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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

INDIAN BRANCH

Report for March 1932.

Contents.

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References to the I.L.O.

The Hindustan Times of 11-3-1932 and other papers publish a news item to the effect that Dr. P.P. Pillai, Director of this Office, left Delhi on 9-3-1932 en route to Geneva to attend the 16th session of the International Labour Conference.

... ..

The Times of India of 7-3-1932 publishes a news item to the effect that Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, employers' delegate to the 16th I.L. Conference, will sail from Bombay on 24-3-1932 to attend the Conference.

... ..

The February 1932 issue (Vol.V, No.39) of the E.B.Railway Labour Review, Calcutta, publishes at page 14 a brief summary of the agenda of the 16th I.L. Conference.

The same issue of the Review contains the following reference to a session of the Unemployment Committee of the I.L.O.:-

"At the recent session at Geneva of the Committee of <sup>the</sup> International Labour Office for combating of unemployment, the Employers' representatives made a frantic attempt to convince the Committee that the shortening of working hours would mean a considerable rise in the cost of production. But the leader of the workers' group retorted by declaring that all that the employers think was to do nothing for their employees. Employers are against an international Convention because they are afraid that it would smooth the way to a planned economic system".

... ..

The roneed "Monthly Circular" of the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association, contains at pages 15 and 18 an item summarising the agenda of the 16th session of the I.L. Conference. The item also contains the following reference to the Government of India's action in

defining what associations are representative of employers:-

"The Government this time, laid down the definition of an Association representative of Employers as one that dealt with the interests of employers as such, regulated conditions of employment, etc. and required that Associations making recommendations regarding nomination of the Employers' delegation should show that they came under the definition. The Committee addressed a letter on 13th January 1932 to the Government of India, Department of Industries and Labour, protesting against their attempt to lay down as to what constituted an Employers' Organisation, as such action is against the spirit of the Treaty of Versailles".

... ..

The Leader of 12-3-1932 publishes an article under the caption: "Mr. Ford and Geneva - I.L.O.'s Work for Detroit" contributed anonymously to it. The article gives an informative summary of the report issued by the I.L.O. in this connection and pays enthusiastic tributes to the services rendered to the labour cause by the I.L.O. by the publication of an authoritative and scientific report on comparative costs of living.

... ..

The March 1932 issue (Vol. XI, No.3) of the Labour Gazette, Bombay, publishes at pages 567-568 a brief summary of the recent I.L.O. report on Costs of Living in Fourteen European Cities.

The same issue of the Labour Review reproduces at pages 551-552 a note on World Employment in 1931, published in Industrial and Labour Information dated 18-1-1932.

... ..

In the Council of State on 14-3-1932, Mr. J.C.B. Drake, Commerce Secretary, laid on the table a statement informing that the Government of India proposed to await further developments at Geneva before taking any further action regarding the ratification of the Draft Conven-



tion and recommendations being accepted concerning protection against accidents of workers employed in loading and unloading ships.

An identical statement was made in the Legislative Assembly on 29-3-1932 by Sir George Rainy.

Full publicity is given to the statement in the Leader of 17-3-1932, the Hindustan Times of 17-3-1932 and in all papers.

The full text of the statement is <sup>given</sup> made in the section: "Ratifications" of this report.

... ..

The Hindustan Times of 21-3-1932, the Leader of 22-3-1932 and all papers publish a communiqué issued by this Office on the Blue Report issued by the I.L.O. on "Partial Revision of the Convention concerning Protection against Accidents of Workers employed in Loading and Unloading ships".

(Six copies of this Communiqué were forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute H 2/604/32, dated 24-3-1932).

... ..

The March 1932 issue (Vol. IX, No.6) of the Indian Labour Journal Nagpur, publishes at pages 85-87 the first instalment of a long article entitled: "The International Labour Office" contributed by Mr. Frensis B. Gilbert, Americal Consul, Geneva. The article fully explains the constitution and working of the I.L.O., the functions of the International Labour Conference and the special obligations of Member States.

... ..

The January and February 1932 combined issue (Vol. IX, Nos. 4 and 5) of the Indian Labour Review, Nagpur, publishes at pages 63-66 an article on "Indian Workers' Housing" contributed by Mr. Rajani Kanta Das, a member of the Geneva staff of the I.L.O.

... ..

The March 1932 issue (Vol. III, No. 3) of the Indian Post, the official organ of the A.I. Postal and R.M.S. Union, publishes at pages 98-101, an article entitled "The World and the Worker - The I.L.O. at Geneva" contributed by Mr. K.E. Matthew, a member of the staff of this Office.

The same article is published at pages 183-186 of the January and February combined issue (Vol. 3, Nos. 7 and 8) of the N. and S.M. Railwayman, Madras.

(A copy of the March 1932 issue of the Indian Post was forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute H 4/811/32, dated 21-4-1932).

... ..

The February and March combined issue (Vol. I, Nos. 4 and 5) of The New World, Lahore, publishes at pages 26 et seq. an article under the caption "The I.L.O. and Democracy" contributed by the Director of this Office.

(A copy of the February and March combined Issue of the New World has been forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute H 4/810/32, dated 21-4-1932.)

... ..

The Daily Herald, Lahore, of 14-3-1932 and other papers publish fairly full accounts of a meeting held at the New Delhi Y.M.C.A. on 11-3-1932, presided over by Mr. K.E. Matthew, a member of the staff

of this office, when Mr. K.D. Shahans, B.A., Member, Servants of India Society, delivered a lecture on "Problems of Indian Rural Reconstruction". In the course of his presidential speech, Mr. Matthew made references to the efforts of the I.L.O. for bettering the conditions of agricultural workers the world over.

... ..

The Hindu of 16-3-1932 publishes a fairly full summary of Mr. H Joseph F. Duncan's article entitled "A New Policy for Agricultural Labour" originally published in the February 1932 issue of the International Labour Review. The same article is published in full in two instalments in the issues of "Federated India" dated 23-3-1932 and 30-3-1932 (Vol.VI, Nos. 12 and 13).

(The article was supplied by this office to the above and other Indian journals as per directions contained in Geneva Minute S 442/3, dated 29-1-1932 forwarding the article. The issues of the Federated India were forwarded to Geneva with this Office's Minute E/769/32, dated 14-4-1932).

... ..

In the notice of the annual meeting of the Senate of the Madras University to be held at Madras on 21-3-1932, published in the Hindu of 2-3-1932, mention is made of a resolution urging steps to be taken in consultation with Principals of Colleges to arrange for lectures to be given in colleges each year under the auspices of the University on "Modern Developments in International Law", with special reference to the League of Nations and its auxiliary organisations and for the publication of a text-book on the League of Nations with special reference to its connection with India.

... ..

Attention is invited to the following interpellations in the Council of State on 3-3-1932, and the Legislative Assembly on 23-3-32:

(1) by the Honourable Phiroze Sethna in the Council of State re names and numbers of Indians employed at the League of Nations Secretariat, Geneva, in receipt of annual salaries of £200 and above (pages 136-137 of the Council of State Debates of 3-3-1932, Vol.I, No.6)

(2) by Mr. K.P. Thampan in the Legislative Assembly re the amount of contributions from different nations to the League of Nations

Below are reproduced the subsidiary questions put and answers given in the Assembly in continuation to Mr. Thampan's question:

Mr. K.P. Thampan: May I know whether India has derived any specific benefit by being a member of the League of Nations?

Sir Lancelot Graham: I should imagine that India had has derived the benefit which the rest of the world has derived from the League of Nations.

Mr. K.P. Thampan: In view of the fact that the authority of the League Council has not been respected by Japan in regard to the Manchurian question, will the Government of India consider the desirability of stopping their contribution to and withdrawing from the membership of the League of Nations?

Sir Lancelot Graham: May I know if that arises out of the question?

Mr. President: I think it does.

Sir Lancelot Graham: In that case I must reserve my answer.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if India has ever voted independently of Great Britain in the League of Nations?

Sir Lancelot Graham: I would ask for notice of that question.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Will Government be pleased to consider as a measure of retrenchment the reduction of India's contribution to this pleasant club called the League of Nations?

Sir Lancelot Graham: The Honourable Member is asking the Government to consider what is quite impossible. We have either got to remain in the League of Nations or not: we cannot reduce our subscription as we please.

Mr. K.P. Thampan: Is it a fact that, constituted as at present, India only helps Great Britain to increase its number of votes in the League?

Sir Lancelot Graham: Certainly not.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Is it not a fact that other countries have as a matter of retrenchment reduced their contributions?

Sir Lancelot Graham: It is certainly not a fact.

(pages 2347-2350 of the Legislative Assembly Debates of 23-3-1932, Vol.III, No.7)

Ratifications.

Draft Convention and Recommendations concerning the Protection  
Against Accidents of Workers employed in Loading or Unloading  
Ships adopted by the International Labour Conference at its  
Twelfth Session held in 1929: Ratification Postponed.

Council of State.

The following extracts are taken from the Council of State Debates of 14-3-1932:-

The Honourable Mr. J.C.B. Drake (Commerce Secretary): On the 15th July, 1930, this House adopted the following Resolution moved on behalf of Government:

"This Council having considered:

- (1) the Draft Convention concerning the protection against accidents of workers employed in loading or unloading ships;
- (2) the Recommendation concerning reciprocity as regards the protection against accidents of workers employed in loading or unloading ships; and
- (3) the Recommendations concerning the consultation of workers' and employers' Organisations in the drawing up of regulations dealing with the safety of workers employed in loading or unloading ships;

adopted by the International Labour Conference at its Twelfth Session recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should examine the possibility of giving effect to the above Convention and the Recommendations and that the results of this examination should be placed before the Council within eighteen months from this date".

2. The Government of India consulted the Local Governments and through them the Port Trusts and commercial bodies as to the desirability of ratifying the Draft Convention and accepting the Recommendations referred to in the above Resolution. The replies received showed that the weight of opinion was in favour of the Draft Convention being ratified and the Recommendations being accepted. After considering the replies the Government of India came to the conclusion that the Draft Convention should be ratified and the Recommendations accepted on behalf of India and that necessary legislation should be undertaken to give effect to them. Subsequently, however, they received intimation from the International Labour Office that certain Governments had met with difficulties of a practical nature when considering the question of ratifying the Convention, and had approached the Office with the suggestion that, in order to remove these diffi-

culties, the Draft Convention should be modified. An examination of the points of difficulty raised by the Governments referred to above showed that similar difficulties would arise in India and that the amendments to the Draft Convention suggested by the Governments in question would remove them. In the circumstances the Government of India decided to postpone the question of introducing legislation to give effect to the Draft ~~Convention~~ Convention till the decision of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office on the proposal for the revision of the Draft Convention had been received.

3. The Government of India have now received intimation that the Governing Body of the International Labour Office have placed the question of the partial revision of the Draft Convention on the Agenda of the Sixteenth Session of the International Labour Conference which is to open at Geneva on the 12th April, 1932. In the circumstances the Government of India propose to await further developments before taking any further action regarding the ratification of the Draft Convention and the acceptance of the Recommendations.

(Reproduced from pages 229-230 of the Council of State Debates, 14-3-1932, Vol.I, No.10).

(For report of previous reference to debate in the Indian Legislature on this Convention, see pages 26-31 of the July 1930 report of this Office).

Draft Convention and Recommendations Re Protection  
Against Accidents of Workers Employed in Loading and Unloading  
Ships: Ratification Postponed.

Legislative Assembly.

An identical statement as the one made in the Council of State by the Honourable Mr. J.C.B. Drake (Commerce Secretary) on 14-3-1932 on the above Convention, was made in the Legislative Assembly by the Honourable Sir George Rainy (Leader of the House) on 29-3-1932.

(For full text of Statement, see pages 2618-2619 of the Legislative Assembly Debates of 29-3-1932, Vol.III, No.9).

National Labour Legislation

The Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Bill - 1932.

On 11-3-32 Sir Joseph Bhowe (Member for Industries and Labour) introduced in the Legislative Assembly "The Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Bill" (L.A.Bill No.28 of 1932). The text of the Bill is published at pages 125-134 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 12-3-1932. As the text of the Bill is too lengthy for reproduction, the main headings of the Bill are given below:-

The Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Bill.

(L.A.Bill No. 28 of 1932).

Chapter I - Preliminary.

Sections. - 1.Short title, extent and commencement. 2. Definitions. 3. Appointment and status of Controller and Deputy Controller. 4. Powers of the Controller. 5. Emigrant Labour Cess. 6. Power to make rules for the collection of the Emigrant Labour Cess.

Chapter II - Repatriation.

7. General right of repatriation after three years in Assam. 8. Right to repatriation on dismissal. 9 Rights of repatriation of family of deceased emigrant labourer. 10. Right to apply for repatriation in certain circumstances. 11. Power of criminal Courts to order repatriation. 12. Incidents of the right of repatriation. 13. The discharge of an employer's duty to repatriate. 14. Postponement, waiver and forfeiture of the right. 15. Power of the Controller to enforce the provisions of this Chapter.

Chapter III - Controlled Emigration Areas.

16. Power to declare controlled emigration areas. 17. Power to grant licenses to local forwarding agents. 18. Recruits in controlled emigration areas to be sent to forwarding agents' depots. 19. Assisted emigrants to be forwarded to Assam by local forwarding agents by prescribed routes. 20. Maintenance of depots along prescribed routes. 21. Power of Local Government to make rules. 22. Inspection of depots, vessels and vehicles. 23. Action where proper arrangements not made for assisted emigrants. 24. Cancellation of licences. 25. Penalty for illicit abetment of emigration.

Chapter IV- Restricted Recruiting Areas.

26- Power to declare restricted recruiting areas. 27. Restriction on recruitment in such areas. 28. Grant of licences to recruiters. 29. Grant of certificates to garden-sardars. 30. Cancellation and suspension of recruiter's licence. 31. Cancellation of garden-sardar's certificate. 32. Penalty for illicit recruitment.

Chapter V - Supplemental.

33. Prohibition of the recruitment of children. 34. Power to detain and return sick persons. 35. Power to return person improperly recruited. 36. Power to enforce the provisions of sections 34 and 35. 37. Magistrates and medical officers who may exercise the powers of the Controller. 38. Power of Governor General in Council to make rules. 39. Powers to extend the scope of this Act. 40. Repeal of Act VI of 1901 and certain consequences.

Statement of Objects and Reasons.

The following is the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill:-



The Assam Labour and Emigration Act, 1901, which regulates emigration to the tea districts of Assam, was designed, like its predecessors, mainly to regulate the recruitment and engagement of indentured labour. It has not been possible for some years for any workers in Assam to be subjected to a penal contract and, in consequence of this and other changes, the law is entirely unsuited to present conditions. Attempts were made by amending Acts in 1908, 1915 and 1927 to adapt the Act to meet altering conditions; substantial parts of it have been repealed and large numbers of rules have been framed in the endeavour to use the Act to regulate the recruitment of emigrants who are subject to no indenture. These changes have proved inadequate and they have made the law extremely confused. Large parts of the surviving provisions of the Act have become completely ineffectively and those provisions which are operative are open to weighty criticisms.

2. In 1926, the Government of India addressed the Local Governments mainly concerned suggesting that the time might have come for the abolition of all control over recruitment and that, if ~~the~~ this was inadvisable, considerable changes should be made in the law. The replies received agreed in regarding some restrictions on recruiting as still essential and the existing restrictions as unsatisfactory. The Government of India accordingly drafted an Assam Recruitment Bill, which was sent to the local Governments in December, 1928. By the time criticisms of it had been received, the Royal Commission on Labour had been appointed and a decision was deferred until they had reported. They collected a large amount of evidence on the subject and devoted Chapter XX of their Report to a discussion of it. As a result, they recommended the replacement of the existing legislation by a new enactment. The Bill follows the scheme prepared by the Commission, whose recommendations have been varied in respect of minor details and supplemented where necessary.

