracted from the Official report of the Council of State of State Debates - Vol. I, No. 17, pages 396-397).

National Labour Legislation.

An Act further to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1911,
for^a certain purposes.

Act No. XIII of 1931.

The Indian Factories Act, 1911, contains no specific provision empowering Local Governments to frame rules to provide for the prevention of fires in factories. The necessity of making legal provision for enforcing such safeguards has come into prominence owing to the fires that have recently occurred in a match factory in Burma where the filling of match boxes is done by hand, a process which involves a considerable risk of fire in the absence of proper safeguards. It has, therefore, been found necessary to insert a new clause in sub-section (2) of section 37 of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, specifically empowering Local Governments to frame rules for the object in view.

A Bill was introduced for this purpose in the Legislative Assembly on 16-3-1931 and was passed by the Assembly on 28-3-1931. The Bill received the assent of the Governor-General on 5-4-1931. The following is the full text of the Act:-

Act No. XIII of 1931

An Act further to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1911, for a
certain purpose.

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Indian Factories Act, 1911, for the purpose hereinafter appearing; It is hereby enacted as follows:-

XII of 1911.

Short title¹. This Act may be called the Indian Factories (Amendment) Act, 1931.

XII of 1911.

Amendment of section 37, Act XII of 1911. 2. After clause (1) of sub-section (2) of section 37 of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, the following clause shall be inserted, namely:-

"(11) precautions against fire;"

(The Gazette of India, 11-4-1931, No. 15,
Part IV, page 24).

Extension of Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923,to Aerial Ropeway Workers.

At page 9 of the report of this Office for September, 1930, reference was made to the intention of the Government of India to extend the application of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, to aerial ropeway workers. The proposed extension has now been made effective and the following Notification has been published in the Government of India Gazette dated 14-2-31.

No.L.-1756 dated 12th February 1931 of the Department of Industries & Labour - Whereas the Governor-General in Council by notification in the Department of Industries and Labour, No.L.-1756, dated 11th September 1930, gave notice of his intention to direct that the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 (VIII of 1923), shall apply to persons employed in the occupations hereinafter declared to be hazardous occupations;

Now therefore in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (3) of section 2 of the said Act, the Governor-General in Council is pleased to declare that the occupation of all persons engaged in constructing, maintaining, dismantling, altering or repairing aerial ropeways is a hazardous occupation and to direct that the provisions of the said Act shall, subject to the provisions of the said sub-section, apply in the case of any person who is employed in such occupation.

(The Government of India Gazette, 14-2-31, No.7, Part I, Page 131)

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The Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Act, 1931.

At pages 8 to 15 of the Report of this office for the month of December 1930 the full text of a Bill to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 15-1-1931 was reproduced. The Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 18-2-1931 and it received the assent of the Governor General on 17-3-1931. Since the Act (Act No. IX of 1931 - An Act further to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, for certain purposes) as finally passed incorporate no changes from the Bill as it was when introduced in the Assembly, its text is not reproduced here.

(The Gazette of India, 21-3-1931, No.12,
Part IV, pages 11 - 14).

Note.- Please make the following change in the text of the Bill given at pages 8 to 15 of the report of this office for December 1930:-

In sub-section (d) of section 37 B for the words "Where any young person is to be employed" (see page 9) substitute "~~Where~~ such young person is to be employed".



General Funds of Trade Unions:Extension of Scope of Spending.

The following Notification extending the scope of objects on which the general funds of a registered Trade Union may be spent, is published in the Gazette of India dated 28th March 1931:

No.L.-1766. - In pursuance of clause (k) of section 15 of the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926 (XVI of 1926), the Governor - General in Council is pleased to notify the following as objects on which the general funds of a registered Trade Union may be spent, namely:-

- (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.

(The Government of India Gazette, 28-3-31, No.13., Part I, Page 244).

Retrenchment in Railway Workshops.

In view of the crippled condition of railway finances (see page 24 February 1931 report) the Railway Board has decided upon a policy of drastic reduction in the personnel of the railways. The Secretary of the Railway Board has in this connection, issued on 7-3-31 a circular letter on the question of the reduction of the Workshop Staff stating that individuals should be selected for discharge in the following order: (a) Those who are ~~least~~ ~~effi~~ inefficient; (b) those who are least efficient; (c) those who have short service; (d) those who are nearing the ^{age} of superannuation. The letter states that practical steps should be taken to see that the work of reducing the staff does not operate to the detriment of communities not at present adequately represented in the Railway services. (The Times of India, 9.3.31).

In pursuance of this ~~decision~~ ^{decision}, the management of the East Indian Railway have decided to dispense with the services of about 1200 men employed in the Lillooah workshops. The dismissed workers are to be given the bonuses due to them and free passes to their homes.

Railway Budget (1931-32) and Service Conditions
of Railwaymen.

At pages 24-27 of the report of this office for February 1931, a summary ^{was} given of the speech delivered by Sir George Rainy, Member for Commerce and Railways, in the Legislative Assembly while

introducing the Railway Budget for 1931-32 . The Railway Budget was presented to the Council of State by the Honourable Mr. T.G. Russel, Chief Commissioner for Railways, on 17-2-31. In the course of his speech introducing the Budget, Mr. Russel made the following references to the conditions of service of railway employees.

Increases in Wages. - First, with regard to wages, the investigation started last year into the rates of pay of the lower paid employees had been concluded, so far as the State-managed Railways were concerned, and schemes of improvement ^{have been} sanctioned for persons in inferior service on the Eastern Bengal, Great Indian Peninsula and East Indian Railways estimated to cost a recurring amount of Rs.450,000 on the Eastern Bengal and Rs.500,000 on the Great Indian Peninsula Railways and Rs.1.1 millions on the East Indian Railway, as also for workshop employees of the Eastern Bengal ~~Rail~~ and East Indian Railways, costing Rs.500,000. Revisions of pay had also been sanctioned on some of the Company-managed Railways: thus on the Assam Bengal Railway the pay of persons in inferior service and of the lower paid subordinate staff had been revised at an annual cost of Rs.125,000; on the Madras and Southern Maharatta Railway the pay of the clerical, lower subordinate, menial and workshop staff has been revised at an estimated annual cost of Rs.450,000. Following the revision of wages on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway an investigation had also been made into the wages of the lower paid employees of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.

Hours of Work. - As regards Hours of Work, the speaker recalled that a Bill amending the Indian Railways Act with a view to giving effect to the provisions of the Washington and Geneva Conventions was passed by the Legislative Assembly on the 27th February, 1930, and by the Council of State on the 19th March, 1930.. Soon after the passage of the Bill, a senior officer was placed on special duty with the Railway Board to direct and co-ordinate the working out of the schemes on the various railways through the agency of officers placed on special duty on individual railways for the purpose and it was expected that the Hours of Employment and Periods of Rest Rules which had been made in pursuance of the Act, would be fully introduced on the North Western and East Indian Railways with effect from the 1st April, 1930, on the Eastern Bengal and Great Indian Peninsula Railways some six months later and on Company-managed railways after a year or so. The total cost of these schemes was estimated to be Rs.4.5 millions per annum on account of additional staff and Rs.7.5 millions under capital for the provision of their quarters.

Speeding up Wage payments. - The question of speeding up payments, Mr. Russel said, had also received attention and a scheme had been introduced on one division of the East Indian Railway to ensure that the payments of salaries and allowances would be made within 7 and 14 days respectively of the close of the month to which they relate. Similar arrangements were in course of extension to the other divisions of the railway.

Debits. - As a result of complaints made by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation that debits were raised against the staff in trivial matters and without proper enquiry, the speaker said, that the Government of India had placed a senior Traffic Officer on special duty to enquire into the existing procedure on the East Indian Railway and that they are awaiting his report.