3. The first object of the Bill is to make it possible, on the one hand, to exercise all the control over the recruitment and forwarding of assisted emigrants to the Assam tea gardens as may be justified and required by the interests of emigrants and potential emigrants and, on the other hand, to ensure that no restrictions are imposed which are not so justified. The ideal, now as in the past, is the reduction of restrictions to a minimum and the establishment of such conditions as will make it possible to dispense with all control. This ideal has recently been endorsed by both the Royal Commission on Agriculture and the Royal Commission on Labour. It is desirable, therefore, that the provisions relating to control should be sufficiently elastic to allow of their complete or partial relaxation as and where this is required, and sufficiently wide to deal with any possible recrudescence of recruiting abuses. The Bill proposes that Local Governments should be able, subject to the control of the Government of India, to impose control over the forwarding of assisted emigrants (clause 16 and Chapter III generally) or over both their recruitment and their forwarding (clauses 16 and 26 and Chapters III and IV generally) as occasion may dictate. Under the former system, assisted emigrants will ordinarily be forwarded through licensed local agents in the recruiting districts (clauses 17, 18) by prescribed routes (clause 19) on which provision for food, shelter, etc., must be made by employers and medical supervision

can be exercised (clauses 20, 34, 36 and 37(4)). Only employers who make satisfactory provision will be able to secure and retain licenses for local agents (clause 17(3)), and the operations of local agents and others engaged in forwarding will be subject to inspection and ~~xxx~~ scrutiny (clauses 4 and 22). Under the latter system, employers will, in addition, be prevented from recruiting otherwise than by means of certificated persons employed in the gardens (garden-gardars), or recruiters licensed in the recruiting provinces (clauses 27 and 28). But the ordinary provisions relating to either system may be relaxed to such extent as seems desirable in any area to which the system is applicable (provisos to clauses 16(1) and 26(1)).

4. In addition, the Bill seeks to secure for all those who are to emigrate under it the right to be repatriated from Assam (Chapter II) with their dependants (clause 9) at the employer's expense (clause 12). Ordinarily this right will accrue after three years from the date of entry into Assam (clause 7). It will also be possible to claim repatriation within three years in the event of the emigrant (a) being dismissed otherwise than for wilful misconduct (clause 8), (b) failing in health, (c) not being provided with suitable work, or (d) having his wages unjustly withheld (clause 10). Repatriation within one year of entry to Assam will also be possible where there has been fraud or misrepresentation or other irregularities in recruiting (clauses 10 and 35). Further, repatriation can be ordered at any time by a criminal Court in the case of a labourer who has been assaulted by the employer or his agent (clause 11). It is believed that the offer of these rights of repatriation to emigrants will benefit not merely emigrants but the industry as a whole by removing a serious obstacle to the flow of suitable labour, and that the existence of an adequate supply of such labour will go far to remove the conditions which make it undesirable at present to dispense with control over emigration.

5. For the general administration of the system which the Bill seeks to establish, it is proposed to appoint a Controller of Emigrant Labour with some staff and possibly a Deputy Controller (clause 3). The charges will be met by the tea industry through a cess of somewhat similar character to that raised under the present Act for the Assam Labour Board (clause 5). The Controller is intended to be an officer subject to the Government of India and responsible for

- (a) enforcing the law relating to repatriation in Assam (clauses 4, 8 - 10, 12-15), collateral powers being given to District Magistrates (clause 37);
- (b) supervising the forwarding routes (clauses 4, 34-36);
- (c) supervising conditions in the recruiting provinces, where his powers will be limited to inspection and advice (clauses 4, 17(3)), executive action being entrusted to the local authorities (Chapters III and IV).

He should thus be able to secure the proper co-ordination of the whole system, and to advise regarding possible relaxations of control or the imposition of further restrictions under the Act, if required. It is intended that, with the appointment of the Controller, the Assam Labour Board, which has since 1915 exercised some supervision, without executive authority, in the recruiting provinces, should be abolished.

6. Apart from the main changes proposed in the law and explained above, the Bill involves a number of minor alterations in the present position.

(a) The Bill is not limited in its initial application to certain provinces (clause 1(2)). So to limit it would involve the limitation of repatriation rights to emigrants from these provinces, while its general extension does not render obligatory the extension of control to areas at present uncontrolled.

(b) It will no longer be possible to restrict the recruitment of labour within Assam itself, cf. Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, page 373 (clause 2(e)).

(c) Unassisted emigration will be entirely free; control can only be exercised where material assistance is given (clause 2(f)).

(d) The engagement and forwarding of emigrants who are merely returning to Assam after leaving it as adults will be uncontrolled (clauses 2(f) and 2(g)).

(e) It will no longer be possible to prohibit recruitment for Assam; with the complete abolition of penal contracts, the prohibition of recruitment for certain districts of India cannot be justified in the interests of labour, cf. Reports of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, page 581, and of the Royal Commission on Labour, page 363.

(f) Managers and other supervising officers on tea estates will be able to receive certificates to conduct recruiting in restricted recruiting areas (clause 29).

(g) It is proposed that in all areas, controlled or uncontrolled, it should be unlawful to assist persons under 16 to emigrate unless they are accompanied by their parent or guardian (clause 32).

(h) It is proposed that it should be possible to detain and return at the employer's expense sick persons emigrating from any province (clause 34).

(i) The provisions of the Bill are intended to apply only to emigration for work on tea plantations in the first instance; but power is retained to extend its application to other industries in Assam and to other districts than the eight tea districts. This power could be used if labourers are imported to other forms of industry with a view to their transference to tea estates, or if the tea industry develops in other parts of Assam (clause 39).

(The Gazette of India, 12-3-1932,  
Part V - Pages 133-134).

Implementing of Whitley Recommendations:

Promise of Accelerated Legislation.

In the course of the debate on the General Budget, Mr. N.M. Joshi moved on 17-3-32 a token cut of Rs.100 under the head "Executive Council" to record his censure of Government in delaying to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour. "The commissioners," he declared, "were not revolutionaries; they were men with a full sense of responsibility, men like Mr. Whitley and Mr. Sastri. If you do not give effect to their recommendations, not within reasonable time, but in time, then the revolutionary element in labour will gain strength". Mr. Joshi then surveyed the field of the Labour Commission's recommendations and referred to the emphasis laid by that Commission on the proper representation of labour in the provincial and central legislatures. Why then, he asked, had the Foreign Secretary and the Government failed to provide for labour a representation in the N.W. Frontier Province Council? He held that about two lakhs out of 22 lakhs of the population represented labour and he insisted that labour must find representation at least among the nominated non-officials.

Sir Joseph Bhore on behalf of the Government of India said that the 350 recommendations of the Commission could not be given effect to in a day. The majority of them concerned the local Governments and other bodies over whom the Central Government had no control. Then again, owing to retrenchment, they had not enough staff to push on with this work, and labour legislation, however important, was not the only (nor the most) important of the legislative activities of

K.2.

Government. From the nature of the business before the House it was apparent that progress could not be much accelerated. Government had already brought forward some Bills, while others relating to trade disputes, mines and land acquisition and other matters were under consideration. He hoped that by the autumn session of the Assembly decisions on most of these would be completed. He again assured the House that Government would continue steadily to pursue the examination of the Commission's proposals.

Mr. Joshi said that though he was dissatisfied he would withdraw his motion.

(The full text of Mr. Joshi's speech and the replies given on behalf of the Government are given at pages 2145-2155 of Legislative Assembly Debates, 17-3-32, Vol.III, No.4).

Conditions of Work in the Indian Posts &  
Telegraph Department - 1930-31.\*

The following information about the conditions of work of Indian Postal and telegraph employees is taken from the annual report of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department for the year 1930-31 issued by the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs:-

Strength of Working Staff. - According to the statistics published in the report, the Department employed during 1930-31 a staff of 132,398 employees, as against 131,917 employees during the previous year. Out of this number, 29,159 employees were sub-postmasters and clerks in the time-scale, 22,447 were urban postmen, 8,907 were village postmen, 1319 were branch postmasters (~~extra~~ Departmental), 18,287 were branch postmasters (extra departmental), 14,367 were runners, and 13,638 were other inferior servants. The department consists of three branches, the postal, the telegraph and telephone, and the wireless branches. The headquarters staff included about 23 superior officers belonging to the Direction, 18 selection grade posts, 179 time-scale posts and 129 inferior servants.

Volume of Business Transacted. - At the close of 1930-31 there were 115,205 postal officials, 24,175 post offices, and 169,558 miles of mail lines. During the year 1,299.7 million articles, including 54 million registered articles, were posted; stamps worth Rs.63 millions were sold for postal purposes; over 39 million money orders of the total value of 864.8 millions of rupees were issued; a sum of about

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\* Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department - Annual Report for the year 1930-31 (With a Review of the Progress of the Department for the quinquennial period 1926-27 to 1930-31) - New Delhi: Printed by the Manager Government of India Press: 1932 - Price Rs.2 As.4 or 4s. 7 pp. 125 .

Rs.247 millions was collected for tradesmen and others on value-payable articles; over 5 million insured articles valued at 1,387.5 millions of rupees were handled. Customs duty aggregating over 6.6 million rupees was realised on parcels and letters from abroad; pensions amounting to Rs.16 millions were paid to Indian Military pensioners and 14,091 lbs. of quinine were sold to the public. On the 31st March 1931, there were 2,477,613 savings bank accounts with a total balance of Rs.370 millions and 79,958 Postal Life Insurance policies with an aggregate assurance of Rs.148.6 millions.

Air Mail Service. - The Karachi-London air mail service continued to be operated by Imperial Airways Ltd. During the year 51 aeroplanes arrived at and 52 planes left Karachi with mails weighing 41,715 lbs. and 39,347 lbs., respectively compared with 30,392 lbs. and 26,746 lbs. in the previous year. The total number of air mail articles despatched from India in connection with the westbound plane during the year 1930-31 was 1,006,200. The service continued to be efficient and punctual except in the winter months when on account of unfavourable weather conditions in Europe, the planes arrived late by one day on six occasions and by two days on three occasions.

P. & O.Contract. - During the year 52 steamers left London with the mails for India, and the same number of steamers left Bombay with the mails from India. The average time occupied, including the transit of the ~~xx~~ mails by the overland route London-Marseilles, was 14 days 4 hours from London to Bombay, and 14 days 4 hours from Bombay to London compared with 14 days 9 hours and 14 days 6 hours, respectively, during the preceding year.

Operations of Savings Bank. - The number of active accounts

at the end of the year 1930-31 was 2,477,613 as against 2,304,904 at the close of the preceding year. The total balance at the credit of depositors amounted to Rs.370,259,874. The average balance at the credit of a single depositor amounted to Rs.14244 at the end of 1930-31, as against Rs.161.10 in 1929-30.

Post & Telegraphs Account Enquiry Committee. - In February 1931 the Governor-General in Council appointed the Posts and Telegraphs Accounts Enquiry Committee with Sir Gwanjee Jehangir, M.L.A., as chairman. The Committee was required to examine the existing system of accounting in the Department in order to see how far it was achieving its object of presenting a true picture of the commercial results of the Department's working, with particular reference to the provision made for depreciation, the assessment in respect of pensionary liability and interest charges, the allocation of the sale proceeds of unified stamps and credits allowed on account of services rendered to other Departments. The Committee commenced its sittings on the 21st February 1931 at New Delhi and had not concluded its labours at the close of the year.

Revision of Pay. - The scales of pay of the following establishments were revised with effect from the 1st April 1930:-  
(1) The clerical and other miscellaneous staff of the office of the Director-General including the Wireless Branch; (2) The permanent wholetime sweepers, bhisties, methars, head sweepers and jamadar mehtars of Calcutta; and (3) Clerks and certain other staff employed at Benares. With effect also from the 1st April 1930 the fixed rates of subsistence allowance of task work telegraph messengers were converted into time-scale ones.



Co-operative Credit Societies.- (a) Postal. Postal Co-operative Credit Societies continued to flourish during the year. The number of Societies stands at 43. The membership increased from 44,426 to 50,544 and the subscribed capital from Rs. 1.73 millions to over Rs. 2.04 millions. Loans amounting to about Rs. 4.55 millions were advanced to 20,906 members compared with Rs. 3.05 millions to 19,707 members in the previous year. A feature of the Postal Co-operative Credit Societies is the institution of Fidelity Branches under which the Societies issue Fidelity Bonds to their members as one of the forms of security required by the Department. The revenue derived from this form of business is considerable, while the demands by the Department are comparatively small. The Societies are therefore able to benefit very greatly by guaranteeing the honesty of their members and the members enjoy larger dividends owing to the general integrity of the general body.

(b) Telegraph.- The Telegraph Co-operative Credit Societies at Agra, Belgaum, Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi, Lahore, Madras and Rangoon continued to make satisfactory progress and the total number of members rose from 4,825 to 5,144.

Commenting on the usefulness of these co-operative societies, the report observes:-

"The existence of Postal and Telegraph Co-operative Credit Societies has undoubtedly been a blessing to the staff in saving them in innumerable instances from getting into and remaining in the hands of professional money-lenders. If properly administered and organised they give wide-spread benefit, financial advantage and a feeling of self-respect to their members. At the same time unless carefully watched by the office holders abuses are liable to creep in and instead of being a benefit, a Co-operative Society may end in being the reverse. On the whole the administration of the Societies in the Department is good and, if the watchfulness of the office bearers is maintained they will continue to do the excellent work which they now effect."

Financial Results for 1930-31: Postal Branch.- The accounts show that the receipts for the year amounted to Rs. 75,091,371 and the charges (including interest on Capital Outlay) to Rs. 81,300,583, the result being a net loss of Rs. 6,209,212 as compared with a net loss of Rs. 2,147,333 shown in the accounts for the year 1929-30. The expenditure increased by nearly Rs. 0.2 million while the receipts decreased by nearly Rs. 3.9 millions, the net result being approximately Rs. 4.1 millions worse than that for 1929-30. This deterioration in the financial position is mainly attributable to continued falling off in the receipts on account of decline in traffic and general trade depression.

Telegraphs Excluding Radios.- Telegraph receipts during 1930-31 amounted to Rs. 26,767,258 and Telegraph expenditure (including interest on Capital Outlay) to Rs. 32,893,992 with a resulting loss of Rs. 6,126,734 as compared with a loss of Rs. 2,520,942 in 1929-30. Thus the results of working this branch alone are worse than in the previous year by Rs. 2.6 millions. The increased loss is due to bad economic conditions and general trade depression.

Radio Telegraphs.- The receipts for the year amounted to Rs. 294,086 and the charges (including interest on Capital Outlay) to Rs. 1,112,704, the result being a loss of Rs. 818,618 as against a loss of Rs. 685,697 in 1929-30. This amount represents the loss on the non-commercial activities of the Wireless Branch as the receipts and expenditure of the commercial radio services have been included under Telegraphs.

Telephones.- The accounts show that the receipts for the year amounted to Rs. 5,633,339 and the charges (including interest on Capital outlay) to Rs. 5,828,083, the result being a net loss of Rs. 194,744 as compared with a net profit of Rs. 109,441 in the preceding year. Receipts increased from Rs. 5,439,142 in 1929-30 by Rs. 194,197 but the increase in expenditure was Rs. 498,382.

Indian Railways (Amendment) Act-1930 (Hours of Employment):

Extension to G.I.P. & E.B. Railways on 1-4-1932.

At pages 44 of the report of this Office for April 1931 reference was made to the application of the Indian Railways(Amendment) Act,1930, to the North Western and East Indian Railways with effect from 1st April 1931. A communique was issued by the Government of India on 18-3-32 notifying extension of the application of the Act to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and the Eastern Bengal Railway. The following is the text of the communique:-

The Indian Railways(Amendment) Act,1930, to provide for the regulation of hours of employment of railway servants was passed by the legislature in the spring of that year, and it was found possible to apply the provisions of this Act with its connecting regulations to the North-Western and East Indian Railways with effect from April 1, 1931. The Government of India now propose to extend the application of the regulations to the Great Indian Peninsula and the Eastern Bengal Railways with effect from the 1st April,1932, thus bringing all State-managed railways, with the exception of Burma Railways, within the scope of the Act. Owing to the present financial stringency it has not yet been found possible to apply the Act formally to company-managed railways, but a large proportion of the staff on these railways are already working according to the provisions of the regulations.

When the regulations were given effect to on the North-Western and East Indian Railways a supervisor of railway labour, unconnected with the administration of either line, was appointed by the Governor-General in Council to supervise the working of the Act. This supervisor, who is assisted by inspectors, will extend the sphere of his activities to the Great Indian Peninsula and Eastern Bengal Railways with effect from the 1st April,1932.

(The Leader, 21-3-32).

A.I.R. Federation and Murphy Report: Threat of  
General Strike.