Education of Children of Employees. - The speaker also drew the attention of the House to the placing of an officer of the Education Department on special duty to frame an estimate of the cost of introducing new rules for the grant of assistance to railway employees towards the education of their children and to report on certain other outstanding questions in that connection, such as the standard of education up to which assistance should be given and other cognate matters. In the meantime the Railway Board have issued provisional rules for the grant of such assistance so as to eliminate all racial discrimination for future employees.

Indebtedness. - On the question of devising measures to combat the evil of indebtedness particularly among the lower paid employees the speaker said that the subject had received attention and a new fund called the 'lower paid staff loan fund' had been constituted on the East Indian Railway with the object of advancing loans at reasonable rates of interest to such employees.

Administration of Fine Funds. - The Government of India had also decided to replace the existing fine funds on the State-managed railways by staff benefit funds which is to receive a contribution from revenue in addition to fines and provident fund bonuses which are to be withheld under the rules from subordinate employees, and which ~~is~~ to be managed by the representatives of the staff.

Cost of Improvement Schemes. - Mr. Russel estimated the total cost of all these schemes for welfare and improvement in the service conditions of the staff to be 4.3 millions during the current year and 8.3 millions during the next year while the ultimate cost is estimated to mount up to a 15 millions rupees; over and above this recurring cost from revenue was the capital expenditure of 2.5 millions already incurred and a further 5 millions to be incurred during the next few years on the provision of quarters for the additional staff required to give effect to the Hours of Employment Regulations.

Re-employment of G.I.P. Strikers. - Finally referring to the question of the re-employment of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway ex-strikers of whom about 5,000 men are, according to the latest reports, still out of employment, the speaker assured the House that the matter was continuing to receive special attention and instructions had been issued to all the State-managed railways in India to give preference to them (including such of them as failed to offer for duty within the period prescribed in the Government of India Communique of March 1st, 1930) in filling posts for which they may be qualified over outsiders.

Jute Mill Strikes, Calcutta.

At pages 11-12 of the report of this office for February 1931, reference was made to the decision of the Indian Jute Mills Association, Calcutta, to make a further reduction of working hours in jute mills, to seal a certain percentage of Hessian looms and to introduce single-shift working from 2-3-31. The strike declared on 19-2-31 by the workers of the Lawrence Jute Mills, Calcutta, consequent on the introduction ^{of the} single-shift system (see page 12 of February 1931 report) ended on 2-3-31 and the strikers resumed work unconditionally. Fresh labour troubles, however, broke out among jute workers on 6-3-31, when 10,000 operatives belonging to the Union South Mill and the Clive Mill, managed by Bird & Company, struck work by way of protest against the dismissals of between 3000 and 4000 workers of the two mills due to the introduction of the single-shift system. (The Hindu, 7-3-31). By 11-3-31 the trouble spread to several other jute mills, with the result that about 13,000 workers were rendered idle consequent on lockouts being declared by the managements of the Delta, National, and Belvedere Jute Mills, belonging to Messrs Andrew Yule & Co. Ltd. (The Statesman 13.3.31). On 21-3-31 two more mills, the Lawrence Mill and the Albion Mill, had to close down owing to the operatives going on strike. On 18.3.31 the strikers marched to Calcutta ^{with} ~~at~~ the object of staging a demonstration before the Bengal Legislative Council and at a meeting held on the same day it was decided to send a memorandum to Government explaining the grievances of the jute workers (The Hindu 21-3-31).

Miss Prohabati Dasgupta, President of the Bengal Jute Workers' Union, has issued on 18.3.31 the following statement regarding the condition of the Jute operatives:-

From the 2nd March, the Jute Mills have closed down 15 per -

cent of the looms. According to the information supplied to the Bengal Jute Workers' Union, about 80,000 workers have been thrown out of employment. The figures are stated to be too high an estimate; in any case according to all accounts no less than 50,000 have been turned out. And as to those who are still in the mills - weavers, spinners and others, men, women and children - have suffered a drastic reduction in their income. As the workers have been advised not to go on strike at this moment, they are still at their work, except one section that has been locked-out. The mills can light-heartedly declare a short lock-out now, and thereby improve their financial position and clear their accumulated stock. But a few months hence, possibly earlier, the mills will find that a strike or lock-out means a serious loss to them. The mill-hands have just got their wages under the new scale of calculation, and now realise how they have been skillfully deceived.

The management is in error if it thinks that the union will submit to the exigencies of the present position of advantage of the employers. There is ~~the~~ permanent reserve of the unemployed about the mill area. To that may be added the 50,000 or more thrown out recently. Both will not doubt be sought to be utilised to break any strike that may be declared now or later. But the workers' solidarity, if it counts, will find a better opportunity to bring the management down on their knees.

(The Hindu, 21-3-31).

HHK.1.

Madras Labour Department and the Depressed Classes,* 1929-30

The following details regarding the work of the Madras Labour Department for the uplift of the depressed classes is taken from the Administration Report for 1929-30 of the Commissioner of Labour, Madras, submitted to the Madras Government. Ameliorative activities on behalf of the depressed classes by way of systematic work, through the agency of a special staff, were extended during the year to three more districts and with this extension the special staff was at work during the year in ~~th~~ nineteen districts. In most districts, the usual policy was followed of concentrating the work on a few taluks (sub-divisions of districts) at a time, new taluks being taken up when the work in the earlier taluks was finished. In the districts of Tanjore, Trichinopoly and South Kanara, however, the work has spread to all the taluks. There was no change in the policy of the Department in regard to the work of the amelioration of the condition of the depressed classes. It was continued on the same lines as in previous years and comprised the following:-

- (1) Provision of house-sites for the relief of congestion in *(dwellings of depressed classes)* cheris, and for the purpose of freeing the depressed classes from oppression by their landlords;
- (2) Organization and running of co-operative societies;
- (3) Organization and running of schools to provide special educational facilities for the depressed classes, granting of scholar-

* Government of Madras. Public Works and Labour Department. (Labour). G.O.No.178 L., 21st January 1931. Labour Department - Administration Report for 1929-30. pp.3 + 70.

ships , stipends and boarding grants to depressed class students, maintenance of hostels, etc.;

(4) Provision of drinking water facilities by constructing new wells and repairing old wells;

(5) Provision of pathways, burial-grounds and sanitary requirements ;

(6) Arranging for the assignment of land for cultivation;

(7) Arranging for the lease of lanka lands.

The work done under the various heads mentioned above is described in detail in the following paragraphs.

House-Sites. - There are two ways in which house-sites are provided for the depressed classes, viz., (1) assigning free of cost waste lands or suitable ^(land belonging to Government) poramboke lands at the disposal of Government, (2) acquiring land from private parties, at the cost of Government in the first instance, and assigning them to the depressed classes, the cost of acquisition over and above an initial deposit made by the assignees being treated as a loan and recovered in easy instalments either directly or through co-operative societies organized for the purpose. An extent of 687.48 acres of Government land providing house-sites for 2,948 families was assigned during the year. The total number of house-sites provided by the assignment of Government land since the commencement of the work of the special staff of this department is 28,336. The total extent acquired from private parties for the provision of house-sites ~~provided by~~ during the year was 225.28 acres and the cost involved was Rs.134,860. The number of house-sites provided by this method during the year was 3,900 making a total of 34,126 since the commencement of the special operations.

Co-operation. - The organization and working of co-operative societies amongst the depressed classes progressed on the usual lines in the 19 districts in which the special staff was working. The societies that were functioning during the year were under one or other of the following categories:-

- (i) Societies for obtaining loans for the acquisition of house-sites;
- (ii) Societies for obtaining loans for agricultural purposes such as the purchase of cattle, seeds, ploughs, etc.;
- (iii) Societies for flood relief;
- (iv) Rural credit societies; and
- (v) Societies for collective bargaining.

Government as usual financed the first three kinds of societies, while the rest were financed by Co-operative Banks, chiefly the Madras Christian Central Co-operative Bank. There were 1,669 societies at the beginning of the year. ¹⁰⁸ One hundred and eight societies were registered during the year, 92 societies were transferred to this department from the control of the Co-operative Department in areas newly taken up by the Special Labour staff, and 59 societies were wound up. Thus, there were at the end of the year, 1,810 societies working under the control of this department. In order to place the activities of the Co-operative activities of the department on a sound basis, the Government sanctioned the appointment of a Deputy Registrar of Co-operative Societies to work under the Labour Commissioner.