At pages 36 to 42 of the report of this Office for February 1932 was given a summary of the report issued by the Court of Inquiry into Railway Retrenchment presided over by Justice Murphy, I.C.S. The report has grievously disappointed the All India Railwaymen's Federation. Even before the official publication of the Report, the General Council of the All India Railwaymen's Federation at its meeting held in Bombay on 7-3-1932 passed the following resolution by way of protest against the Railway Board's action in proceeding with retrenchment while the Court of Inquiry was still conducting its proceedings (see pages 36 of our February 1932 report):-

"It is the considered opinion of the Council that while the Federation scrupulously refrained from aggressive action since the commencement of the work of the Court of Inquiry, the Railway Board had shown utter disregard to the spirit of the Trade Disputes Act, which requires that both the parties should desist from action while the subject matter is still under inquiry".

"In view of the fact that the miseries and privations of railway workers have been accentuated by the unjust wage cuts, increase of short time, additional taxation and the growing cost of living and in view of the fact that the situation among the railway workers has become intolerable, the Council resolves that there is no alternative left but to implement the resolution for a general strike passed by the special Convention in June 1931."

"The Council accordingly directs the taking of ballots by the affiliated Unions, which was suspended on the appointment of the Court of Inquiry, to be now resumed from the 21st March and be completed by the 24th April. If the ballot be favourable the Council of Action should fix a date for the declaration of a strike and give notice of the strike to the Railway Board".

"The Council further directs that, in the meanwhile, the affiliated Unions should launch an intensive and extensive propaganda for awakening the workers to the dangers with which they are faced. The Council further declares that the strike would be confined to the economic issue of retrenchment". (The Hindu, 8-3-1932).

After the publication of the Report, the Council of Action of the All India Railwaymen's Federation met in Bombay on 18-3-1932

under the presidentship of Mr. Jammadas Nehta and decided to proceed with the ballot for a general strike as the recommendations of the Court of Inquiry were such as not to give any relief to the workers.

A statement issued to the press by the Council of the All India Railwaymen's Federation on 19-3-1932 justifying the decision to <sup>ballot for</sup> a general strike says:-

"With the publication of the report of the Murphy Court of Inquiry into Railway Retrenchment, a further stage has been reached in the biggest trade dispute that has arisen in this country. The perusal of it leaves a better impression about its contents than did the bald summary which was made available a few days earlier. The report does justice to many of the submissions made by Railwaymen's Federation before the Court. It finds for instance that in effecting retrenchment most of the administrations failed to consult the Railway Unions, that the order or discharges laid down by the Railway Board was impracticable; that different administrations put different interpretations thereon, that even in the same administration contradictory interpretations were put by different officers on the same instructions; that in many cases the specific orders of the Railway Board were neglected or ignored and so on.

"It is not possible to criticise the whole report in this brief statement. In the name of economy the Railway Board and the Railway Administrations retrenched 40,502 men and demoted 4,382: and all these enormous reductions were carried out without giving any opportunity to the men or their unions to make representation. There was almost a conspiracy of silence while thousands of men were sent out in the streets to starve with their families. And this went on while a special member was added to the Railway Board three years ago professedly to look after the interests of Labour.

"We are forced to come to the conclusion that the results of the inquiry are on the whole disappointing. No doubt, the Railway Board has been censured for its vague methods but the real test to apply is how many men will be reinstated as a result of this inquiry. If the Court had grappled with the implications of its own findings, we estimate that over 20,000 men could have been recommended for reinstatement, but this is what the Court deliberately shrinks from doing and that is the weakest and the most disappointing part of the report".  
(The Times of India, 19-3-1932)

"The workers have not received the justice to which the evidence and the findings entitled them; we are most reluctantly compelled to advise them to go on with the balloting for a general strike. That is the only weapon now left to secure redress of the many wrongs done to them in the name of retrenchment".

(The Indian Labour Journal, March 1932, Vol. IX, No.6, page 82 89).

Workmen's Compensation: Bombay Government

Inquiry re. Extension to Agricultural & Forest Workers.

The following news item regarding possible extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act to agricultural and forest workers in the Bombay Presidency is published by the Statesman dated 13-3-32:-

Action<sup>ing</sup> on the suggestion of the Royal Commission on Labour regarding the extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act to agriculture and forestry, <sup>The</sup> Bombay Government are inquiring: Whether the work carried on in reserve forests by Government or by private employers is generally to be regarded as organized work of a hazardous nature; whether any practical difficulties are likely to arise if the provisions of the workmen's compensation act are extended in order to include forest workers; whether the work of persons employed in agriculture is hazardous; <sup>and</sup> whether the Act should be extended to cover only employees of the larger agricultural employers.

(The Statesman, 13-3-32).

Welfare Work in Bombay Cotton Mills -

New Lady Officer.

Early in 1931, the National Y.W.C.A., India, Burma and Ceylon, invited Miss F.E. Hawkins to India to ~~the~~ do advisory work in Industrial Welfare Work in India. Miss Hawkins who has had a very wide experience of welfare work in England, and more particularly in the cotton trade, on arrival in India was attached to the staff of the Naigaum Social Service Centre, Bombay. Through the good offices of the Bombay Millowners' Association, she was able to visit a large number of cotton mills in the City and Island, and her advice was

sought by a number of mills on a variety of welfare problems. In November 1931, Miss Hawkins met a representative body of mill managers and explained the general scope of welfare work in England. During a very interesting discussion, a number of suggestions were put forward by the managers present, particularly with reference to the medical side of welfare work. Since many of the proposals concerned the medical staff of the mills, an opportunity was afterwards given to Miss Hawkins to address the Mill Doctors. As a consequence of this meeting, a sub-committee of mill doctors was appointed, which has since made a number of recommendations in connection with the medical side of welfare work. The meetings which have taken place between Miss Hawkins, the Mill Managers and the Mill Doctors, and her frequent visits to mills, are reported to have been of considerable value, and the Committee of the Association had, therefore, little hesitation in accepting an offer made by the National General Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. of India, Burma and Ceylon to loan the services of Miss Hawkins to the Association for a period of six to twelve months to assist in any way possible in existing or contemplated schemes of welfare work in mills. This will enable Miss Hawkins to pay greater attention than has hitherto been possible to matters relating to welfare work in Bombay Cotton Mills, and make her expert advice and assistance on such matters available to the mills concerned free of cost, the Association having decided to bear Miss Hawkins' travelling expenses. (Labour Gazette, Bombay, March 1932).

Labour Welfare Work in Government Rifle Factory, Ishapore.

The following information about labour welfare work in the Government Army Rifle Factory, Ishapore (Bengal), is taken from a report on the subject published in the Statesman of 31-3-32:-

Labour Bureau of the Factory. - The Labour Bureau entirely staffed by Indians under an Indian Employment Manager, is responsible for employment, housing, records, welfare, statistics and education, and these activities are sub-divided under various heads, the successful operation of which is the result of many years' experience. Very great credit is due to the Factory officers who have for many years devoted considerable attention to the training of the Indian staff.

Co-operative Society. - The Co-operative Society with its paid-up capital of Rs.1,27,870 and its 2,123 members (all Government Factory employees) has performed a great service to the community in its efforts to reduce usury and to promote thrift and also to supply stores at a reasonable price.

Recruitment. - When engaging labour, a photograph is taken of the man and is fixed to his "record of service". The man is medically examined in order to discover whether he is physically fit for employment and the "trade test" discovers whether a man is what he claims to be without wasting time in the workshops. It measures quality and speed, the results being used to establish the candidates starting wage.

Promotions, Transfers, Discharges, etc., - Promotions, transfers from one workshop to another, periods of long leave and discharges are entered on the "record of service," and no discharge can become effective except over the signature of the Factory Superintendent. Once discharged, no man is permitted to again work in the Factory, and it follows that discharges are very carefully considered before being effective. Discharged due to reduction of work, do not debar workmen from re-engagement, and after a few years the whole of the labour force understand that when they are discharged through their own misconduct it is useless for them to apply for work again.

Welfare Committee. - The Welfare Committee, under its elected Indian president, consists of members from each of the workshops and subsidiary departments of the Factory, and it is remarkable what a steadying influence this Committee exerts, and its recommendations are almost invariably well reasoned and impartial.

Health Conditions. - Health is attended to very closely. A dispensary for minor ailments, vaccination, etc., is maintained at the main gate of the Factory, and in addition a well-equipped hospital is maintained in the Workmen's Village.

Education. - In the primary school, the curriculum is specially arranged to be of service to boys who enter the Factory as boy artisans. It is noteworthy that both in the primary and technical schools, creed or caste is not recognized.

(The Statesman, 31-3-32).



Welfare Work in Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Madras:

Report for 1931-32\*

The following information about the activities of the Welfare Committee of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Madras, for the year ending 29-2-1932 is taken from the Annual Report issued by the Secretary of the Welfare Committee. It may be mentioned here that the Welfare Committee of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills is one of the best organised committees of this nature in the whole of India and that in many respects it serves as a model institution to other welfare committees started by industrial institutions, not only in the Madras Presidency, but in other parts of India as well. The Welfare Committee was started in these Mills on the 10th January 1922 and has now completed a decade of its existence. The number of workers in the two mills is over 8,000.

General Survey.- The Welfare Committee held 22 ordinary meetings during the year under report and discussed several important questions concerning working conditions and social welfare of the employees. The question of the date of payment of wages to the workpeople was discussed at length and arrangements made to distribute wages on the 10th of every month. Lively discussions were held on the question of leave for ceremonies connected with death in workpeople's families. Since the year under report was one of acute trade depression, it is no matter for wonder that the deliberations of the Committee at many of its meetings related to measures proposed by the Management to cope with the situation. The Social Welfare activities of the Committee were carried on quite successfully. Instead of organising the usual Health Week, a map campaign of sustained health propaganda has been devised by coming to an arrangement with the National Health Association of Southern India to give their cinema exhibitions and magic lantern lectures for the benefit of the workpeople. A series of lectures on the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour were delivered by the Welfare Superintendent. It is pleasing to note that the services of the Welfare Department are more and more requisitioned for organising social service activities in the localities round about the Mills, occupied mostly by the workpeople.

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\*Tenth Annual Report of the Welfare Committee. The Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Madras - 1931.

Principal Activities.- During the period under review, a number of questions affecting the welfare and conditions of the workpeople engaged the attention of the Committee. The following list catalogues briefly such questions:- (1) Date of payment of wages, (2) Gratuity Fund, (3) Leave for ceremonies connected with death in workpeople's families, (4) Long leave, (5) Perfect attendance certificates, (6) Resignations, (7) Compensation for accidents, (8) Conveyance for sick workpeople, (9) Holidays, (10) Retrenchment, and (11) Working hours.

Working Hours.- The Report furnishes the following details about the question of introducing a working week of 54 hours in the mills:-

At the meeting of the Welfare Committee on the 1st February 1932 representations were made for the early introduction of the 54 hour week in the Mills and in that connection it was stated that though legislation had not been passed for the introduction of the shorter day as recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour, the workpeople expected that the Company would anticipate the legislature as they had done on previous occasions in many matters affecting the welfare of the workers. Suggestions were also made for the distribution of the working hours when the shorter day was introduced. The President in reply made a comprehensive review of the trade situation and in view of the general trade depression and the increase in taxation and keen competition from other Mills, considered that this was not a very good time to introduce a reduction in working hours and that it would be better to wait until conditions were more settled and Government itself introduced legislation to deal with the question. The President also emphasised the necessity of increasing the efficiency of the workers in order that they might not suffer by the introduction of the shorter hours as indicated in the Report of the Royal Commission.

Social Welfare Activities.- The social welfare activities of the Committee during the period under review may be summarised under the following main heads: (1) Health propaganda, (2) Athletic Association, (3) Chutrams, (4) Workmen's stores, (5) Co-operative credit society, (6) Cloth sales, (7) Tailor's shop, (8) Savings fund, (9) Income-tax (10) Dramatic society, (11) Mills' villages, (12) Vyasarpadi Adi-Dravida village, (13) Social service in localities other than Mills' villages, (14) Literary and debating society, (15) Teddy shops in the mill area, (16) Urdu paper for mills' welfare offices, (17) Whitley Commission report, (18) Technical classes for weaving jobbers (19) Chemistry class, ~~20~~ (20) Personal relationships.

Co-operative Activities.- The report furnishes the following details about the working of the Mills' Co-operative Credit Society: The Society worked quite successfully and made further progress during the year under report. The number of members as recorded at the meeting of the Board of Directors held on the 8th February 1932 was 1259 with 6,382 shares as against 1,203 members with 5,996 shares as mentioned in the last Report. The paid-up share capital of the society stands at Rs. 36,670-0-4 as against Rs. 29,005-4-8 in January 1931. As against 2,473 loans with an outstanding against members of ~~Rxix2x~~ Rs. 42,620-14-4 recorded in the last report, the Society has so far granted 3,344 loans, the total loan outstanding against members being Rs. 43,517-0-11. The audit report for the year 1930-31 showed that the Society had earned a net profit of Rs. 3,180-4-0 as against Rs. 2,498-13-0 in the previous year. The Society declared a dividend of

7%, i.e., 1% more than that of last year. With a view to minimising the work of maintaining the accounts of the Society, a new system of accounts has been introduced. The Society has also started a "Dividend Equalisation Fund" with the object of reserving, if possible a certain portion of each year's profit to be utilised if and when necessity arises for the payment of dividend in subsequent years, should the profits of those years prove insufficient to declare a decent dividend. This fund now shows a balance of Rs. 1,080-11-0.

Commenting on the smallness of the above figures when compared to the 8,000 workers on the pay-roll of the mills, the report observes: "The progress of the Society as disclosed by the figures quoted above may perhaps be considered as rather disappointing by a co-operative enthusiast. It may be questioned whether in an industrial organisation with more than 8,000 workers the Society should not be stronger in numbers and the turn-over of its business larger. The explanation is that the Society has never been run on the principle that co-operative credit is the last word in the solution of the problem of indebtedness of the workpeople. The Society believes that, as remarked by the Royal Commission on Labour in India, "Credit, in the sense of borrowing capacity, is not the workers' need; it would be nearer the truth to describe it as his curse". With this principle in view the Society has been exercising the utmost caution in admitting workers as members and granting loans to them. When viewed in the light of these considerations, the progress the Society has made will be found really satisfactory."

Progress in period 1922-1932.- The Report summarises the progress achieved in the period 1922-1932 as follows:-

"Various activities have been started in conjunction with the Committee for enriching and ennobling the social life of the workers,- an Athletic Association to organise sports and games, a Dramatic Society to provide entertainments, a Workmen's Stores to supply the necessaries of life at cheap rates, a Co-operative Society to promote thrift and provide cheap credit, a Literary and Debating Society to facilitate the intellectual progress of the literate section of the workers and Village Panchayats to look after the internal peace and promote community life amongst the residents of the villages. The Schools, where literary and technical education is imparted to the children of the workers and the young workers in the Mills free of cost have been in existence for the past nearly three decades. Besides, these, ad hoc Committees have often been constituted for organising Health Weeks, Excursions and other social activities. It would not, therefore, be an exaggeration to say that what was a fragile plant of a Committee in 1922 has developed during the past ten years into a strong tree of an institution with several branches & of associations for social service, all of which together support a beautiful canopy which affords shelter to thousands of workers in these Mills."

Industrial Organisation.Employers' Organisation.5th Annual Meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers  
of Commerce and Industry, Delhi, 1932.

The fifth annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry was held at Delhi on 26 and 27-3-1932 under the presidency of Mr. Walchand Hirachand, owing to illness of Mr. Jamal Mohamed, the President of the Federation. Prominent among those present were Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Mr. G.D. Birla, Lala Shri Ram, Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, Mr. Chunilal Mehta and Mr. Heshang Dinshaw. A notable feature of the year's session was the absence from the session of Members of the Executive Council of the Government of India who, in recent years, had made it a practice to attend the annual meetings of both the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon. The decision of the Government Members not to attend the session, according to a communication sent to the Executive Committee of the Federation, is based, among other reasons, on preoccupation of Government Members with Legislative Assembly work and the non-cooperative policy adopted by the Federation as evidenced by its refusal to send a representative to the Consultative Committee of the Round Table Conference. Commenting editorially on this attitude of the Government of India, the Leader, Allahabad, in its issue of 18-3-1932 observes:-

"We know that if the members of the Executive Council had the will nothing would have been easier for them than to find the time to attend the sessions of the Federation, just as they have been finding time for attending the sessions of that other commercial organisation, the conference of the British chambers of commerce. The presence of the legislators at Delhi was not an insurmountable difficulty. The Assembly for the last four or five years has had to be content with the presence in their midst of a secretary as the representative of the Army department. Surely, the secretaries of the other departments are not so incompetent as not to be able to carry on the duties of their chiefs in the legislature during their absence for a day or two.

As regards the other reason, viz., the 'noncooperative policy' of the Federation we may remind the Government that in 1930 also the Federation advised their affiliated member bodies to abstain from participation direct or indirect, in the Round Table Conference. And yet the Councillors and Lord Irwin continued, and very rightly too, to attend the meetings of the Federation even after that decision of that body. ... We thought that there was as much need as, if not greater than, last year of Government coming into contact with the representatives of India trade and industry. Why then, this changed attitude? (The Leader, 18-3-

The following is a brief summary of the presidential address of Mr. Jamal Mahomed, M.L.A.:-

Political Situation.- "The year 1931 turned out to be a very eventful one. It was heralded by that famous agreement the Gandhi-Irwin Pact which was a distinct landmark in the history of our constitution. As a result of that Pact the Indian National Congress participated in the deliberations of the second session of the Round Table Conference as its sole representative, Mahatma Gandhi, attended the session. The Federation nominated as representatives of Indian commerce and industry, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Mr. G.D. Birla and myself to attend the second session. Your representatives did as best as they could and kept themselves in close touch with Mahatma Gandhi in London particularly regarding matters relating to finance and commerce. Unfortunately for this country, the atmosphere in which the second session met was not very congenial ~~and~~ calm deliberations. On the British horizon were seen signs of a grave financial crisis, an emergency Cabinet was formed and the country soon went to the polls. The anxiety to tide over the crisis was reflected in the thumping majority the Conservatives secured in the Government of Great Britain. I am afraid that the atmosphere that is now prevailing in the country is not conducive to a frank and cool exchange of views and a calm consideration of things so necessary in dealing with the many vitally important subjects concerning the future constitution of this country. The Government's adoption of repressive policy, rapid promulgation of Ordinances one upon another and the rigorous enforcement of same have tended to create an atmosphere of uncertainty and tension in the country.

Administration of Finance and Commerce.- With the introduction of responsibility at the centre in the future Federal Government of the country, the question that will affect us most is the administration of finance and commerce. The British Government want certain safeguards to be introduced in the constitution subject to which the administration of finance will be handed over to a popular minister. The object of such a proposal according to their view is to maintain the financial stability and credit of India. One is rather led to believe that the anxiety is not simply to maintain the financial stability and credit of India abroad, but to adjust the currency and exchange policy of India to suit the financial and industrial requirements of the British nation. Such a belief can only be strengthened by such an act as the most deplorable interference by the Rt. Hon'ble Secretary of State for India in September last in linking the Rupee to Sterling. It is no wonder that with such a history before them, those representing India who were competent to express any opinion on these matters were very nervous from the very beginning about the proposals of the British Government as regards financial safeguards.

Commercial Discrimination.- Another important subject is in relation to commerce and problems connected therewith such as commercial discrimination and equality of trading rights. At the Federal Structure Committee, Mahatma Gandhi suggested a formula to the effect that "no disqualification not suffered by the Indian-born ~~xx~~ citizens of the State shall be imposed upon any persons lawfully residing in or entering India merely on the ground of race, colour or religion". The future Government of India would certainly not discriminate against any particular individual or firm or interest simply because he or it happens to be a non-national. The main idea underlying this demand for the right of discrimination, to my mind, is that the right of the future legislature of this country to enunciate a particular policy in the economic interests of the country should be left intact. I would, therefore, urge that though we are quite prepared to have a clause in the statute to the effect that there shall be no discrimination per se against any non-national, India should be given the same powers which are at present enjoyed by the other component self-governing parts of the Empire in matters relating to finance and commerce of the country.

Railway Policy and Transport Problems.- Another proposal on the agenda of the Consultative Committee of the Round Table Conference for constituting the Railway Board into a Statutory Body. The Railways of India are one of the best assets of the taxpayer and constitute one of the largest assets in India. The anxiety of the present administration in India to turn the present Railway Board into a statutory body on the eve of the inauguration of the new constitution is strange and I must record my voice of protest against any such act at the present stage. When the new Government of India Act comes into force, the legislature of the country will be the best competent authority to lay down the future constitution of the Ministry of Transport which would not only look after the administration of railways, but also take care of the construction and maintenance of roads and development of inland and coastal navigation. These three means of transport constitute a very important factor in the economic development of a country and the problem should not be tackled now as it is expected to be done by the Round Table Conference.

Economic Conditions. (a) Need for drastic Economy. Events in India during the year under report were not very assuring and the economic situation in the country worsened though there were occasional fitful flashes of certain brightness as regards commerce. Retrenchment Committees became the order of the day. Your Committee suggested certain remedies to alleviate this tension such as reconsideration of the currency policy and drastic retrenchment to the extent of one-third in the expenditure of the Imperial as well as Provincial Governments. But it was more and more brought home to the Committee that the Government as constituted at present were not always able, in these things, to keep the interests of this country alone at the top.

(b) Export of Gold.- Another very disquieting feature of the year ~~bring~~ was the enormous export of gold from this country. India exported between September 1931 and February 1932, gold to the value of Rupees 500 millions. India never exported gold on such a large scale before. The phenomenon is particularly distressing because the movement of gold is more or less promoted not by any offer of speculative profit but by economic pressure of forcing the poverty-stricken people of this country to part with their savings in the form of gold ornaments. One ~~is~~ is at a loss to understand that when countries like Canada, Australia, Sweden,

Norway, Japan, Egypt, Argentine and several others which have abandoned gold standard, have prohibited or restrained to a great extent export of gold from their shores. India is unfortunately an unique instance of a country, which, being off the gold standard, is not placing any embargo or restriction on the export of gold. The Indian commercial community asked and is still asking with one voice for an immediate embargo on the export of gold and suggested to Government to avail themselves of the opportunity thus offered by adding substantially to their gold reserves by purchasing gold offered for sale at a reasonable price by issuing fresh currency against it, but there has come no response from the Government.

Agricultural depression.- Indian agricultural debt is estimated to be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 8,000 millions. The freight policy of the Railway Board is not conducive to greater movement of agricultural produce from one place of consumption to another. Over and above this, the agriculturist has to pay land revenue which is not commensurate with the produce that his soil yields having regard to the great fall in the prices of commodities. Unless Government devise means of lessening the interest charges which he has to pay on his debts, the economic condition of the agriculturist can not fully improve. The land revenue policy of the Government has also aggravated to a great extent the present agrarian trouble and distress. Mere grant of remissions during lean years will not help him. The lands should be so assessed as to leave him sufficient margin to enable him to meet the daily requirements of his family. If relief is given in these directions, i.e., by way of decreasing these debt liabilities, by offering reduced railway rates to stimulate greater movement of agricultural produce and by adjusting land revenue so as to leave him a fair margin, I am sure the present crisis, which is of course mainly due to a substantial fall in prices all the world over, will be to a great extent mitigated.

Budget Deficits.- With all the new taxations and introduction of surcharges, the year is still expected to close with a deficit of Rs. 130 millions. I am afraid if the administration of this country is run on these lines, it will soon be landed in greater financial difficulties. The only alternative way, to my mind, out of its very distressing position is a drastic cut or a fair adjustment in the military expenditure of the country and further economy in other directions. Several of the colonies and dominions which depend for their security on the military strength of this country, such as, Australia, New Zealand, Union of South Africa, Kenya and Mandated Territories in East Africa, should also be made to pay a share towards the maintenance of the Army in India. Another direction in which efforts must be made to adjust the expenditure according to the receipts is the costly machinery with which the administration of the country is run. The emoluments of the Imperial services and those of the Provincial and other Subordinate Services do require a proper adjustment in view of the prevailing conditions in the country. I sincerely hope the British nation in transferring the powers to the hands of the Indians will not give them a country bereft of economic vitality but will hand it over to the younger generation as a sufficiently solvent country".



The following is the full text of the more important of the resolutions passed by the Federation:-

1. Export of Gold.- (a) "The Federation views with grave concern the continuous and heavy export of Gold from India amounting to about Rs. 550 millions and strongly urges upon the Government of India the desirability of placing an immediate embargo on the export of gold from India as such a heavy and continuous drain of the precious metal will seriously endanger India's future monetary reconstruction.

(b) The Federation further urges on Government the necessity of purchasing gold in the open market at a price fixed on the basis of day-to-day ruling rate with a view to accumulate gold reserves which will enable the future Government of the country to establish the Reserve Bank with adequate resources at its command." (Carried Unanimously).

2. Public Debt of India.- "The Federation strongly recommends to the Government of India to press for the appointment of a Tribunal for an impartial and thorough investigation into the financial obligations between Great Britain and India". (Carried unanimously).

3. Aviation.- "This Federation is of opinion that in any scheme for the development of civil aviation in this country, the Government will strictly adhere to the conditions laid down by them about reserving a substantial majority — 75 per cent. — of share capital and directorate for Indians and of affording training and employment to Indians in all branches of its works and will not relax these conditions on any account". (Adopted unanimously).

4. Roads.- The Federation is of opinion that the Government of India is allowing funds out of receipts of petrol tax for construction of roads to Provincial Road Boards should issue definite instructions to the Boards for constructing only cement concrete roads wherever needed in the country in preference to asphalt road even at some higher cost as construction of cement roads would give impetus to indigenous industries, stimulate transport and increase employment in the country". (Carried unanimously).

5. Port Trust Boards.- "In view of the constitutional handicap of the Indian Members of the various Port Trusts who are helpless against the overwhelming number of their European colleagues in any important decision regarding the control of affairs of these quasi-public institutions, such as may be considered imperative by them in the interest of sound and efficient management and on which public opinion especially in the Indian Sections of the Commercial Community is insistent, the Federation desires to impress upon Government the imperative necessity of immediately revising the constitutions of Port Trusts on the various major ports of India, their powers and functions with a view to secure predominant representation and control to Indian interests in all such bodies. The Federation strongly urges upon Government to appoint only Indians in the posts of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the various Port Trusts whenever vacancies occur in the future". (carried unanimously).

6. Measurement of Cargo at Ports.- The Federation strongly protests against the attitude of certain Steamship Companies which grant monopoly to a single institution at every port in the matter of



control of measurement of consignments, resulting in the realization of a large income from the general traders, and urges upon Government to appoint at all major ports a Board comprising representatives of local commercial and shipping interests for the purpose of carrying on measurement work at minimum charges". (carried unanimously).

7. Silver.— The Federation regrets that the Government of India should continue their policy of silver sales in spite of continued protests from the public. The Federation is of opinion that since the recommendations of the Hilton-Young Report are not now operative Government should stop further sales of silver. (carried unanimously)

8. Exchange Policy.— (a) The Federation records its emphatic protest against the linking of the rupee to sterling in spite of the demand of the commercial community to leave the rupee free to find its own level at which eventually it may be stabilised: such action would have enabled Government to undo the wrong perpetrated on India by overvaluing the rupee, an action unparalleled in any major country of the world ~~xxx~~ since the Great War. The linking of the rupee to sterling is objectionable particularly for the following reasons:—

(i) The future management and fate of sterling are and must remain outside the control of the Government of India.

(ii) The new valuation of sterling in terms of gold will be determined in accordance with considerations affecting the economic and financial conditions of the United Kingdom, and may possibly prove detrimental to the economic and financial interests of India.

(iii) Any claim on any measure of stability being secured by link to sterling is neither material nor real as sterling itself is, under present conditions, not only fluctuating but most uncertain.

(b) The Federation also protests against the arbitrary manner in which the Secretary of State for India acted completely ignoring not only the wishes of the Legislative Assembly and the Round Table Conference but also the declared intention of the Government of India.

9. Repression Condemned.— The Federation is strongly of opinion that the present repressive policy of Government will be no solution of the existing unhappy state of the country and urges upon Government that it should be substituted by a policy of reconciliation so that an atmosphere suitable for framing a constitution acceptable to the people and for its smooth ~~x~~ working thereafter may be created".

(2) The Federation regrets the interpretation put upon the Committee's resolution dated the 22nd January 1932, in view of the express statement with which it opens that the Committee of the Federation recognise it to be their duty to take part in the framing of a suitable constitution for India".

(3) The Federation feels that having regard to the repressive policy and having regard to the experience of its delegation in London at the last session of the Round Table Conference, participation by its representative in the work of the Consultative Committee can be productive of no good to national interests unless -

(a) There is a genuine desire on the part of the Government to change that Policy and to discuss and come to an agreement with the progressive opinion of India on the question of financial autonomy, safeguards, reservations and trading rights;

(b) Towards this end, the Consultative Committee is at liberty to have a free and full discussion on the various questions connected with finance and the questions connected with trading rights, financial safeguards, etc., are referred to a Committee composed of an equal number of British and Indian experts, the latter to be such men as command the confidence of this Federation". (carried unanimously).

Office-bearers for 1932.- The following were elected as members of the Executive Committee for 1932:-

President.- Mr. Walchand Hirachand.

Vice-President.- Mr. Malini Ranjan Sarker.

Committee Members.- Mr. G.D. Birla (Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta); Sir Purshotandas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay); Lala Shri Ram (Delhi Factoryowners' Federation); Mr. Malini Ranjan Sarker (Bengal National Chamber of Commerce); Mr. B. Das (Bihar and Orissa Chamber of Commerce); Mr. Kasturibhai Lalbhai (Ahmedabad Millowners' Association); Mr. M.L. Dhanukar (Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce); Mr. Fakirji Cowasji (Buyers' and Shippers' Chamber, Karachi); Mr. R.K. Shanmukham Chetty (Indian Chamber of Commerce, Coimbatore); Mr. Hussainbhai A. Laljee (Indian Salt Association, Bombay); Mr. M. Mohamed Ismail Sahib (Southern India Skin and Hide Merchants' Association, Madras); Mr. J.C. Ghose (Indian Tea Planters' Association, Jm & Jalpaiguri); Mr. D.P. Khaitan (Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta) and Mr. R.L. Nopany (Jute Balers' Association, Calcutta) <sup>and</sup> elected Treasurers.

(A summary of the proceedings of the fourth Annual meeting of the Federation is given at pages 47-51 of the Report of this Office for April 1931).

Employers' Right of Association:

Federation Members' Protest Against Prohibition Order.

In view of the prevailing political unrest and the fact that considerable numbers of Indian employers endorse the nationalist demands, the Government of Bombay on 6-3-1932 issued <sup>an</sup> order on certain Bombay merchants prohibiting them from attending any meeting convened by anybody at any place where the acts of the Government ~~or~~ are liable to be condemned ~~etc~~ or disapproved. The merchants concerned refrained from attending the 5th annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry held at Delhi in accordance with legal opinion they obtained on the Bombay Government's explanation that the order did not prevent any person upon whom it had been served from attending any meeting held either in or outside Bombay for the purpose of transacting the normal business of any commercial association.

The prohibition order and the legal interpretation placed on it have an important bearing on the right of association of employers. The merchants concerned have addressed a letter to the Federation stating their position concerning legal opinion. The letter states that <sup>The</sup> Bombay Government's Press note is only an interpretation of the original order. It reserves to Government to decide what "normal business" is. It is difficult to decide what is normal in the case of a central commercial association like the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, which is not deciding any matters affecting a single trade but have to deal with large issues arising mainly out of Government's policy, financial and otherwise as they affect trade. The Federation would normally therefore criticise, condemn or disapprove Government's acts, urge or recommend, advocate, suggest or advise the annulment, cancellation or withdrawal of such acts. The letter concludes :  
"We are not sufficiently reassured by the Press note. We regret our inability to attend the Federation meeting." (The Hindustan Times, 28-3-32).

Indian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce: 3rd Annual Meeting -

Delhi - 1932.