Education. - The work of the department in promoting the spread of education among the depressed classes, which is one of its most important ameliorative activities, comprises the following:

- (i) endeavouring to obtain admission wherever possible for depressed class pupils to existing elementary schools, and where this is not practicable starting separate elementary schools for them;

- (ii) granting of scholarships;
- (iii) granting of stipends for teachers' training;
- (iv) maintenance of hostels for students of the depressed classes, and awarding boarding grants to deserving depressed class pupils; and
- (v) granting of financial aid to philanthropic bodies working for the educational advancement of the depressed classes by maintaining schools, hostels, etc., for the depressed classes.

In most rural areas the caste people in general were still opposed to the spread of education among the depressed classes and to the admission of depressed class children to the ordinary taluk board or aided schools, Government have repeatedly laid down that no elementary school under public management or receiving aid from public funds should exclude any community on the ground of the caste or creed to which that community belongs. But caste prejudices were still so strong in many rural areas, that it was frequently impossible to secure admission for the depressed classes to the ordinary elementary schools. [1,407 labour schools were working at the beginning of the year. Two hundred and thirteen schools were started during the year and 37 schools were closed. There were thus 1,583 schools working at the end of the year. 1,428 of these were day schools, 66 were night schools and the rest were combined day and night schools. A total number of 56,527 pupils received education at these schools of whom 47,259 were boys and 9,268 were girls. There were 1,885 teachers employed in the labour schools. 1,468 or 77 per cent of them were trained, the rest being untrained. Every possible endeavour was being made to replace untrained by trained teachers. To provide suitable accommodation for the labour schools, 65 new school sheds were constructed and 85 old ones were repaired at a total cost of Rs.29,757 during the year. As an inducement to the poorer parents of the depressed classes to keep their children at school the free

supply of cloth to deserving pupils was tried as an experimental measure in two districts. The Government of Madras has also sanctioned many scholarships and stipends for depressed class students.

DS.

Labour Troubles in Harvey Mills, Madura.

A serious dispute has arisen on 20-3-1931 between the textile operatives numbering nearly 9,000 working in the Harvey Mills, Madura, and the mill authorities. The relations between the management and the workers were getting strained during the last few months, chiefly as a result of the unsatisfactory labour conditions prevailing in the mills. Even so far back as September 1930, the secretary of the Madura Labour Union (for textile workers) had drawn the attention of the Madras Government to the unsatisfactory conditions of work of operatives numbering 15,000 in the five textile mills of Madura. (A copy of the letter dated 5-9-1930 has been forwarded to Geneva with this office's minute No. F 5/1630/30, dated 9-10-1930). The Madura Labour Union was started in January 1930 by Mr. B. Shiva Rao (Adviser to the workers' delegate to the 14th International Labour Conference). The following details regarding the strained relations between the Harvey Mills authorities and the workers which have culminated in the present dispute are taken from a communication addressed to this office by Mr. B. Shiva Rao:-

According to Mr. Shiva Rao's communication ever since the Madura Labour Union was started, the management of the Harvey Mills has been exerting undue pressure on the workers to get the Union dissolved, despite the fact that it was a registered trade union. In the first week of February 1931, the management dismissed 15 workers for very

trivial offences, the real reason, it is alleged, being their loyalty to the Union. The dismissals led to a strike which lasted 12 days, at the end of which the management agreed to reinstate the dismissed workers on condition that the Union was dissolved, and a Welfare Committee ^{under the auspices of the Mills management} substituted in its stead. The men held out against this proposal despite pressure exerted by the management. On 20-3-1931 a fresh development took place when a young worker loyal to the Union was asked by the manager to exchange frames with an old worker. The young worker refused to do so on the ground that the change meant harder work and less wages for him. The workers hold that the manager wanted to penalise the young worker for his loyalty to the Union, but the manager's version is that the change was ordered as the old worker who had put in 20 years of service was in need of light work. In the afternoon of 20-3-1931 about 600 workers at the suggestion of the Maistri (supervisor) went in a body during working hours to place their grievances before the manager, who refused to discuss matters and called in the police to clear the place of the workers who had left their duty during working hours. Work in the mills thus stopped and the Union alleges that the management has locked out the workers. (Summarised from Mr. Shiva Rao's letter dated 6-4-1931 to this office).

The management denies that it has locked out the workers and has issued the following statement to the press on 22-3-1931:-

On the 19th instant a worker of 20 years' service in the Roving Department of one of the mills asked that he be transferred to an easier worked frame as his feet were giving him trouble. We considered the request was reasonable and next day he was transferred to a frame where a man, acting for an absentee, was working and vice-versa. The acting man refused to work on the frame given to him and in the afternoon most of the workers in this department stopped work and stated they refused to work until this decision was reversed. These strikers were soon joined by men from other departments and the mills had to stop as it was impossible to continue working.
(The Hindu, 23-3-1931)

K.1.

Enquiry into Incidence of Sickness among Cotton

Mill Operatives ,Bombay City.

Attention is drawn to the report of an Enquiry conducted by the Labour Office, Bombay, into the incidence of Sickness among cotton mill operatives of Bombay^{city} published at pages 570 - 578 of the February 1931 issue of the Labour Gazette ,Bombay, (Vol X, No.6).

Labour in Mysore.

Attention is specially invited to the extracts dealing with labour conditions in Mysore from the Report on the working of the Department of Industries and Commerce, Mysore, for the year 1928-29, published at pages 558-562 ~~of~~ the February 1931 issue of the Labour Gazette, Bombay, (Vol.X, No.6).

Workers' Organisations.

7th Annual Convention of A.I.R.Federation, Ajmer.

The seventh Annual Convention of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation opened its session at Ajmer on the 15th March 1931 with Mr. I.B. Sen, Bar-at-Law, in the chair. The following Unions were fully represented:- The Assam Bengal Railway Employees' Association; The Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union; the B.B.& C.I.Railway Employees' Union; the Eastern Bengal Railway Employees' Association; the G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union; the G.I.P. Staff Union; H.E.H. the Nizam's State Railway Employees' Union; the M.& S.M. Railway Employees Union; the Mysore State Railways ^{Employes'} Union; the North Western Railway General Workers' Union; the National Union of Railwaymen of India and Burma; the Rohilkund and Kumaon Railway Employees' Union; and the East Indian Railway Union. The Director of this Office also attended the session of the Convention.

Administration Report for 1930.- The Administration report of the A.I.R.Federation for 1930 presented to the Convention drew attention, among other subjects, to the following:-

New Affiliations.- The Mysore Railway Employees' Union, the N.W.Railway Union; the R.& K. Railway Union; the A.B.Railway Employees' Association and the N.W. Railway General Workers' Union have become affiliated bodies and that the B.N.W. Railway Union and the S.I.Railway Union have not been affiliated technically on account of not having fulfilled their financial obligations towards the Federation, and that it was this important feature which has prevented other Unions from seeking affiliation with the Federation.

Attitude of Administrations towards Unions.- While there has been no general change in the attitude of the Administrations towards Railway Unions, it is necessary to record the attitude taken by the Mysore and E.I. Railways Administrations towards the growth of Trade Unionism. The Mysore State Railways have gone to the extent of openly victimising the workers for joining their Union as if it were an illegal body and in this respect the Mysore Railways hold a similar

position corresponding to that of Fascist Italy against whom the I.T.F. has been fighting unceasingly. While the Local Administrations have been apathetic towards the growth of Trade Unionism, the Railway Board have since February 1930, opened a new chapter in their relations with the Federation by agreeing to meet the representatives of the Federation twice a year in a conference to discuss matters of interest to the railways and in that way the Railway Board have come into closer contact with the Federation.