The 3rd Annual Meeting of the Indian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce was held at Delhi on 26-3-1932 under the presidency of Mr. Walchand Hirachand. The following are important excerpts from the presidential address:-

International Co-operation. - Referring to the subject of International Co-operation, Mr. Hirachand said:

Reference is made in the Report presented to you to the resolutions passed at a recent meeting of the Council of the International Chamber. The first of these, which has come to be known as the "Confidence Resolution", in its five points constitute a basic programme for Governments to translate international co-operation into action. The Resolution urges on all Governments: (1) An effective policy of disarmament; (2) Retrenchment of Government expenditure and reduction in the tax burdens; (3) Settlement of International debts; (4) Restoration of monetary stability and (5) The adoption of economic policies, which, after providing for the temporary requirements of every nation, should lead to a freer international movement of goods, capital, etc.

Time will not permit me to analyse each of the above five points, but it can be safely said that the nationals of this country are in agreement with the programme suggested in the resolution. With regard to the last part of the resolution, we have some substantial reservations to make; the time has come when all Governments should exert their utmost to translate the appeal contained in the first four items of the resolution into action.

Contact with International Employers' Organisation. - Referring to this subject Mr. Hirachand said:

At present we stand badly in need of finances and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce has kindly undertaken much of our responsibility upon its shoulders. If we have finances, there are so many things which we can do and which will be in the interests of the country. Thus, for instance, there is at present no permanent Resident Administrative Commissioner of the National Committee with the Headquarters, as several important National Committees have. This permanent Resident Administrative Commissioner keeps himself in touch with all the movements of the International Chamber and can also keep himself in touch with the International Organisation of Employers. We can also have then better arrangements for sending out views of the National Committee on all the questions on which our opinions are asked. The world is coming closer together and such National Committees inter-linked and connected with the International Chamber are a great

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step in advance in the direction of World Fraternity and closer International Trade.

International Arbitration. - Regarding contractual obligations to the Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber, Mr. Walchand said that the International Chamber should exert its utmost to remove disabilities existing at present against their legal and arbitral proceedings in such matters, as otherwise international trade would not develop on healthy lines. On the question of stabilisation of the price of silver, Mr. Walchand made a reference to the report of the executive committee appointed by the International Chamber and also to China's desire for stabilisation.

Before the sessions concluded, the meeting adopted the Report of the statement of accounts for 1931 placed before it.

(The Hindustan Times, 28-3-32).

(For proceedings of the 2nd annual meeting of the Indian Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce vide page 52 of our April 1931 Report).

## Workers' Organisations

### Communalism in Railway Unions:

#### Move to Organise A.I. Railway Muslims' Association.

A meeting of the Muslim employees of the various Indian railways was held at Delhi on 13-3-32 with Mr. Zia-ud-din, M-L.A., in the chair. Several Muslim members of the Central Legislature were also present at the meeting. The following resolution proposing to form an All-India Railway Muslim's Association was unanimously passed at the meeting: -

"Resolved that a Conference of the All-India Muslim Railway-men be held on March 27, at Jeewan Baksh Hall, Fatehpuri Mosque, Delhi, and all the existing Muslim societies and unions of the Muslim railway-men be invited to send their delegates to attend the meeting and discuss the desirability of forming an association of All-India Muslim employees of the different railway administrations and to discuss the general questions concerning the railways. It is also resolved that the Muslim employees who are not members of any society or union and those who are interested in the welfare of Muslim railway employees, may cordially be invited to attend the meeting." (The Leader, 23-3-32)

Lahore Muslim Employees' Support. - The Working Committee of the Muslim Institute (an organisation of the Muslim employees of the North Western Railway) passed the following resolution unanimously: - on 23-3-32: -

Resolved that as in the opinion of the Working Committee of the Muslim Institute, the proposal regarding the formation of the All India Railway Muslims' Association is a very important one and concerns a very large majority of the members of the institute, every member of the working committee should, not only himself proceed to Delhi to attend the first General Meeting of the proposed All-India Railway Muslim Association to be held at Delhi on the 27th of March but should also take with him as many friends interested in the welfare of Muslim railway employees as possible.

(The Daily Herald, 23-3-32).

Recognition of G.I.P.Railway Workers' Union, Bombay.

A deputation of the newly formed G.I.P.Railway Workers' Union waited upon the Agent of the Railway at Victoria Terminus, Bombay, on 25-2-32. After hearing the deputation, the Agent accorded recognition to the Union, stipulating that the conditions formerly imposed in granting recognition to such Unions were scrupulously observed. The following demands made by the Union are receiving the consideration of the Railway Administration:-

- (1) Right for the Union to represent cases of any nature whether affecting an individual or a section or class.
- (2) Leave and Passes to be sanctioned to representatives of the Union for attending meetings with the Railway Administration. The leave and passes are not to be counted against the due privileges of the Railwaymen in whose favour they may be issued.
- (3) Quarterly meetings to be convened between the Union and the Railway Administration to discuss all outstanding grievances.
- (4) The Union to be permitted the usage of the Railway Notice Boards.
- (5) Right to hold meetings of the Union in the Railway premises and Institutes.
- (6) Quarters to be allotted for housing the Branch office of the Union at various centres.

(The Indian Labour Journal, Nagpur. -  
January and February issue Vol.IX, Nos.  
4 & 5).

Intellectual Workers.

Restoration of Recognition to A.I. Postal Union:

Government's Conditions.

At pages 49 to 50 of the report of this Office for February 1932 reference was made to the steps taken by the All India Postal and R.M.S. Union to secure restoration of official recognition to the Union and to the representations made in this behalf by a Deputation of the Union's representatives which waited on the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs on 1-2-1932. As the result of definite undertakings made on behalf of the Union by its General Secretary in respect of certain conditions for the grant of recognition laid down by the authorities, the Director General in a letter dated 24-3-32 informed the General Secretary of conditional restoration of recognition to the Union. As the matter is one which vitally concerns the freedom of association of intellectual workers, relevant extracts from the letters re. this matter exchanged between the authorities and the Union are given below:-

Union Accepts Government's Conditions. - The following are extracts from the letter dated 14-3-32 addressed by the General Secretary of the Union to the Member in charge of the Department of Industries and Labour:-

Referring to the conditions on which the Director General was prepared to restore recognition, the letter says:-

He (Director General) was prepared to restore the recognition of the All-India Union and its branches if he was given the assurance, (a) that the policy of substituting Members or Ex-members of the Posts and Telegraphs Department for outsiders as office bearers will be pursued wherever it is possible to do so, and (b) that the present President of the All-India Union has ceased to hold that Office.

Re. the Unions difficulties regarding the fulfilment of



these conditions the letter says:-

The Director-General, at my request, was pleased to grant me an interview on the 12th February 1932, in course of which I represented to him the difficulties which my Union felt with regard to the conditions laid down by him for restoration of official recognition of the Union. After giving me a patient and sympathetic hearing he was pleased to inform me that condition (a) was elastic enough to admit of election of non-officials as office-bearers of the Union and did not insist on the substitution of the present non-official office-bearers of the All-India Union and its affiliated branches either immediately or in the near future by members or ex-members of the Department unless circumstances rendered it possible for the Union to do so. In view of this elucidation which I hope has your approval my Union has not the least hesitation to accept the principle as its ideal, as laid down in condition (a) and to assure you that it will, as circumstances render it possible, give effect to the principle.

Re. the election of a new president the letter says:-

With regard to condition (b) my Union has represented to you the difficulties it feels through Mr. S.C. Mitra, M.L.A., who is also President of the Bengal and Assam Provincial Branch of the Union and at his advice my Union has decided to hold the next (twelfth) session of the All-India (including Burma) Postal and R.M.S. Conference and with this object we have already taken steps with utmost expedition to request the Provincial Branches to submit the panel of Presidents for the Annual Conference and have provisionally fixed the first week of June 1932, for the Conference in Calcutta. I beg to forward, in this connection, copies of the correspondence that passed between me and the General Secretaries of the Provincial Branches from which you will be pleased to see that the name of Sir Abdur Rahim, M.L.A. has been given the first place in the panels of Presidents for the ensuing session, by the Provincial Branches. The panels returned by the Provincial Branches under Rule 13(b) of my Union contain the names of the following five members of the Legislative Assembly:-

1. Sir Abdur Rahim, M.L.A.,
2. Mr. Rahimtoola M. Chinoy, M.L.A.
3. Mr. Jamal Mahommed Sahib, M.L.A.
4. Mr. Mahomed Azhar Ali, M.L.A.,
5. Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhuri, M.L.A.

The final selection for the Presidentship will have to be made out of this list. So it is clear that there is no chance of the re-election of our present President.

Re. the need for immediate grant of recognition the letter says:-

I may be permitted to point out that the withdrawal of official recognition from my Union and its affiliated branches has been seriously detrimental to the interests of the staff as my Union has been deprived of the right and privilege of representing to the authorities and the Government, their important grievances, especially, those in connection with the Retrenchment measures and that unless official recognition is speedily restored it will be practically impossible for my Union to hold the ensuing Conference with any measure of success. In view of these facts as well as of the assurances

given above I earnestly hope that you will kindly see your way to issue instructions for immediate restoration of official recognition to my Union and all its affiliated Branches.

Conditional Restoration of Recognition. - The following

are extracts from the letter dated 24-3-32 addressed by the Director-General to the General Secretary informing <sup>him</sup> of conditional restoration of recognition to the Union:-

I have the honour to inform you that in view of the contents of your letter dated 14-3-32 and relying on the assurances contained in it, the Government of India have agreed to official recognition of the Union and of its branches being restored forthwith.

A reference is made, in your letter under reply, to the possibility that the condition, prescribed in my earlier correspondence on the subject, regarding the elimination of non-official office bearers from their position in the Union, might be applied with some elasticity and that Government might not insist upon its rigid enforcement. From what has been stated above it will be seen that you have rightly understood the attitude of Government in this matter. They do not desire to insist upon a complete and unqualified observance of the requirement that no non-officials shall be employed as office-bearers of the Union xx so long as they can feel satisfied with the general conduct of the Union, and in particular so long as they are satisfied as to the character of the influence exerted by non-officials, In the interests of the staff and of the Union itself I desire, however, formally to draw your attention to this matter and to remind you that the harmonious relations now being re-established will inevitably be seriously impaired if unfortunately occasion should again arise for exception to be taken to the conduct of the affairs of the Union under the influence of non-official persons, or if these indulge in any form of misleading or inflammatory addresses or other objectionable activities of the type to which exception has already been taken in my previous letters. Should such an unfortunate development recur, Government would be obliged to reconsider their decision.

( Summarised from pages 129-130 and 138-139 of the March 1932 issue of "The Indian Post", Vol. IV, No. 3).

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2nd All India Muslim Postal and R.M.S. Conference,

Delhi, 1932.

The 2nd annual session of the All India Muslim Postal and R.M.S. Conference met at Delhi on 25-3-1932 under the presidentship of Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy. The presidential address sheds some light as to the causes which led to the setting up of a Muslim communal organisation of postal employees apart from the parent body, the All India Postal and R.M.S. Union. (See also pages 24 and 25 of the report of this Office for November 1931).

The following are relevant extracts from the address:-

First Muslim Trade Union.- Your Union is the first and up till now the only Muslim organisation of its kind, and your responsibility therefore is the great responsibility of a pioneer on whose success and failure depends the future of others. Your success or failure will prove to the world the capacity or lack of it of Muslims for organising themselves and managing institutions similar to those founded and managed by members of other communities. Just as we have waked up to the necessity of our adequate representation in the Public services, we should realize the imperative necessity of proving our worth and capacity in spheres of activities outside and other than those of the Services and nothing can prove and serve as a better test of our fitness to hold our own in the battlefield of life than our capacity for the creation and management of organisations and institutions for mutual benefit, advancement and uplift.

Indian Labour predominantly Muslim.- The protection of the rights and interests of the weak against the strong is the essence and soul of the philosophy of Socialism on which Trade Unions and kindred institutions are founded. As Muslims represent labour predominantly and non-Muslims capital, it must be their imperative duty more than that of the capitalistic community to devote their undivided thought, attention and energy to the problem with which Labour is confronted everywhere. Yet inspite of the patent fact that for years to come the lot of the Muslims is cast with Labour, thanks to their indifference and apathy, we have the strange spectacle of members of the capitalistic community, - money lenders, landholders, employers of labour - practically dominate all institutions and unions professing to be for the protection of labour.

Genesis of the Union.- I need not recount to you the history of the formation of your Union. Like all movements it has its birth in the hardship and injustice of which many members of the Union have bitter personal experience. Just as Trade Unionism itself had its birth in the persecution of Labour by Capital, of the employed by the employer, this Union had its birth in the contemptuous rejection of your prayers that went unheard, your frustrated hopes, your unfulfilled aspirations, your unrealised dreams till your implicit faith in the

sense of justice and fairplay of other communities was completely shattered.

Non-recognition of the Union.- The fact of the non-recognition of your Union by Government appears to have damped the spirit of some of you. Far from being a source of disappointment to you it ought to spur you on to greater activities and concentration of efforts. Secure recognition of your own self and when you feel within yourself the stirrings of a new life and the pulsation of fresh vigour and strength, rest assured that you stand in need of no recognition from an outside body. If you are weak and ill-organised, a mere formal recognition by your employers may only serve to flatter your vanity and delude you into a belief of false strength.

Federation with All-India Postal Union.- The second year of your existence should be devoted exclusively to the furtherance of the objects peculiar to your own community, a duty which cannot be satisfactorily performed by non-Muslims. The next step should be a federation of unions, unions like yours consisting exclusively of Muslim employees and unions, the membership of which is open to Muslims, but which are dominated by non-Muslims. (The Hindu, 29-3-1932).

Commenting adversely on the move initiated by Muslim Postal employees to organise a communal union the "Leader", Allahabad, in an editorial published in its issue of 31-3-1932 says:-

We have never been able to understand the utility of a Muslim trade union, but it is something to be grateful for that the conference at which Sir Abdullah presided is according to his own statement the only communal labour organisation. Indeed, it is devoutly to be wished for that it would be the last of its kind. We have carefully gone through the speeches of both Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy and Sheikh Ataur Rahman, chairman of the reception committee, but we fail to find any justification for maintaining this communal body as distinct from the national organisation of postal employees, the All-India Postal and R.M.S.Union, which includes among its members both Hindus and Muslims.

We will not attempt to convince Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy or Mr. Ataur Rahman that appointments to the services should be made on the merits, but even if it be taken for granted that the creed and religion of a candidate should be taken into consideration, how is it a function of a trade union, which is meant only to promote and safeguard the interests of the members on its roll, to agitate for a 33 per cent. share or more of the services for members of a particular community in this department or that? We are glad that the Government have refused to recognize the union, which instead of rendering any service to the cause of trade unionism, will weaken it by creating divisions in the ranks of the workers, and which deserves to be closed down at the earliest possible moment. (The Leader, 31-3-1932).

Salaried Employees in Ceylon: Retrenchment Commission

Appointed.

Salaried Employees in Ceylon: Retrenchment Commission Appointed.

The Governor of Ceylon has intimated on 15-3-1932 to the Ceylon State Council his willingness to appoint a Retrenchment Commission "provided the Council agrees to make such financial provision as is necessary".

Terms of Reference.- The terms of reference of the Commission are as follow:-

"To investigate and make recommendation forthwith in regard to -

(a) The salaries, allowances and general conditions of service of (i) existing members of the Public Service, and (ii) future entrants;

(b) The cadre of Departments, with a view to reduction of the expenditure of the Island and with a view to the fixing of salaries on a rupee basis and in accordance with a Ceylon standard".

Personnel.- The personnel is as follow:-

~~Mr. R.L. Pereira~~ Mr. R.L. Pereira, K.C. (Chairman);

Mr. E.R. Tambimuttu and

Col. T.G. Jayewardene, V.D. (members).

(The Hindu, 19-3-1932)

Economic Conditions.

Development of Assam Tea Industry - 1930-31.\*

The following information about the development of the Assam tea industry during the year ending 31st March 1931 is taken from the Report on the Administration of Assam for the year 1930-31 issued by the Government of Assam:-

Number of Tea Gardens. - There were 996 tea gardens at the close of the year against 992 in the previous year. The total area included within the tea estates was 1,655,544 acres against 1,648,181 acres in the previous year. The area under actual cultivation increased from 429,435 acres (revised) in the previous year to 435,809 acres and the area plucked increased from 398,992 acres to 401,708 acres. The total outturn of tea of the province amounted to 231,666,578 lbs. of black tea and 1,749,505 lbs. of green tea against 258,028,278 lbs. and 912,436 lbs. respectively in the preceding year.