Trade Disputes during 1930.- The following were the important disputes during the year:- (1) Lightning strikes in the Bengal Nagpur Railway consequent on the introduction of the bonus system in the workshops (settled in favour of the workers); (2) B-B.&C.I. Railway dispute over transfers to Dohad (settled in favour of workers after reference to a Conciliation Board under the Trade Disputes Act) (3) the G.I.P. Railway strike which began on 4-2-1930; (4) the N.G.S Railway strike due to grant of bonus to Provident Fund subscribers ~~and~~ only (the rederation brought about a settlement and the bonus question is still under negotiation); (5) Lucknow Railway workshop strike.

Retrenchment.- The announcement in the Railway Budget of impending retrenchment and the reduction of wages of all employees drawing over Rs. 30 per month is causing serious concern. Retrenchment and reductions of salaries are to be strongly opposed by the Unions.

Organisation.- During the period under review, the General Council met at Hubli (on the M. & S.M. Railway), Nagpur (on the G.I.P. and B.N.R.), Simla (N.W.R.) and Delhi (E.I.R., B.B. & C.I., N.W.R., G.I.P.), and important decisions regarding G.I.P. strikers' unemployment, attitude of workers ~~at~~ the present situation in the country, the demands of the working class for a proper place in the new constitution, Trade Union unity, etc., were reached.

Relations with I.L.O.- The report contained the following expression of thanks to the I.L.O.:- "The Federation is ~~also~~ indebted to the International Labour Office and its indefatigable Director M. Albert Thomas for supplying the Federation with literature of the Office freely and thus keeping us in touch with the work of that Office. The information from this Office in regard to Washington and Geneva Conventions, supplied by M. Thomas was extremely useful to the Federation at the time of discussions with the Railway Board on Hours of Employment Regulations."

Resolutions passed.- The following are some of the more important of the resolutions passed at the Conference:-

Resolved that this Convention of the All India Railwaymen's Federation records its deep conviction that the Indian State Railways cannot be efficiently worked and managed nor could justice be done to Indians unless and until the Railways are placed under the full control of the Indian Legislature without any reservation whatsoever.

The Railway Board should be Indianised, so that it may be ~~responsive~~ responsive to the wishes of the people and do justice to Indian customers and staff who have been hitherto treated indifferently and starved by the European officials placed in charge of the high offices with inordinately high salaries and allowances, which should,

at least in the case of new entrants, be reduced to the rates in force in the Japanese State Railways.

The Agency Companies hitherto employed for the working and management of the Indian State Railways should be discharged at the earliest date possible as superfluous, irresponsible and uneconomical, they being directly responsible for raising the salaries and multiplying the numbers of the higher railway officials and for keeping the percentage of working expenses at the present high level.

The proposal contained in the Sankey Report for the Federal Government of India to the effect that the Railway Board might be given a statutory constitution outside the control of the Indian Legislature is highly reactionary and should not be allowed to come in the Federal constitution.

The Railway Board should be urged upon immediately to stop retrenchment and cancel previous orders already issued pending complete discussion with the Federation.

The discussions with the Railway Board on the question of the reinstatement of the G.I.P. Railway strikers, which according to the Federation, has been unsatisfactorily replied to by the Railway Board should be pursued to a logical conclusion by the Deputation that is shortly to wait upon the Railway Board.

Other resolutions demanded that adult franchise should be the basis of the new constitution, that labour legislation and its administration should be treated either as a Federal or a Central subject, that the new constitution should contain a declaration of the rights of workers and that adequate representation of labour should be provided in the work of shaping the future constitution.

Trade Union Unity.- Messrs. Deshpande, N.M. Joshi, Aftab Ali and others representing the All-India Trade Union Congress, ^{the} All-India Trades Union Federation and the Bengal Trade Union Federation took part in the discussions on trade union unity and finally it was resolved that a Committee consisting of Messrs. J.M. Mehta, V.V. Giri, and I.B. Sen should negotiate with other organisations generally on the basis that Unions should be given freedom in certain matters and that power of coercion should be used only by 9/10ths majority.

Office bearers.- The following office-bearers were elected for the ensuing year:- President, Mr. J.M. Mehta; Vice-Presidents - Messrs. S.C. Joshi, R.S. Ruiker, K.P. Bannerjee and Kashinath Muttu; General Secretary - Mr. V.V. Giri; Treasurer - Mr. V.R. Kalappa; and Assistant Secretary - Mr. S. Guruswamy.

(The M. & S.M. Railwayman, April 1931, Vol. 2, No. 10, Part I, pages 266-268).

(A review of the 6th Annual Convention of the A.I.R. Federation is given at pages 32-33 of the report of this Office for November 1929).

34

B.B. & C.I. Railwaymen's Annual Conference, 1931, Ajmer.

The annual conference of B.B. & C.I. Railwaymen for 1931 was held on 14-3-1931 at Ajmer under the presidentship of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. The conference was attended by a large number of delegates, as also by distinguished labour leaders from Bengal, the Punjab and Madras.

In the course of his presidential address, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said that of the approximate capital of Rs. 750 millions owned by the B.B. & C.I. Railway, almost 98 per cent was found by the Government, and that it was, therefore, very unfair that the directors in far-away London should control the fate of the employees of the B.B. & C.I. Railway numbering about 90,000. The company had an income of Rs. 120 millions most of which was spent in high salaries, palatial bungalows and extravagant allowances to the officers. The prosperity of the company was due to the incessant toil and labour of the workers, but these creators of wealth were doomed to life-long drudgery, low wages, bad housing, humiliating conditions of work, absence of provision against illness and old age. Many entered a premature grave, weary and brokenhearted. The Indian Railways were, he said, in a sense nationalised, but under an undemocratic government, the benefits of nationalization did not accrue to the country while the Railway Board were irresponsible and acted merely in the interests of the foreign bond holder. Recently, labour legislation had however introduced some elements of humanity in the conditions of work of railwaymen and the unions of railwaymen were proving successful to some extent in the prevention of wrongs, but the Nagpur split of 1929 had given a set back to the labour movement in the country.

Proceeding, the president pointed out that industrial peace could not be secured without giving to workers a stake and status in industry, i.e., standard wages and a substantial voice in the conditions of work. He said that if the worker was to ~~live~~ ^{live} a civilized life, he should be given a minimum wage of Rs. 100 in Bombay and Rs. 60 outside. He observed that the cry for real economy through high wages was not merely a slogan of pestilential labour agitators, but that it was a doctrine backed by eminent authorities. Mr. Jamnadas regarded the ~~8~~ 4 hours working day as the ideal to be aimed. The 8 hours day adopted under International Labour Conventions was not ^{the} last word ^{on the subject} and the possibility of a 6 hours working day could not be considered as ^{an} idle dream. He also pleaded for industrial self-government, and observed that it was as important as political self-government. He pointed out that the Railway Board's proposals for retrenchment were, as usual, at the lower paid employees' expense and that, until high salaries of officers were reduced, and the subsidy to the general revenues were substantially cut down, it would be monstrous ^{to retrench the strong members of the lower staff and} to ^{throw} helpless workers on the streets to starve. He concluded with an appeal for strong and vigorous Unions functioning for the best interests of the workers.

The conference passed resolutions condemning the staff retrenchment proposals of the Railway Board and demanding the reinstatement of the G.I.P. railway strikers. Other resolutions passed by the conference related to the grievances about pay, housing, medical relief, leave, passes, fines, racial discrimination, and the complaints of the railway colony at Dohad and the cabinmen of Bombay.

(The Hindustan Times, 19-3-1931)

Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad.

The following are some of the resolutions passed by the Joint Representative Board of the Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, at a meeting of the Board held on the 26th March 1931:-

Day Workers Employed At Night. - This meeting of the Joint Representative Board of the Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, strongly condemns the practice of day workers being employed in night shifts, involving a glaring breach of the Factory Law, and entailing serious consequences to the physical and moral condition of those concerned. The Board expresses its surprise that a continued breach of a vital provision of the ^{Law} labour is being permitted and resolves that the Secretary should take steps to put a stop to this practice.