Strength of Labour. - The daily average number of permanent garden labour was 480,041, permanent outside labour 34,060, and temporary outside labour 41,806 against 480,841, 35,188 and 42,055 respectively in the previous year. The scarcity of labour still continued in some districts.

Price Fluctuations. - The market prices of tea were even lower than those of the previous year. The average Calcutta price per lb. for Brahmaputra Valley tea was ten annas and one pie and that for the Surma Valley tea seven annas and seven pies against ten annas and nine pies and eight annas and two pies respectively in the previous year.

Condition of the Industry. - The general condition of the industry was far from satisfactory due to the fall in prices occasioned by over production in previous years and consequent accumulation of large stocks of tea.

Immigration Figures. - The continued depression in the tea industry was responsible for a further reduction of recruitment especially in the Surma Valley where the number of immigrants was only 1,994, while in the Assam Valley the number fell from 53,370 to 51,525. The strength of the total resident labour force at the end of the year had fallen from 1,088,962 to 1,065,154.

Economic Conditions. - The continued depression in the tea industry was responsible for a further reduction of recruitment

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\* Report on the Administration of Assam for the year 1930-31-  
Shillong: Printed at the Assam Government Press - 1932 - Price Rs.3,  
or 4s.6d. - pp.46.

especially in the Surma Valley where the number of immigrants was only 1,294, while in the Assam Valley the number fell from 53,370 to 51,525. The strength of the total resident labour force at the end of the year had fallen from 1,088,962 to 1,065,154.

Although there was no serious epidemic and the general health of the labour force was reported to have been good during the year, there was an increase in mortality, the death-rate rising from 21.77 to 22.59 per mille in the Assam Valley and from 19.43 to 21.21 in the Surma Valley. The birth-rate increased in the Surma Valley from 31.11 to 32.55 per mille but fell in the Assam Valley from 32.60 to 31.95. Owing to the curtailment of work as the result of the trade depression, there was an appreciable fall in the average cash wages of working labourers of all classes except men in the Assam Valley. It was however fortunate for the labour force that the fall in wages was accompanied by a decrease in the prices of food and other necessities, and when allowance is made for other concessions enjoyed by the labourers in the form of free housing, medical attendance, firewood, grazing and land for cultivation, their condition did not compare unfavourably with that of the village population in Assam. A few strikes occurred which were short-lived, and in one district there was a recrudescence of hât-looting. The relations between the management and the labour force were generally good but there was a regrettable increase in the number of cases of unlawful assembly and rioting.

Glut of Jute Production in Bengal.

The jute industry of Bengal is at present being threatened with serious dislocation precipitated by over-production. Over 300,000 leaflets, advocating the restriction of the jute crop, have been distributed among the cultivators by the Government, and 300,000 are now being prepared and will shortly be broadcast from an aeroplane in the principal jute-growing tracts. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce have offered an aeroplane to the Government for the purpose. In addition to this the Bengal Jute Growers' Association have been carrying out propaganda work in order to restrict jute cultivation this year. (The Statesman, 11-3-1932).

A new danger is now confronting the industry. The Jute Mills Association have up till now achieved considerable success in reducing working hours and thus limiting output, (vide pages 11-12 of the report of this Office for February 1931). But the secession of certain mills from the agreement with regard to the reduction of working hours and the action of certain mills which are outside the Association in increasing working hours, have precipitated a crisis in as much as other mills are now being forced in self-defence to work longer hours. Commenting editorially on the jute crisis, the Statesman of 10-3-1932 observes:-

"Is jute to go the way of rubber which promises, if the growers continue their present policy, to have no value at all? Should such a situation arise in regard to jute the disaster to Bengal would be un-ending, for Bengal lives on jute. The central fact of the present situation is that Bengal can both grow and manufacture into products far more jute than the world can absorb. When a market becomes glutted there is no bottom to the price that a commodity commands. The price, in the absence of increased demand, falls lower and lower until bankruptcy forces a considerable section of the producers out of the business. That is precisely what is in process in regard to rubber and, unless the industry develops statesmanship, jute is in danger of starting on the same downward slide. Yet no business in the world, given self-control among its principal members, is in so good a position to save itself from catastrophe.



"An active propaganda in the jute districts greatly reduced the area under cultivation in 1931 and the crop yield. That propaganda is being continued this year, the peasant having learned, it is hoped, that a smaller crop at a higher price is more profitable to him than a heavy crop at a low price. Although there is anxiety in regard to the amount of sowing this year, it is probable that not very much more land will be placed under jute and the crop obtained will not be embarrassing in quantity.

"Now a new danger has arisen. The Jute Mills' Association had over a number of years remarkable success in regulating output. It is a commonplace that the mills in Bengal are capable at full working of turning out more cloth than the world can consume. The Association has been successful in regulating output by reducing hours in stages from 60 to 54 and then to 40 per week with, in the last phase, 15 per cent. of the looms sealed. That would have been wholly effective to meet the situation but for the fact that there are mills outside the Association and not signing its agreements. These have seized the opportunity to work longer hours reducing their costs and taking advantage of the better market conditions created by the self-denying ordinance of the Association. So long as these mills were few in number they were an irritation rather than a danger to the trade. Two mills, hitherto in the Association, have withdrawn from the agreement and have increased their hours. Unless that movement can be reversed other mills in self-defence will come out of the hours' arrangement, and the market of jute products will be flooded and prices will fall lower and lower. The mills with large reserves might carry on for long. Those without resources would be utterly ruined.

"Here is a case where the selfishness of the few threatens an industry upon which the welfare of a province hangs. There are, we believe, even in the present condition of markets, profits for all in the industry, but they depend on control being maintained. If that cannot be done, there are ahead the blackest days that Bengal has known". (The Statesman, 12 10-3-1932).

(For previous references to conditions in Bengal Jute industry, see pages 24-25 of June 1930, and pages 11-12 of February 1931 reports of this Office).

Economic Conditions in Bombay Industries - 1930-31\*

The following information relating to economic conditions in the more important industries of the Bombay Presidency during the year 1930-1931 is taken from the Review of the Administration of the Presidency during 1930-31 issued by the Government of Bombay:-

General Conditions.- The year under review was one of acute commercial and industrial depression. There was a widespread propaganda for the use of Swadeshi articles. Various institutions, associations, political bodies, swadeshi shops and commercial museums were opened to concentrate their activities in this direction. There were no serious strikes in factories. These factors should have given a fillip to the local industries, but local political causes, frequent hartals, and above all the world economic depression brought commodity prices to a serious decline and consequently reduced the purchasing power of the people and disorganised business.

Cotton Industry.- The Cotton Industry in this Presidency, passed through trying times. Out of 39 Bombay Island Mills, no fewer than 27 showed a loss in working, the total loss being Rs. 9.8 millions. The remaining 12 made a profit of Rs. 1.766 millions. Ahmedabad mills did fairly well during the year, their profits in 1929 amounting to Rs.6.7 millions and losses to Rs.0.133 millions. In Sholapur five mills showed a profit of Rs. 0.392 millions. In Khandesh four of the mills worked at a total profit of Rs. 0.845 millions.

Woollen Industry.- The condition of the woollen industry continued to be unsatisfactory during the year. In 1929 there were five woollen mills in the Presidency. In 1930 only two mills were working. The total production during 1930 was 1,691,242 lbs. valued at Rs.3.092 millions as against 6,408,257 lbs. valued at Rs. 7.498 millions in 1929. Imports of woollen decreased from Rs. 0.173 million to Rs. 0.117 million.

Sugar Industry.- There is only one sugar factory in the Presidency. The value of sugar and melasses produced and sold by this factory increased from Rs. 1.117 millions in the previous year to Rs. 1.589 millions in the year under report. The company in question worked at a profit of about Rs. 0.3 million during the year as against a loss of Rs. 0.318 million in the previous year. The net imports of sugar into Bombay and Karachi were 3 per cent. more than last year valued at Rs. 0.508 million. Consequent on the recommendations of the Tariff Board, the Government of India increased the duty on imported sugar, which is expected to give a good fillip to the sugar industry in the country.

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\* Bombay - 1930-31. A Review of the Administration of the Presidency. Price Re.1 As.8 or 2s. 6d. 1932, Printed at the Government Central Press, Bombay. pp. 192.

Match Industry.- It is reported that during the year most of the match factories, excepting the Western Indian Match Factory, were not able to work at full capacity. The total production amounted to approximately 7.5 million gross boxes valued at about Rs.6.5 millions, which was in excess of the local demand. A portion of the production was, therefore, exported to other parts of the country.

Miscellaneous: Paper, Engineering and Cigarette industries.- The three paper mills continued to do well with an increase in production by 8 per cent. There is considerable scope for the expansion of this industry in the Presidency. During the year under report the ~~English~~ Engineering shops on the whole had to work under difficult conditions brought about largely by the general trade depression. The total number of big and small engineering concerns was 135. The cigarette industry is reported to have done well during the year under report. The annual local production of cigarettes is worth about Rs.0.84 million but is only 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the total imports valued at about Rs. 7.6 millions.

New Industries.- During the year under report several new industries such as rubber soled canvas shoes, glass bangles, shoe polish and gas mantles made their appearance in the Presidency. One of the most important developments in the chemical industry during the year has been the establishment of a factory for the production of hydrogenated oil commonly known as vegetable ghee.

Real Gold Thread Industry.- The real gold thread industry of the Bombay Presidency is one of its important industries organised on small factory basis. It is chiefly carried on in Surat, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Poona and Yeola. Of these places Surat is by far the most important centre and the manufacture has been developed on modern lines with the assistance of power-driven machinery.

Cottage Industries.- Cottage industries occupy a very important place in the national economy of India. It is estimated that nearly 90 per cent. of the industrial workers of India are engaged in cottage industries. So far as Bombay Presidency is concerned, hand weaving industry is its most important single cottage industry. There are something like 990 centres where this industry is carried on and it is estimated that there are some 100,000 handlooms in the Presidency. A rough estimate would place the value of production of cloth by handlooms in the Bombay Presidency at some 45 millions of rupees. The Department of Industries concentrated its attention, therefore, chiefly on this and its allied industries. Improved appliances were popularised. A fly shuttle loom gives some 50 per cent. more production than a hand throw-shuttle loom. A large number of weavers turn out cloth which can be woven on fly shuttle looms. It was obvious, therefore, that if a majority of such weavers were to be persuaded to adopt fly shuttle looms, value of production would increase by probably more than ten millions of rupees per annum.

Weaving Schools.- The Department, as usual, carried on its propaganda work of introducing improved implements and modern methods in weaving, dyeing, and ~~at~~ calico-printing amongst the weavers, dyers and calico-printers through its peripatetic weaving schools, weaving and dyeing demonstrations. Peripatetic weaving schools were maintained at different places in the Presidency and Sind and they were transferred from one place to another as found necessary. The Department of Industries had under its control 7 weaving schools for bona-fide weavers.

The weaving schools were also run exclusively for agriculturists with a view to train them in hand weaving as a subsidiary industry. In addition to the weaving schools mentioned above, the Department of Industries maintained 11 peripatetic weaving demonstrations in the Bombay Presidency and Sind, which were transferred from one place to another as found necessary.

Rural Indebtedness in the Punjab:

Investigation Committee Appointed.

The Punjab Government has appointed on 29-3-32 a committee of seven officials and non-officials to investigate rural indebtedness in the Province. The Committee will be presided over by Mr. Calvert, Financial Commissioner, and the members will be Mr. Anderson, I.C.S., Sardar Habibulla, Sardar Sampuransingh, Mr. Mukandlal Furi, Mr. Labh Singh and Mian Narullah. The last five are elected members. Mr. Abbel will be the Secretary.

Terms of Reference. - The terms of reference of the Committee are:-

To examine the recommendations relating to relief of indebtedness made by the Royal Commission on Agriculture, the Royal Commission on Labour, the Banking Inquiry Committee, and any other recommendation that may be made before them on that subject, and submit proposals to the Punjab Government in connection therewith.

(The Times of India, 31-3-32).

Protection to Cotton Industry: Tariff Board Inquiry.

The following Government Resolution (No. 341-N(150) dated 9-4-32) relating to the Government's decision to refer the question of continuing the protection given to the textile industry to the Tariff Board is published in the Gazette of India dated 9-4-32.

Resolution 341-N(150) dated 9-4-32. - By the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Act, 1930, protective duties were imposed on cotton piecegoods for a period of three years in order to give the cotton mill industry in India temporary shelter against foreign competition. These duties are fixed at a lower rate on piecegoods of British than on those not of British manufacture. By the same Act the operation

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of the duty imposed by the Indian Tariff (Cotton Yarn Amendment) Act, 1927, was extended for a further period of three years on account of the unfair competition arising from the prevalence of inferior labour conditions in China. These duties will expire on the 31st March 1933. An assurance was, however, given by Government to the Legislature, when the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Bill was under consideration, that before the termination of the three-year period the effect of the duties on the production of cotton piece-goods in India and on the Indian cotton textile industry would be examined in a Tariff Board enquiry.

2. Since the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Act was passed three noteworthy changes have occurred. In the first place, the rates of duty imposed on cotton piecegoods under the Act have been raised by two successive Finance Acts, and are now levied at a rate substantially higher than the Legislature found to be necessary to give temporary shelter to the indigenous industry. In the second place, a very large increase has occurred in the imports of piecegoods made wholly or partly of artificial silk, and the duties on such goods have been raised to the rates applicable to goods made wholly or partly of real silk. Finally, the Government of India have decided to discuss at the forthcoming Imperial Conference at Ottawa the question whether Great Britain and India should enter into a trade agreement embodying a preferential tariff regime so designed as to benefit the trade of both countries.

3. The Government of India consider that the Tariff Board enquiry should now be undertaken. The Board is requested to examine the following questions and to make recommendations:-

(1) Whether the claim of the Indian cotton textile industry to protection has been established;

(2) If the claim is found to be established, in what form protection should be given and to what extent;

(3) If it is proposed that protection should be given by means of import duties —

(a) whether the same rate of protection is required against the competition of goods manufactured in the United Kingdom as against the competition of goods manufactured elsewhere; and

(b) what rates of duty are recommended in respect of—

(i) cotton piecegoods,

(ii) piecegoods made wholly or partly of artificial silk, and

(iii) cotton twist and yarn, according as they are manufactured—

A. in the United Kingdom,

B. elsewhere.

In making its recommendations the Tariff Board will take all relevant

considerations into account including that stated in part (b) of the Resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly on the 16th February 1925. In particular, the Board is requested to consider how its recommendations will affect the handloom weaving industry.

4. Firms or persons interested who desire that their views should be considered by the Tariff Board should address their representations to the Secretary to the Board.

(The Gazette of India, 9-4-32, Part I, Page 426).

Millowners' Attitude. - Commenting on the new Tariff Board

Inquiry into textile protection, the Times of India of 19-3-32 observes:

The present plight of the industry must be well-known to the Government of India and the millowners were under the belief that the question of revising the tariff, would not be raised at this juncture. Government must also be aware of the fact that the revenue needs of the country for some time at least will necessitate heavier duties on imported cotton goods than have been imposed for protective purposes. The revenue duties on piece-goods exceed the protective duties and until Government is in a position to sacrifice some of the revenue, there seems to be very little object in having a Tariff Board inquiry at all.

Government could, therefore, have asked the Legislative Assembly for sanction to postpone further inquiry into the question till 1934-35 instead of having it at present, when the indigenous industry has to contend against Japanese competition. After England went off the gold standard, the Yen-Rupee exchange rapidly improved, and immediately Japan gave up the gold standard, the cross rate was Rs.210 per 100 Yen.

In the interval that elapsed between England and Japan going off the gold standard, Japan made extremely heavy purchases of American cotton. Her purchases of Indian cotton, however, fortunately for India, were not so heavy because of the lateness of the crop and the shortness of the supply; but the fact remains that in the finer types of goods produced from American cotton, Japan can still sell cheaper in the Indian market.

The Rupee-Yen cross rate now stands at somewhere between Rs.110 and Rs.120 per 100 Yen and it does not need an economist to work out the tremendous advantage which accrues to Japan by purchasing cotton on the gold standard and selling that cotton in the form of cloth at today's depreciated value of the Yen. (The Times of India, 19-3-32).

These millowners are not without hope that they can present a convincing case for the continuance of protection. Mr.H.P.Medy,

Chairman, Bombay Millowners' Association, is already preparing for a great fight to maintain the protective tariff at the level now prevailing. The reason for the launching of the new inquiry now is that allowance must be made in the Government of India's next budget for any changes in the tariff in which it may result and the Board's report must, therefore, if possible, be in the hands of Government by September, 1932.

(The Times of India, 19-3-32).

Water Hyacinth's Possibilities: A New Indian Industry.

An industrial scheme tested thoroughly in the chemical laboratory of the University of Calcutta and found practicable is announced by Dr. H. K. Sen, Professor-in-charge of the Department of Applied Chemistry of the University College of Science. The scheme has a double purpose to serve; on the one hand, it expects to augment the country's wealth, and on the other it promises to utilise the growing menace of water-hyacinth for the annihilation of which a Government Commission of experts could not prescribe any practical remedy.

Details of the Process. - In the course of an address to a large gathering in the Ashutosh Hall of the Calcutta University, as the Adhar Chandra Memorial Lecturer of the year Prof. Sen, drew the attention of the public to some very interesting applications of such ordinary useless cellulose matters (as rice-straw or water hyacinth. Boiled with one per cent of caustic soda, said Prof. Sen, under a low pressure of 45 pounds only they could be converted into a pulp which, when carefully washed and disintegrated, yielded a semi-gelatinised mass which could be moulded into rods, or sheets under high hydraulic pressure, giving a product of hard consistency, capable of being lathed ground or polished after drying under ordinary atmospheric conditions. This material, a sample of which was demonstrated by Dr. Sen, had great physical hardness and had an electric resistance approaching ebonite. It promised to be a useful adjunct of the wood-work industry, after a coating with water-resisting varnish and was also likely to be used in fancy ornamental work, dolls, statues, electrical insulators, panels, etc.





Budget of the Government of India for 1932-33.

The Budget of the Government of India for 1932-33 was presented in the Legislative Assembly by Sir George Schuster, the Finance Member, on 7-3-1932. A deficit in the revenues of the Government of India for the current year 1931-32 was revealed in the budget, the revised estimates showing a deficit of Rs. 136.6 millions, as against a budgeted surplus of Rs. 3.106 millions. Introducing the Budget, the Finance Member said :-

"I rise to present the Budget for 1932-33 in circumstances which are somewhat unusual. The House is already familiar - almost painfully familiar - with the main features of the present financial situation, and a special occasion has already been taken to ask for the supplies which six months ago we considered to be necessary in order to carry us safely through next year. (see pages 53-55 of the Report of this Office for October 1931). As His Excellency the Governor General has already announced, we do not propose to ask the House at the present stage to approve any extensions or modifications of the plan for raising revenue which we put forward last September. A Budget speech must therefore lack much of the interest which normally attaches to it. Nevertheless a very important part of the financial business still remains to be performed - the voting of the actual grants for expenditure - while the occasion is an appropriate one for attempting a general review of the financial position."

Revised Estimates for 1931-32 and Prospects for 1932-33.- Re. this subject, the Finance Member said: "I need not remind Hon. Members of the circumstances in which we were forced during last September to undertake interim measures to fortify our budgetary position (see pages 53-55 of the Report of this Office for October 1931). According to our estimates at that time, we should, on the existing basis of taxation have had to face deficits of over 190 millions in each of the years 1931-32 and 1932-33. We hoped by our new measures of retrenchment and taxation to reduce the deficit for the current year to Rs. 101.7 millions and for next year - when the effects of retrenchment would be fully felt and with the new rates of taxation, applicable for a whole year - to realise a surplus of Rs. 0.523 millions. But I emphasised in presenting the estimates in September that they would not in the extremely uncertain circumstances then prevailing be regarded as more than guesses and that we looked to the estimated surplus for next year mainly as a reserve margin against this uncertainty. We now allow for a deterioration in the figures by about 30 millions for each year and we anticipate that the current year will close with a deficit of 136.6 millions and that the surplus for 1932-33 will be Rs. 21.5 millions. This surplus of 21.5 millions, based as it is on severely reduced estimates of revenue, we regard as providing a reasonable margin for safety".

Budget at a glance.- The following table shows the actuals for 1930-31, the revised estimates for 1931-32, and the budget estimates for 1932-33:-

	<u>In millions of rupees.</u>		
	<u>Actuals</u> 1930-31	<u>Revised Estimates</u> 1931-32	<u>Budget</u> 1932-33
Revenue	1246.0	1207.7	1299.6
Expenditure	1361.8	1344.3	1278.1
Surplus (+) or Deficit (-)	- 115.8	- 136.6	+ 21.5
Do. as per September Estimates	- 126.8	- 101.7	+ 52.3

Retrenchment in Salaries.- Re. this subject the Finance

Member said:-

"The total reduction recommended by the four civil sub-committees was Rs. 49.9 millions, and we have against this achieved economies of Rs. 43.3 millions or nearly 87 per cent.- before allowing for terminal charges which, of course, the committees did not take into account. The net controllable administrative expenditure, civil and military (which excludes the cost of collection of taxes and of the administration of Salt and Posts and Telegraphs expenditure) has been brought down from just over Rs. 760 millions in 1930-31 to just over Rs. 640 millions for 1932-33, a reduction of about 16 per cent."

Reduction in Personnel.- The Finance Member gave the following particulars about reduction in personnel effected as a result of economy measures:-

"In pursuance of the retrenchment campaign the following appointments in the Civil Departments (including Posts and Telegraphs) have been or will shortly come under reduction so far as information is at present available -

Gazetted officers	299
Ministerial establishment and other superior establishment	5,279
Inferior establishment	1,485
Total	<u>7,063</u>

General.- The Finance Member explained the deterioration in revenues since his September estimates as due to decreases under commercial departments, profits from coinage and currency, and opium.

Dealing with the future position, Sir George suggested that if the provinces were to be allotted a portion of the revenues now Central, the Central Government may have to find fresh sources in increased taxes falling on the masses such as salt, kerosene, betel-nuts and spices.

(The Hindu, 7-3-1932).

(The Budget of the Government of India for 1931-32 was reviewed at pages 43-45 of the report of this Office for March 1931. See also pages 69-71 of our April 1931 report. For review of the Emergency Budget of the Government of India for period 1-10-1931 to 31-3-1932, see pages 53-55 of the October 1931 report of this Office).

Employment & Unemployment.

Unemployment Statistics in India.

The following question on unemployment statistics in India was put in the Council of State by the Hon'ble Mr. J. C. Banerjee on 29-2-32. The answer given by Mr. J. A. Shillidy on behalf of the Government of India is also given below:-

The Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee: Will Government be pleased to state whether they have taken any statistics of the unemployed persons of all nationalities in India? If so, will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the number of unemployed persons of the different provinces in India, with their nationalities?

The Honourable Mr. J. A. Shillidy: No such statistics of unemployed persons in India have been collected, but an attempt was made at the last Census to collect statistics of the educated unemployed. These statistics will be published in the forthcoming Census Report.

(Council of State Debates,  
29-2-32, page 50, Vol. I, No. 3).

# Social Conditions

## Social Workers' Conference, Madras, 1952.

A conference of social workers was held at Madras on 27-3-52 in the Gokhale Hall, Y.M.I.A., Madras, under the presidency of Sir P.S.Sivaswami Aiyar, when workers in different fields of social activity gave their experiences with a view to effecting a co-ordination of their work. The presidential address was followed by more than a dozen addresses on almost all aspects of social work and a resolution was adopted forming a committee to take steps to secure co-ordination of social work at present carried on by different institutions.

The conveners of the conference were the followings:- the Rt. Rev. Bishop H.Waller, and Rao Bahadur K.V.Sesha Iyengar (Vigilance Association); Hon. Mr. Justice and Mrs. Venkata Subba Rao (Seva Sadan); Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi (Children's Aid Society), Pundit Jnani (Arya Samaj), Mr. D. E. F. McClelland (Y.M.C.A), Mr. G. Jackson (Sanitary League), Mr. A. Ranganatham, M.L.C., (Rural Reconstruction Centre), Mrs. Dorothy Jinarajadasa (Women's Indian Association), Mr. T.S. Ramaswami Aiyar, M.L.C., (President, Corporation of Madras), Mr. M. Kolanthavelu Mudaliar (Temperance League), Dr. (Mrs.) Chinnappa (Health Association), Mr. T. Varadarajalu Naidu (Social Service League), Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan (International Fellowship), Mr. V. Venkatasubbayya (Servants of India Society), and Mr. G.W. Ranson (Sociological Brotherhood).

Sir Swaswami Iyer, the President, in his opening speech explaining the need for and objects of such a conference said:

"The need for the conference was obvious, There had been many institutions and associations started in recent years for improving the social conditions of the community and improving their material and moral conditions. The present conference was to ensure that there was no overlapping of effort on the part of the different institutions and to see how far it was possible to avoid such duplication and wastage. Very often it was found that people engaged in social work did not always possess the necessary intellectual equipment not to speak of the material equipment. It would be better if those who entered the field could realize the importance of drawing largely upon the experience of other countries on the importance of studying the problems of similar kind that had arisen there, and successfully tackled by them.

After the presidential address a number of speeches were made by representative social workers on different aspects of social

welfare work. The following subjects were dealt with:-

"The work of the Madras Seva Sadan" by Mrs. Venkatasubba Rao; "Vigilance Association" by the Lord Bishop of Madras; "Night Schools in Madras" by Mr. T.N.Seshachalam; "Libraries and Adult Education" by Mr. S.R.Ranganathan; "A Social Service Programme for a City Chery" by Rev.C.W.Ranson; "Work in Slums" by Mr.A.Ramanjulu Naidu; "Health Problems of the Poor" by Dr.Vasudeva Rao; "Public Health and Conditions in Cheries" by Mr. H.G Jackson; "Work among the Depressed Classes of Malabar" by Dr.(Mrs.) Chennappa; "Social Work for Industrial Workers" by Mr.K.D. Anthony; and "Work among the employees in Beedi factories" by Mr. Afsul-Ul-Ulema S.A.W. Bukhari Sahib Bahadur.

The following resolution was passed by the conference:-

"The organisers and the representatives of various institutions brought together in this Conference be asked to form themselves into a Committee for the purpose of taking steps for co-ordinating social service activities and to take all further and necessary steps which will promote the objects of this Conference". (The Hindu, 29-3-32).

# Social Insurance.

## State Unemployment Insurance:

### Mr. N.M.Joshi's Suggestion to Consultative Committee.

The meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Round Table Conference held on 29-2-32 discussed the suggestion by Mr.N.M.Joshi that the chapter on Fundamental Rights in the new Reformed Constitution for India should include <sup>a</sup> clause entitling every citizen to support from public funds, if no work could be found for him and to the provision, through a system of State insurance or otherwise, for maintenance during sickness, infirmity or old age and in the case of women for a reasonable period before and after confinement. While the Committee were in general sympathy with the principle underlying the proposal, it was pointed out that, in the peculiar conditions of India, it would be impossible to place any such statutory obligations on the State.

Mr. Joshi stated that he attached great importance to the recognition of this principle in the Constitution Act, though he realised that there were financial and other difficulties in the way of giving effect to this clause.

It was finally decided that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Joshi should draft suitable formula and circulate it for further consideration at the next meeting.

(The Hindu, 1-3-32).

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Co-operation.

Madras Co-operative Societies' Bill (No. IV of 1931) -

Passed into Law

At pages 56 to 57 of the report of this Office for March 1931 reference was made to the intention of the Government of Madras to introduce a Co-operative Societies Bill (Bill No. IV of 1931) in the Madras Legislative Council. The Council on 23-3-32 passed into law this Bill designed to consolidate and amend the law relating to Co-operative societies in the Presidency.

The Hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan, Minister, in his speech on 23-3-32 moving that the Bill should be passed into law said:-

Previous History of the Bill. - The co-operative movement has been in existence for the last 28 years and has made rapid progress during the period. There are now 15,000 societies and the working capital employed in the movement is over Rs. 180 million. The financing and supervision of this vast credit organisation presented problems of great magnitude and it became necessary to take stock of the results achieved so far and to concert measures for future development. The present law relating to Co-operative Societies is embodied in the India Act II of 1912 which like its predecessor the Act X of 1904 laid down merely the general outlines leaving details to be filled in gradually as experience is gained in each province. The experience gained in the working of the movement during the last two decades in this Presidency has indicated that certain changes were necessary in the existing law in order to facilitate the consolidation of the movement and to ensure its further progress. The necessity for such changes was pointed out by several committees like the Townsend Committee on co-operation, the Banking Inquiry Committee and the Royal Commission on agriculture. Recommendations of these bodies were considered by Government and such changes as were found necessary are introduced in this Bill.

Principal Changes. - The principal changes introduced by the Bill are:- (1) the precise nature of the liability in unlimited liability societies and the mode of enforcing such liability has been defined; (2) freedom is given to societies to change their liability from limited to unlimited and from unlimited to limited; (3) provision is made for division and amalgamation of societies; (4) power to inspect societies is given to financing banks; (5) powers are given to the Registrar to execute decrees speedily; (6) power is given to supersede committees of societies with a view to give opportunities



for societies to avoid, if possible, the extreme step of liquidation; (7) greater facilities are given to the liquidator to wind up the affairs of societies speedily; (8) provision is made for the recovery of moneys misappropriated or fraudulently retained by means of a surcharge; (9) provision is made to give power to the Registrar to call a general body meeting of a society ~~in~~ in case the committee refuses to do so at the request of the members of the financing bank; (10) to avoid any possible miscarriage of justice the Registrar is invested with power of revision in arbitration cases and also with power to attach property before decision when there is fear of alienation of property; (11) provision is made to enable Government to grant loans, to take shares in, or give financial assistance in any other form to any society; (12) provision is made to take notice of the failure of societies to comply with certain provisions of the Bill. Wilful submission of false returns and the wilful disobedience of summons are made offences under the Bill. 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 an 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 Bill has also provided for greater measure of control by non-official bodies like financing banks over the co-operative societies with a view to secure their co-operation in the expansion and progress of the movement.

Criticism of the Bill. - The provisions of the Bill, have, however, failed to satisfy some of the advanced co-operators whose views were given expression to in the Council by Mr. G.Simbachalam who said:-

"The co-operators of the province were very much disappointed at the nature of the Bill. It was not very much an advance on the existing Act. At a moment when the greatest need was to de-officialise the movement, it had been completely officialised, and converted more or less into a local board. It was a matter for regret that penal and surcharge provisions had been introduced into the Bill against the opinion of the co-operative unions." (The Hindu, 23-3-32).

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1st All India Rural Representatives' Conference, Delhi, 1932.

The first session of the All India Rural Representatives' Conference was held at New Delhi, at the Red Cross Society Hall on the 13-3-32, under the presidentship of Mr. G.K.Devdhar, C.I.E., Member, Servants of India Society. Prominent among those present were Dewan Bahadur G. Narayanaswami Chetti, Mr. Hormusji Nanekji Mehta, Mr. B. Sitaram ~~Ram~~ Raju, Mr. S.G.Mitra, Raja Rampal Singh, Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore, Mr. S.G.Jog, Sardar G.W.Mujumdar, Mr. H.P.Mody and Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee.

Rai Sahib Lala Nanak Chand, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in his welcome address said:-

Today's occasion is a unique one. For the first time in the history of our public life representatives of rural area and rural peoples have met together with the avowed purpose of thinking out a common rural policy for the country irrespective of politics. Nation building in India means rural reconstruction in every phase and form in some 700,000 villages among our three hundred million people, and industrial reconstruction among our towns co-ordinated with the villages. I pray and hope that with the wise guidance of so many distinguished Delegates who are present here and with practical sympathy and financial support of all ranks we may be able to lay the foundations of a beneficial rural policy and programme bringing the town and the village in a link of active fruitful co-operation and so make for the happiness of our millions of rural folk.

The following is a brief summary of the presidential address delivered by Mr. G.K.Devdhar:-

Rural Problems. - If India is a big problem, rural India is a bigger problem still; and all those varied interests that have a direct bearing on the shaping of the future of this land must take into account the problems of rural India and utilize this opportunity to define a far-reaching constructive policy and programme so as to make those who have to live in villages capable, not only of producing in efficient and economical ways more wealth and of bringing more health, happiness and contentment to them all, but there must be created among them able and active citizens capable of playing fairly their humble part in the gradual evolution of larger national life. This is the problem before the country today judging from all points of view; it is not wholly social, economic, or political. It is all

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that and something more too. It is truly a human problem.