Refusal to Engage Women After Maternity. - In a number of cases, women have been refused employment on return after maternity, and have had to submit to loss of days on this account. The Board disapproves strongly of this and is of the opinion that such a practice is contrary to the spirit and letter of the Maternity Benefit Act; and that in the circumstances that have arisen, the Maternity Benefit Act is causing more hardship than good to the women concerned.

Reduction of Women Workers. - A strong tendency has been noticeable since the passing of the Maternity Benefit Act to reduce the number of women workers and to shut them out from the departments in which they have been usually employed hitherto. This has placed women workers at a very serious disadvantage and has in numerous cases entailed serious hardships. This Board is of opinion that this

regrettable situation has arisen owing to a desire to escape liability connected with the operation of the Maternity Benefit Act. The Secretary is requested to represent the matter strongly to the mills concerned and to the Mill Owners' Association, and to take steps to remove the unfair distinction in ~~the~~ matters of employment made against women on the score of sex.

Weekly Wages. - This Board is firmly of opinion that the period of about a fortnight elapsing between one payment and another in the cases of ~~the~~ most of the workpeople in the local industry, is too long, that it prevents quick and smooth adjustment between ~~the~~ income and expenditure and entails the necessity of borrowing at heavy rates, in the middle of the pay period, and that it is responsible for a large proportion of the huge indebtedness of the labourers, and for the drain of earnings in the shape of interest, ~~caused thereby.~~

This Board therefore resolves that a demand be made for immediate introduction of the system of weekly payment of wages.

Interests on Advances in Wages. - This Board notes that petty advances are made to the work people by the authorities of certain mills in the middle of the 'Hapta' (pay-period) to help them through the period till the payment time and regrets that interest is charged on such advances, which is in some cases at excessively high rates. In view of the fact that payment is made about a week after the wages have become due for a previous hapta, the practice amounts to charging interest on the men's own money, and a demand be therefore placed that the mill authorities should not thereafter charge any interest on such advances.

It furthermore resolves that the mill authorities should,

pending the introduction of the weekly payment of wages , themselves make advances on a reasonable scale, without charging any interest, whenever required, so as to obviate the need of borrowing money at usurious rates from money-lenders, and further the mill-authorities should be asked to immediately put a stop, to the lending operations of certain persons, at present carrying on the business, inside the premises of certain mills.

Bribery in Mills. - It is a matter for the deepest regret that the practice of bribe-taking is still rampant in the mills and no effectual action has yet been taken by the Association or the Union to eradicate it.

The Board resolves that, in view of the great importance of the question and the grave consequence to the working class that flow from this practice, a Committee be appointed, consisting of Shrimati Anasuya Ben, Sjt.Navinchandra Desai, two representatives of the Mill Owners' Association, one representative of the Non-Association Mills, and one representative of the Textile Association with power to co-opt; to inquire and report within ~~Two~~ two months regarding the extent to which the practice of bribe taking prevails in the local textile mills, the occasion and circumstances in which bribes are exacted, the steps so far taken to put a stop to the practice , and the measures it would be desirable to take to remedy the evil.

*(Extracted from Communication to this Office
(No 1347 of 7-4-31) from the Publicity Officer,
Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad).*

Intellectual Workers.

Bombay Clerks' Union: Demand for Regulation of Hours of Work.

The annual meeting of the Bombay Clerks' Union was held on the 17th February under the presidentship of Mr. K.C. Desai. The following resolutions were passed at the meeting:-

(1) This meeting strongly protests against the resolution of the Association of Employers in India opposing the proposition of the International Labour Conference for a Convention or Recommendation on the subject of the regulation of hours of work of salaried employees, as being difficult and impossible of application in India. It, therefore, requests Government to consider the reasonableness of its early application in the case of clerks.

(2) This meeting strongly disapproves of the action of the Associations of Employers in Bombay in changing the morning hours of attendance of clerks in their offices in Bombay on the plea of closing them early for the good health of all the working clerks, but in fact continuing the same old timing in closing them. This meeting requests Government to fix the limit of hours of work for clerks in all offices and shops ^{at} to not more than 8 hours a day, the work commencing not earlier than 10 in the morning and closing not later than 6 in the evening, inclusive of an interval of one hour's recess.

(3) This meeting views with misapprehension the efforts of the employers to bring down the scale of salaries of clerks. It protests most emphatically against such efforts and is of the opinion that the effect of such actions will drive the clerical community to acute suffering and consequently to desperation for the sake of existence.

(The Trade Union Record, Bombay, March 1931
Vol. 2, No.1)

Pay & Prospects of Indian Civil Servants.

The pay and prospects of the salaried employees in the service of the Government of India and the Provincial Governments are matters on which there are considerable differences of opinion in India at present. On the one hand, the Congress and the Indian Nationalists are of opinion that the salaries and allowances given to government servants of the superior grades are very much above the country's financial resources and that the huge salary bill of the civil service constitutes a drain on Indian revenues out of all proportion to the services rendered by such government employees. The unprecedented economic and financial depression in the country has given an added impetus to the nationalist demand that there should be drastic reductions in the salaries of the higher grades of the Indian Civil Servants. The matter has been deemed of sufficient importance as to be included in the resolution on Fundamental Rights moved by Mahatma Gandhi on 31-3-31 at the last session of the Indian National Congress, which contained inter-alia the following clause on the subject of salaries of government employees:-

"Expenditure and salaries in the civil departments ought to be largely reduced. No servant of the State other than specially employed experts and the like to be paid above a certain fixed figure which should not ordinarily exceed Rs.500 per month." (The Hindu, 1-4-31).

On the other hand, the Government of India is of opinion that the administration of India, compared with that of other countries, is run at very low cost. The following facts and figures in support of the Government's contention are taken from the budget speech of Sir George Schuster in the Legislative Assembly on 28-2-31. (The figures relate to 1928-29).

Taking the Civil Departments (exclusive of the Railways), the

total pay of all the officials of Government, British and Indian, high-paid and low-paid, Central and Provincial, amounts to just under Rs.570 millions. Of this sum, the Central Government's share is about Rs.160 millions, and the Provincial Governments' about Rs.410 millions. This total is distributed between gazetted officers on the one side and what are called 'establishments' on the other. The term 'establishment', covers all the clerical and lower-paid staff. Roughly speaking, with a few exceptional cases, it may be said that this part of the staff includes posts with pay ranging to a maximum of about Rs.500 per month. I may add incidentally that it also includes all the police, and the irregular levies employed in Frontier defence, to which special considerations apply. Taking these two classes, the total cost of establishments amounts to Rs.410 millions, and of officers, British and Indian, Central and Provincial, all together, and including all leave pay, amounts to Rs.160 millions, of which the Central Government's share is just under Rs.40 millions and the Provincial Governments' just over Rs.120 millions. Out of this total, the cost of British officers amounts only to about Rs.65 millions.

Referring to the meagre results that would be achieved by effecting even a 10 per cent cut in the salaries of the Civil Service, Sir George Schuster said:-

If the total pay of officers, British and Indian, Central and Provincial combined, amounts to only Rs.160 millions, it is clear that no practicable cut in this figure could produce a revolutionary change. If all salaries were cut by 10 per cent, the total saving for the whole of India would only be Rs.16 millions of which the Central Government would get about ~~Rs.~~ Rs.3.8 millions and the Provincial ~~governments~~ Governments about Rs.12.2 millions or not more than about Rs.1.4 millions each. Even if this cut were multiplied to impossible percentages, it would not produce an effect which could really affect the fundamental financial problem, and it is clear that, if effects which are even worth considering are to be produced, drastic reductions right down to the very lowest ranks would be necessary. This would be a very difficult task for any Government to face and one which might produce hard results for the lower-paid men. It is clearly not a case for hasty action.

(Extracted from the Budget speech of Sir George Schuster in the Legislative Assembly on 28-2-31. Legislative Assembly Debates Vol.2, No.6. page 1372).

10th All-India Audit & Account Offices Conference,

1931, Delhi.

The 10th session of the All India Audit and Account Offices Conference was held at Delhi on 28-2-31 under the presidentship of Mr. C.S, Ranga Iyer, M.L.A. Referring to the conditions of service of clerical employees, the President said :-

"It is a legitimate purpose of every employee to improve his standard of life and have enough wherewithal to educate the children and support the family. In no part of the world, with the exception of China, has the condition of the subordinate employees been so much neglected, in the Government service especially, as in this country. Whether we look to the Railways, Postal Department, or the Audit and Accounts Offices, you find that the subordinate employees have to bear the brunt of the work of the whole administration without being adequately compensated. Nowhere in the world does one find so great disparity as in this country between the salaries of the officer and the clerk."

Among the subjects considered by the Conference were:-

1. The need of granting pensions and compensatory pensions for the dependents of deceased government servants.
2. The need for grant of facilities to the ^{relations} ~~positions~~ of the employees possessing qualifications to enter the services.
3. The desirability of the substitution, if necessary, of a Provident Fund in lieu of pension.

(The Times of India, 5-3-31).

Economic Conditions.

Budget of the Government of India for 1931-32.

The Budget of the Government of India for 1931-32 was presented in the Legislative Assembly by Sir George Schuster, the Finance Member, on 28-2-1931. A heavy deficit in the revenues of the Government of India for the current year (1930-31) was revealed in the budget, the revised estimates showing a deficit of Rs. 144.2 millions as against a budgeted surplus of Rs. 8.6 millions.

Estimates for 1931-32.- The income for the ensuing year (1931-32) has been framed in a cautious manner. These work to a total deterioration of Rs. 181 millions as compared with the budget estimates for the current year, and as the latter provided for a surplus of Rs. 8.6 millions, the net deficit will be Rs. 172.4 millions. The Finance Member proposes to meet this deficit by means of retrenchment and new taxation. Military expenditure will be reduced by Rs. 17.5 millions, normal civil expenditure by Rs. 9.7 millions, thus bringing down the deficit to Rs. 145.1 millions. Customs duties and increased taxes on income will bring in Rs. ^{148.2}~~1,482~~ millions, leaving a surplus of Rs. 3.1 millions. The Finance Member also proposed to levy a number of new taxes. He proposed to alter the substantive tariffs in respect of liquor, sugar, silver bullion, ~~mixer~~ betel-nuts, spices and exposed cinematograph films. The liquor duties will be enhanced appreciably. The duty on beer and the like will be raised by about 66 per cent. above the present level, while those on wines and spirits (except denatured spirit and spirit used in drugs and medicines) will be raised by between 30 and 40 per cent.

The net effect ~~is~~ of the changes in taxation announced is an addition to the revenue of Rs. 8.8 millions in the revised estimate for 1930-31 and of Rs. 148.2 millions in the Budget estimate for 1931-32. But for these, the estimates would have shown deficits of Rs. 135.6 millions and Rs. 145.1 millions respectively, instead of the deficit of Rs. 126.842 millions and surplus of Rs. 3.106 millions now shown.

Budget at a glance.-

	<u>1929-30.</u>	<u>1930-31.</u>	<u>1931-32.</u>
	Actuals.	Revised	Budget
	(in millions)	Estimates.	Estimates.
	(in millions)	(in millions)	(in millions)
Revenue	1,326.855	1,234,361	1,358.764
Expenditure	1,324.171	1,361.203	1,355.658
Surplus or)			
Deficit)	+ 2.684	- 126.842	+ 3.106

Details of New Taxation.- The plan for new taxation is all confined under the heads Customs and Taxes on Income and comprises the following:-

Silver.- Import duty is to be increased from 4 annas to 6 annas per ounce. Additional yield expected is Rs. 7.5 millions. Export duty to be likewise increased. Expected yield - Rs. 0.7 millions.

Sugar.- Increase in duty of Rs. 1-4-0 per cwt. Expected yield - Rs. 0.116 millions.

Liquor.- Duty on beer to be increased by about 66 per cent and that on wines and spirits by between 30 and 40 per cent. Expected yield - Rs. 6.1 millions.

Spices.- Duty enhanced from 15 per cent ad valorem to 30 per cent ad valorem. Expected yield - Rs. 0.8 millions.

Cinematograph Films (exposed).- From 15 per cent ad valorem to 30 per cent. ad valorem. Expected yield - Rs. 0.3 millions.

Betelnuts.- From 15 per cent. ad valorem to 30 per cent. ad valorem. Expected yield - Rs. 2.3 millions.

Kerosene.- Increase in import duty from 2 annas 3 pies per gallon to 3 annas per gallon. Expected yield - Rs. 4.3 millions.

~~Excise~~ Increase in excise duty from 2 annas 3 pies per gallon to 3 annas. Expected yield - Rs. 5.2 millions.

Motor spirit.- Import duty increased from 6 annas per gallon to 8 annas per gallon. Expected yield - Rs. 0.7 millions. Excise duty increased by 2 annas likewise. Expected yield - Rs. 8.3 millions

Cigarettes.- Increase in duty of Rs. 1-8-0 per thousand. This, together with the enhanced duties on cigars, etc., is expected to bring in Rs. 1.5 millions extra.

Motor cars.- From 20 per cent. ad valorem to 30 per cent ad valorem. Expected yield - Rs. 3 millions.

Cotton Piece-goods.- Whereas the present duty is 15 per cent. and 20 per cent. ad valorem, with minimum of $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per lb. in certain cases, the g figures for the rates of the ad valorem duties will hereafter be deemed to be increased by 5 in each case. Expected yield is Rs. 9 millions.

Income-Tax.- The taxable minimum income from income-tax - Rs. 2,000 - will not be lowered. The rate of tax on the lowest zone, up to Rs. 4,999 will be raised by 4 pies. The rates on higher grades up to Rs. 39,999 will be raised in some cases by 5 pies, in some cases by 6 pies, and in the highest of the grades by 7 pies. At present the highest rate is reached at Rs. 40,000. It is now 19 pies. A rate of 25 pies is now to be levied on incomes from Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 99,999 and a maximum rate of 26 pies on incomes of Rs. 100,000 and over. Net estimated yield is Rs. 45.4 millions.

Miscellaneous.- Generally a surcharge of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. has been added to 10 per cent schedule; of 5 per cent to the general or 15 per cent schedule; of 10 per cent to the luxury or 30 per cent schedule. Additional revenue is about Rs. 30 millions.

Super Tax.- Higher rates resulting in increased yield of Rs. 4.6 millions.

Currency Policy.- In the course of a brief summary of the Government's currency policy, Sir George emphasised that "the contraction effected by the Government has been an essential sequel to the fall in world price and has not been carried to an excessive extent". Turning to the ratio Sir George said that "there is no question now of choosing between 1s.6d. and 1s.4d. It is a choice between a stable currency and complete instability".

Economies.- Towards the conclusion of his speech the Finance Member foreshadowed the appointment of (1) a Retrenchment Committee for the Central Government; (2) a Special Committee for Posts and Telegraphs; (3) Investigation of Expenditure on the Railways; and (4) a Committee to study the possibilities of a tobacco monopoly.*

(The Statesman, 1-3-31)

(The Budget of the Government of India for 1930-31 was reviewed at pages 35-37 of the report of this office for March 1930).

* As a result of the discussion of the Budget proposals in the Assembly several allegations have been made, and the position of the new Budget as sanctioned will be summarised in our next report.

The Bengal Jute Bill, 1930.

(A Bill to regulate the control and production of Jute).

At pages 27-30 of the September 1930 report and 35-36 of the October 1930 report of this Office references have been made to the depressed conditions in the Jute industry as well as ^{to} the resolutions passed by a representative conference of all the interests affected in the trade, recommending the Government to restrict the cultivation of Jute in Bengal. The Government of Bengal has followed up the suggestions of the Conference and has drafted a Bill incorporating the suggestions of the Conference to be introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council. The following passages are excerpts from the statement of objects and reasons for introducing the Bill:-

Jute is the most important source of the wealth of the Bengal Presidency, and it is one in respect of which Bengal enjoys a practical monopoly in the world. Nevertheless the price of jute has, within recent years, fallen to a level at which it does not even suffice to pay the cost of its production. The result has been disastrous to the people, notably to the people of Eastern Bengal. Intervention of the public authorities to prevent the disaster is therefore urgently called for. Having regard to the widespread area of production and the backwardness and illiteracy of the cultivators, there is no near prospect of their producing their own organisation for dealing with the situation. This Bill therefore seeks to provide an organisation by which the production of jute may be so adjusted as to maintain as high a price-level of jute as may safely be kept up. It is hardly necessary to add that if by this means jute-prices could be raised it would immediately lead to greater prosperity all round. An increase of each rupee per maund in the price of jute would bring approximately Rs.50 millions to the people. And considering that jute prices could easily be raised by Rs.8 per maund above the present prices without any apprehension of serious competition from other materials, a successful regulation of the jute crop may easily add about rupees Rs.400 millions to the wealth of the people.

This Bill proposes to carry out the scheme of regulation of production through the agency of Union Boards. As the jute producing districts have mostly been covered by Union Boards, they furnish a useful instrument for the carrying out of the work. The framing of a provincial scheme for regulation of cultivation of jute is entrusted to a Central Board, which will be necessary. The pro-

gramme of cultivation cannot be settled piecemeal. It must be done on a provincial scale and by persons competent to take account of the necessary factors and determine the amount required to be produced with reference to the world demand. Provision has been made for a revision both of the village and of the provincial scheme, so that any errors due to want of consideration of relevant facts may be remedied. At the same time care has been taken that the decisions should be promptly and finally made without interminable appeals and reviews. In the framing of a village scheme an option has been provided for voluntary compliance by the cultivators with the requisition of the Central Jute Board. The Union Board will frame a scheme of its own only when the voluntary offers of the villagers individually are not adequate to satisfy the requisition of the Central Board.

There are other factors to consider besides restriction of production and important reforms will have to be carried out in the system of marketing jute before the full benefit of its value can be secured to cultivators. That is a matter which must be dealt with in future and in respect of which the Jute Board when constituted under this Act will be able to give competent advice.

(The Calcutta Gazette, 12-3-1931, No. II,
Part IV., pages 6-12.)

Failure of Textile Mill Merger Scheme, Bombay.

At pages 32 and pages 30-31 of the reports of this Office for September and October 1930 respectively, references were made to the Bombay Textile Mills Merger Scheme. The Times of India of 13-3-31 states that it understands on good authority that, owing to serious difficulties which have come to light, the proposed Bombay textile mill merger will not materialise. There may be re-groupings of some of the mills concerned, but the merger of over 30 mills originally contemplated is impossible.

The merger scheme has been in the air for several months. ~~new.~~ Mr. Entwistle, the Manchester valuation expert, was specially brought to Bombay to value the properties of the various mills

concerned. He recently ~~submitted~~ submitted a detailed report which was considered by the Merger Committee, consisting of Sir Ness Wadia, Mr. C. N. Wadia, Sir Joseph Kay, Mr. N. B. Saklatwalla, Mr. F. E. Dinshaw, Sir Dinshaw Petit and some others.

The exact nature of the difficulties in the way of the merger, which was intended to bring down cost of production, has not transpired. One part of the scheme was that a loan of about ~~Rs~~ ~~Rs~~ ^{Rs} 100 millions would have been necessary to provide working capital for the new enterprise. The scheme was intended to put the mill industry in Bombay on a firm foundation by the control of production and marketing of goods and the establishment of an efficient buying and selling agency. It was also proposed to abolish the agency commission system and to have a directorate with a managing director or governor for the control of the whole group of mills included in the scheme. The merger scheme, as originally proposed, included 31 mills.

(The Times of India 13-3-31)

The Hindu of 12-3-31 commenting editorially on the failure of the scheme writes:-

"The Bombay mill-owners have rejected the scheme of amalgamation on the lines of the Lancashire Cotton Corporation prepared by the Manchester expert they had called in. We are told that unexpected difficulties have arisen in putting the scheme through. It is, of course, possible that a scheme suited to the conditions in Lancashire was found to be a misfit in Bombay, and if Bombay mill-owners set it aside as impracticable, it is not for any outsider to find fault with them. But the Indian tax-payer and every well-wisher of the country are entitled to see that a great national industry is not ruined by the short-sighted policy pursued by the mill-owners. When special protection was recommended to be given to Bombay by the Cotton Tariff Board, that Board laid emphasis on the fact that the consumer will be justified in going to the aid of the industry

only if those responsible for its management radically reformed their whole system of running it. Thanks to undesirable speculation, an out-of-date method of financing the industry and a defective system of control, the industry finds itself over-capitalised and run on antiquated and wasteful lines. There is no evidence to show that the mill-owners have taken efforts to reduce capital, instal new plant and machinery, and organise sound methods of finance and control. It is also possible that the extra tariff aid which the budget has provided for the industry and the impetus which the Swadeshi movement has given it have made the mill-owners to go back to their old complacent unbusiness-like methods. We should indeed be sorry, if, basking in the sunshine of protection and the patriotic impulses of the people, they forget to fulfil their part of the pact only on the basis of which protection was granted to them. If the mill-owners are wise, they will, of course, utilise the easier conditions, in which they find themselves, to reform industry and consolidate their position."

(The Hindu ,12-3-31)

K.

Co-operation.

Co-operative Societies Bill, Madras.

The Government of Madras has decided to introduce a Bill (Bill No.1V of 1931) in the Madras Legislative Council with a view to consolidate and amend the law relating to Co-operative Societies in the Presidency. The progress and development of the Co-operative movement since the existing Co-operative Societies Act, 1912 (Act II of 1912), was passed by the Governor-General of India in Council has made it necessary to revise the law under which co-operative societies in the Madras Presidency work. The Committee on Co-operation appointed by the Government of Madras in September 1927 who examined the progress made in the co-operative movement in the Presidency and enquired into the present position and lines of development have observed several defects in the existing law and ^{have} recommended that they may be rectified by suitable legislation.

The Draft Bill gives effect to the suggestions of the Committee and opportunity is taken to embody the results of experience of the movement and rectify certain defects found in the existing Act. The noteworthy features of the Bill are shown below:-

(1) The overdues in credit societies are assuming alarming proportions. The panchayatdars (arbitrators) become defaulters and other members are consequently allowed to become defaulters. It is proposed to empower the Registrar or the officer authorized by him to recover the overdue instalments of loans by distraint and sale of movable properties. Provisions for prompt arbitration and conditional attachment of property involved are made.

(2) The co-operative societies in the Presidency have multiplied greatly, the number on 30th June 1928 was 14,064, and the State has been bearing the cost of arbitration and execution besides the cost of audit. Act II of 1912 gave powers to the Local Government to make rules to provide for charges if any to be made for audit, but not for costs for arbitration or execution. It is now proposed to empower the Government to make rules for the levy of fees for the settlement of disputes and for the enforcement of the awards. There is provision for extension of the time for repayment of loans in deserving cases and in other cases it is just that defaulters should pay for the cost of proceedings taken against them, while many disputes arise for which there is no justification and in these cases the delinquent party should be made to pay

for settling the dispute.

(3) Act II of 1912 gave a prior claim to a registered society in respect of loans for the purchase of seed or manure, on the crops and in respect of loans for the purchase of cattle, fodder, implements and machinery and raw materials for manufacture on those things and on articles manufactured and the term of the lien on the agricultural produce was restricted to 18 months. It is proposed to convert the lien into a charge. Land Mortgage Banks are being registered under the Act and the success of the Banks mainly depends on the value of the mortgaged property. The debt is made a first charge also on the lands purchased or improved with the loan and on godowns and buildings purchased or built with the loan and upon the immovable property mortgaged to the society in respect of loans advanced for the clearance of prior debts.

(4) There is much delay in winding up the affairs of liquidated societies. The liquidator is given more powers to wind up the affairs under the guidance of the Registrar and the process of liquidation is sought to be placed on a better footing.

(5) Act II of 1912 required the society and the office-bearers to do many things, but no provision was made to take notice of the failure to comply with the provisions. The only offence for which punishment was provided is the use of the word 'co-operative' by persons other than registered societies. A great laxity is the result and it is therefore proposed to declare the wilful failure, wilful neglect or refusal, wilful submission of a false return and wilful disobedience of summons, etc., an offence under the Act. The offences are made non-cognizable and triable only by a First-class Magistrate while an adequate safeguard against irresponsible prosecutions is provided by requiring the permission of the Registrar before launching a prosecution. The existence of the penal sections will stimulate business methods in the minds of co-operators and the provisions are based upon the English Industrial and Provident Societies Act.

(The Fort St. George Gazette, Madras,
dated 17 - 3 - 31)

Co-operation in Delhi Province, 1928-29.

The following table shows the progress of co-operation in Delhi Province during the years 1927-28 and 1928-29:-

Class	Societies.		Members.		Working Capital.	
	1927-28	1928-29	1927-28	1928-29	1927-28	1928-29
Central Credit	1	1	452	487	Rs. 1,293,534	Rs. 1,368,444
Agricultural Credit	233	236	4,672	5,011	622,272	747,670
Non-Agricultural Credit	30	43	622	1,376	62,400	150,683
Total	264	280	5,746	6,874	1,978,206	2,266,797

During 1928-29, 18 new societies were registered, while the registration of two was cancelled. Besides the Central Bank, the total number of societies working rose to 279 against 263 in the previous year. The new societies registered contained 3 Agricultural Credit, 2 Better Living, 1 Consolidation of Holdings, 1 Cattle Breeding, 1 Thrift and Savings and 10 non-Agricultural Credit in the City of Delhi. Out of 280 societies including the Central Bank, 241 are in the rural area and ~~52~~ 39 in the urban. There were 236 Agricultural Societies, including the Consolidation of Holdings and the Cattle Breeding Societies, working in the Province against 233 societies in the previous year. Of the 370 villages in the Province the Co-operative Department has now nearly touched 200 villages. The non-Agricultural Societies consisted of 35 Credit Societies, 6 Thrift Societies and 2 Better Living Societies, against 30 in the previous year.

(Extracted from the Report on the Administration of the Delhi Province for 1928-29., pages 42-43).

Progress of Co-operation in the Punjab , 1929-30.*

The total number of Co-operative Societies in the Punjab rose during the year under review from 19,462 to 20,333. The net increase of 871 was smaller than has occurred for some years. The number of members rose by 38,439 and the total membership is now 679,966. The Registrar points out that each member usually represents a family , and so the number of persons touched by the movement must be more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions or about 12 per cent. of the total population of the province. The working capital rose from just over 160 to just over 175 millions Rupees. These last figures are all the more striking when it is remembered that for the agricultural classes, and indeed for the province as a whole, the year was a disastrous one ; agriculture being depressed by low prices and industry by a shrinkage in the demand for manufactured articles. The report states that this may be taken as a proof of the vitality of the co-operative movement in the Punjab. It is a notable fact that 40 per cent. of the villages of the province now possess at least one Co-operative Credit Society. In spite of ~~the~~ great difficulties, the movement among women continues its slow but steady growth. The number of women's societies has increased during the year from 128 to 146, the number of members from 1,977 to 2,397 and the working capital from Rs.90,319 to Rs.103,105.

The following statement shows the progress so far as it *can be* recorded statistically :-

* Report on the Working of Co-operative Societies in the Punjab for the year ending 31st July 1930. Lahore: Printed by the Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab. 1931. Price: Rs.4-12-0 or 7s.2d. *fr 56 + CXXXVI*

1 Class.	2 Societies.		3 Members.		4 Working Capital	
	1929	1930.	1929	1930.	1929	1930.
					Rs. in millions.	Rs. in millions.
Provincial Bank	1	1	12,615	13,008	7.6	9.8
Central Credit	120	118	21,678	22,400	66.4	70.6
Central Non- credit	33	40	3,037	4,379	.4	.5
Agricultural	16,473	17,222	504,907	540,338 540,338	73.1	81.0
Non - agri- cultural	2,835	2,952	99,190	104,603	13.0	14.5
Total	19,462	20,333	641,427	684,728	1,60.5	1,76.3

(The progress of Co-operation in the Punjab during 1928-29 is reviewed at pages 71-72 of the February 1930 Report).

Maritime Affairs.

National Seamen's Union of India, Bombay.

At pages 55 to 56 of the report of this office for January 1931 reference had been made to the prospects of an amalgamation of the two unions of Indian seamen in Bombay, the Indian Seamen's Union and the Bombay Seamen's Union, into one union under the name of the National Seamen's Union of India. On 22-3-1931 the inaugural meeting of the National Seamen's Union of India, Bombay, was held at the Institute Luso-Indiano Hall, Dabul, to commemorate the amalgamation of the Indian Seamen's Union and the Bombay Seamen's Union, Rao Bahadur S.K. Bole, M.L.C., J.P., presiding. After several speeches, resolutions appreciating the services of the negotiators for a settlement, adopting the draft constitution and confirming the election of office-bearers and members of the Executive Council of the Union, and referring the question of housing the Union to the decision of the Executive Council, were moved from the chair and unanimously carried.

(The Times of India, 25-3-1931).

Migration.Cape Town Agreement : Revision Plans.

A Reuter message appearing in the Pioneer of 18-3-31 states that preliminary arrangements have been made between the Governments of India and South Africa for holding a conference in September in order to revise the present Indian agreement ^(The Cape Town Agreement) (see pages 49-53 of October 1930 Report) which will shortly terminate.

In view of the conference the Government has decided to postpone the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill (see pages 61-63 of January 1931 Report) until next year.

Commenting editorially on the possibility of a revision of the Cape Town Agreement as the result of another Round Table Conference the Hindu of 16-3-31 writes:-

It is time that the Government of India thought of entering upon the negotiations, not as a suppliant but as an equal with the South African Government. Representatives of India at the Conference should not merely think of having this grievance or that of Indians remedied but should carry on their work with the fixed determination that hereafter Indians in South Africa should be treated in every respect as part of the permanent population who are entitled to enjoy, as regular citizens, all the amenities of a civilised people. The agreement which is reported to have been entered into between the Union of South Africa and Japan should make it easy for India to secure for her people equality in respect of franchise, railway travelling, inter-provincial migration, representation in the Councils of the country, etc. Even in the Cape the existing rights are being sought to be curtailed. But this move should be strongly opposed and Indians in other provinces should be afforded opportunities for playing their part as citizens of a free country. The Transvaal Land Tenure Bill will, of course, come in for consideration at the Conference; but we hope that the atmosphere will be favourable not only to the complete withdrawal of this mischievous measure but for revising the antiquated laws of Transvaal in regard to proclaimed lands, now that many parts of such proclaimed areas are no longer used for the purpose of mining. There is lastly the question of repatriation or as the Agreement would have it, the scheme of assisted emigration. This has not been a happy business altogether, and the South African Government would do well seriously to consider whether they are wise, now that many thousands of Indians have left that country, to seek to squeeze out more which will not be to their

advantage. The Conference will have necessarily to consider commercial and shipping questions for the mutual advantage of both countries. It is all the more reason, therefore, that the Conference must be fully representative of Indian opinion, and not merely of Government of India and that the negotiations should proceed on the footing that a free country is conferring with another which is almost on the eve of coming into its own.