Programme Defined. - The meeting held in Poona in July 1931 adopted a proposition which was meant to serve as a basis of this conference and runs as follows:-

"That an All India Rural Representatives Conference be convened early next year to discuss the entire question of rural affairs, village society and economics in the scheme of national life and policy, and to determine the future course of action for all practically interested in the enlightenment, efficiency, equipment, enrichment, and well-being - social, economic and political - of the rural population, as, in view of the likely constitutional changes and the consequential results on the life of the village peoples, it is necessary that the question of reforms and their use and operation should be considered in detail in their rural aspect for the benefit of rural peoples, and that opinion should be created for the formulation of a Rural Policy in all matters regarding (1) Politics, Administration and Legislation; (2) Economics, Agriculture, Rural Industries, and Rural Finance; (3) Education - general and technical; (4) Health, Sanitation and Medical Aid; (5) Physical Culture and Defence, Policing, and Self-Defence against robberies and dacoits, etc., and share in National Defence; (6) Village Autonomy and Prosperity; (7) Reconciliation of the interests of superior and inferior holders; (8) Training and Preparation in Civics, and Corporate Life, as the basis and foundation of a useful and beneficent National Rural policy and co-ordination of action for the operation of such national rural policy."

It looks far too ambitious in its nature, but in these days of internationalism a truly national and comprehensive programme, if one could be safely, wisely, and clearly laid down, for the rural super-structure in a proper perspective in the whole scheme of national advance, is a real need, and I for one would not shirk attempting it. In the first place, in all future under-takings we could not afford to neglect any longer the genuine wants of the rural population who form a preponderating element in our community and who bear no small burden of direct and indirect taxation in maintaining a very costly and elaborate machinery of government. Our outlook, besides, must be thoroughly national, non-sectarian and non-sectional.

Rural Depopulation. - ~~There~~ The neglect of the rural parts and rural needs and occupations coupled with temptations of Industrial Revolution has created here as well as elsewhere a problem of rural depopulation which process must be arrested. All attempts at stopping it would prove futile in the face of the existing conditions of civilization, unless the agriculturist's outlook on life is changed or in other words he is taught a different philosophy of life. In order to stop this slow death of village life with all its poetry, the only remedy that seems to me more effective in the rapidly changing conditions of modern life is the substitution of the process of constructive and healthy urbanization by means of which the human element secures environments for its healthy all-round growth.

Economic Improvement. - Coming down to the need for steady economic improvement of the rural population we come to the question of

Land Revenue or Land Policy. Without any way entering into the discussion whether the Government charge on land is tax or rent, it goes without saying that there is need for the system to be made sufficiently "elastic" and easily "adjustable". Moreover, the relations between the landlords and the tenants in all their wide variety need a closer and more sympathetic examination and both the Government and the landlords have much in their power to render the life of the poor peasants truly remunerative and adequately self-sufficient. The tenant, on the other hand, is to be educated with regard to the need for the improvement of the conditions of labour and the betterment of his land. The question of the consolidation of small holdings and further prevention of ~~xx~~ fragmentation would have to be taken up. The growing population is imposing great burdens on the soil and, therefore, great relief is necessary in the case of agriculturists by the introduction of supplementary occupations and active promotion of rural industries to reduce the burden of the population on the soil.

Rural Credit. - Then we come to the great problem of the democratization of rural credit which at present is as low as it could be. But impossible expectations and wrong policies have left the maha-jan or the money-lender and the middle-man to dominate the field and so long as he has to do his business according to business principles providing against risk, and so long the frightfully high rates of interest which agriculturists and farmers have to pay in this country continue to exist, there is very little hope of a speedy betterment of the economic position of the peasantry.

Progress of Co-operation. - Luckily, in spite of the want of active promotion of the co-operative principle applied to all the phases of rural life on the part of Government Departments and the politically minded leaders of the country, the movement of co-operation which took its rise in 1904, has made tremendous strides in this conservative country. The progress of the movement in India from the year 1906-07 to 1929-30 shows a growth from a few societies to 104,000. The total number of members of the primary societies has grown from 161,910 in 1906-07 and 1909-10 to 4,181,904 in 1929-30 and the total amount of capital which is increasing faster than membership stands today at Rs.900 <sup>millions</sup> ~~crores~~ having steadily risen from Rs.6,812,000 in 1909-10. There are in India today 588 Co-operative Provincial or Central Banks with lending accounts amounting to nearly <sup>180</sup> ~~180~~ <sup>crores</sup> ~~crores~~ to individuals, banks and societies alone.

Agricultural Indebtedness. - Moreover, there is a great millstone round the neck of the cultivator as a class; and that is what we call "agricultural indebtedness". This problem engaged the attention of many famine commissions and economic inquiries and also of the Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee. The total indebtedness, on a very conservative estimate, is placed at Rs.9,000 million and one can easily imagine the hopelessly confused economic condition that must be causing perpetual anxiety and uneasiness to the farmer weighted down under this crushing load.

Debt Conciliation Boards. - I am glad to find that the Government of the United Provinces have seriously undertaken enquiries relating to agricultural debts or in another words question of the redemption of agricultural indebtedness and I am, more or less, of opinion that if suitable measures to effect composition of debts by measures of conciliation be undertaken by Government, as was attempted

on a very small scale in C.P. several years ago, or as has recently been tried as one of the State's measures of agrarian relief in Bhavanagar State by my friend Sir Prabhashankar Pattani, some kind of relief much better than one what is sometimes contemplated by an Act of Rural Insolvency, would be secured. I am in favour of a great movement by way of starting conciliation boards for agricultural indebtedness with the assistance of Government. This might be attempted with the help of different types of co-operative societies or co-operative land mortgage agencies on a different basis. (Hindustan Times, 16-3-32).

The following fundamental resolution was passed by the Conference:-

"This All-India Rural Representatives Conference is of opinion that the propositions adopted at this conference be considered as a basis of an All India Rural Policy and Programme for consideration and discussion and invites opinions and suggestions from all groups, bodies and persons, interested in rural affairs, for consideration at the next conference."

Objectives of the Conference. - The following platform was formulated by the Conference:-

The immediate necessity of an examination and revision of land revenue policy and land system; a judicial commission for zemindari rights and interests; a tenancy commission for the charter of tenants' rights; a rural labour inquiry; registered money lenders' association; conversion of the taccavi system into a banking system; the establishment of rural development boards; agricultural improvement trusts, and rural colonies; a village commonwealth council for reinstituting the villages as self-administrative units as a part of the executive system; a rural areas educational council; a system of central rural schools; the need for rural voluntary constabulary and rural statistics; the immediate necessity for a rural industries council; the organisation of rural water-supply systems, rural electric supplies and rural communications by roads and telephones in villages; the necessity for immediate reduction of taxation and supervision and control of prices to prevent profiteering by middlemen.

General Council. - A General Council of 15 members of the Council of State and 45 members of the Legislative Assembly was constituted as the head body with Mr. G. K. Devdhar as president and an executive Council was appointed with Srimati Vidya Gauri Ram Bhai as president and Mr. Ramrai Mohan Rai as general secretary with necessary powers. (The Leader 21-3-32).

Women and Children.

National Council of Women: 3rd Biennial Meeting, Bombay, 1932.

The third biennial meeting of the National Council of women in India was held at Bombay on 17-3-1932. Owing to the unavoidable absence of H.H. the Maharani Saheba of Baroda, Mrs. Maneklal Premchand, one of the vice-Presidents, and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council, presided.

The National Council of Women in India was formed in 1925 with the aim of strengthening and co-ordinating women's activities by federating the various associations working for the improvement of the position of women and for social progress. It has for its object to establish a permanent link between the women's organisations of the different provinces in India thus making it possible for them to work together for the material and moral advancement of women. The National Council of Women stands for the belief that women have a special contribution to make to the solution of social and economic problems.

Mrs. Premchand in the course of her presidential address said:-

"The Council was no longer in its infancy; it had now passed its sixth year; therefore, the time had now arrived for the expansion of the Council. At present they had five provincial councils at Bengal, Bombay, Bihar and Orissa, Burma and Delhi. An institution in Berar was opened last year. All these provincial Councils worked independently. The Madras Branch of the Women's Indian Association and the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon had also been affiliated to their institution. What the National Council of Women in India was doing was to provide for the exchange of ideas and co-ordinate the work of the different provincial Councils, thus creating sympathy of thought and purpose. Preceding, she stated that the National Council was in touch with 36 different countries through the International Council of Women, and they were interested in international questions. The Council had endorsed the Disarmament Conference. Concluding, Mrs. Premchand pleaded for the enforcement of compulsory primary education for both boys and girls in the country".

Report for Period April 1930 to February 1932.- The report for the period April 1930 to February 1932 presented at the meeting



stated that the period under review was marked by several new developments:

Much useful work was done by the Labour Committee under the direction of Miss Wingate, and the Legislation Committee. The Council considered the question of cinema films and suggested to the provincial councils to urge the appointment of a woman on the local board of film censors as was done in Bengal. The Council also represented to the Central Government to allow educational films, intended primarily for use in schools and welfare educational institutions, to enter the country free of duty. The report then described the nature of the future work to be undertaken. That included the starting of new provincial councils and the compilation of an Indian Women's "Who's Who".

Resolutions Passed.- The following is a summary of the more important of the resolutions passed.-

"The Council thanked Dewan Bahadur Harbilas Sarada for introducing a resolution in the Legislative Assembly to secure rights of inheritance to Hindu widows. It further requested Government to introduce a measure in the legislature conferring on Hindu widows rights of inheritance to their husbands' property, and on daughters to the property of their fathers. Another resolution congratulated all those members who opposed the repeal of the Sarada & Child Marriage Restraint Act. A third resolution considered that, in the interests of the future generation of India, the establishment of school clinics for inspection of children was imperative and urged provincial governments to arrange for this to be done through the public health departments in the provinces. The Council also impressed upon all school authorities the present inadequate arrangements for physical training and out-door games for children and requested them to provide facilities".

Office-bearers.- For the next two years Bombay was selected as the headquarters of the Council. H.H. the Maharani of Baroda, was elected President for four years, and Lady Ezra and Mrs. Maneklal Premchand as vice-presidents.

(The Times of India, 19-3-1932)

Education.

Educational Reform - Punjab Students' Demands.

In recent years the Indian educational system has been subjected to a great deal of criticism, the main counts in the indictment being : (1) the present system emphasises art education and neglects technical education. (2) The system is responsible for creating a permanent surplus of arts graduates beyond the employment possibilities of the country and in this way unemployment is increased, (3) The death of technically qualified young men has retarded the industrial progress of the country, as many industries which could be profitably started in the country are not being started for lack of qualified men to run them. (4) The present medium of instruction, English, is not a suitable one and vernaculars should be substituted as this would make education an easier and cheaper process. The truth of such criticism has been accepted to a great extent now, it being generally conceded that much of the preventible unemployment in India is due to the lopsided nature of the present system of education. In view of the important bearings that the present educational policy has on the unemployment situation in the country, the following demands formulated by the Gujranwala (Punjab) Students' Union are given below to indicate the trend of opinion among the educated youth of the country on the educational system:-

1. We , the students of the Punjab University, demand University reform, and insist that the whole question of University reform should be considered solely from the point of view of those for whom this education is meant.

2. The present type of literary education does not satisfy



the needs of the country. It produces a commodity that is a drug on the market. The existing system of education is mainly responsible for unemployment among employable educated young men.

3. We demand that the medium of instruction be changed from English to the Vernacular of the people. The use of a foreign tongue as medium of instruction causes great waste of time and energy and has produced a regrettable gulf between educated people and the masses of the population. The change from English to vernacular would cheapen education, make it more pleasant and less of a task, and finally be a powerful means of bringing enlightenment to the unlettered millions of our countrymen.

4. That the period of study be shortened and education made cheaper.

5. We demand that immediate steps be taken to lessen the rigour of the examination system. If the object of University education had been to make the average student a dull and stupid cramming machine, no better system could have been devised than the existing one.

6. That the artificial barrier, which the present system of education has created between the educated and uneducated, be removed.

7. (a) That the University should help the diffusion of scientific ideas among the masses.

(b) That dispensaries be opened in large numbers in rural areas and proper medical assistance be provided to the villages.

8. We demand that education be de-communalised. The present organisation of schools and colleges on communal lines is one of the direct causes of communal hatred which, from time to time, finds a terrible expression in sanguinary riots.

9. That an honest attempt be made to solve the problem of unemployment.

10- That Government should encourage the development of power industries so that educated young men may find employment in large business factories and industrial concerns.

11. While approving the ideas of starting of U.T.C., we demand that the military training and education in politics be made compulsory above the age of 16.

12. Finally we humbly demand that the teachers and professors be asked to come to schools and colleges in simple and cheap dress.

(The Hindustan Times, 31-3-32).

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Maritime Affairs.

Deck Workers' Strike, Bombay.

About 2,000 deck-workers working in the Bombay docks struck work as a protest against alleged wage-cut and victimization on 12-3-32. The complaints of the dock workers are that the contractors give only 25 per cent. of the labour wages they take from the companies and whereas there were 16 men in each gang previously, the number has now been reduced to 8. In addition, there is also a wage-cut. As the negotiations between the agents of the contractors and the representatives of the Union failed owing to the refusal of the contractors to recognize the Union, two thousand coal men went on strike in sympathy with the strikers on 15-3-32. The Union has drafted a list of 17 demands the most important of which are the following:- (1) The company should recruit labour directly through the Union and should remove the intermediaries such as stevedores, contractors etc. (2) The workers should be paid weekly or as soon as the ship is loaded or unloaded. (3) Double wages should be paid for night work. (4) Restoration of the cut in wages. (5) The working hours should be eight. (6) In case of accidents the claims of injured men must be settled according to the Workmen's Compensation Act with the help of Union officials. (7) If the workers are made to work for half a day they must be paid for the whole day. (8) The rule of half holiday on Saturdays should be strictly observed. Sundays should be treated as holidays as per rules and any work on that day should be treated as whole day and paid double. (9) The Union officials should have a right to go to the Decks and on board the ships for investigating into the grievances of the workers.

(Trade Union Record,  
March 1932, Vol.3, No.1).

Despite the fact that about 125 dock-workers resumed work on 24-3-32, press messages dated 30-3-32 indicate that the strike was continuing at the end of March. A development of the strike situation is the frequent clashes that occur between the strikers and the Pathan labour force which has been recruited to replace the strikers.

(The Hindu, 30-3-32).

Dock-Yard Workers' Strike, Madras.

The dock yard workers employed by Messrs. Biny and Co., numbering 1,200 went on strike on 14-3-32 on the question of bonus after having refused to take their wages for the months of January and February as a protest. The workers held a meeting on the 14-3-32 with Mr. Kotiswaram, in the chair. On 15-3-32, the labour leaders interviewed the Managing Director, Mr. Kay. The workers were advised to resume work but they could not be prevailed upon. A union was formed with Mr. P.V. Sutramania Mudaliar as the President and Mr. Kotiswaram as the General Secretary. On 16-3-32 it was decided finally to resume work on 17-3-32. But the next day the management refused to allow the people to work and converted the strike into a lock-out though on the previous day they had asked the workers to resume work. But subsequently as the management approached the workers and asked them to resume work, the Union officials advised the workers to resume work which they did on 18-3-32. The workers resumed work without the management stipulating any condition or terms. It was decided by the Union that the question of bonus should be left over for some time, as it was believed that the management would willingly revise its decision if conditions should improve. It was also decided to register

the Union. As regards the question of receiving wages the Union advised the workers on 19-3-32 to take wages for the months of January and February due to them.

(The Trade Union Record, March 1932.  
Vol.3, No.1).

Bengal Mariners' Union:  
Protest Against Wage Cut.

At a largely attended general meeting of the Union held at Kidderpore under the presidency of Mr. M. Daud on the 13-3-32, Mr. M. Abdul Huq, General Secretary, explained the present situation of the Union and the activities of the I.G.N. & Railway Co., Ltd., and the R.S.N.Co., Ltd., affecting the interests of the inland-waterwaymen. He also explained to the members the recent activities of the Joint Steamer Companies and their unwarranted circularisation of a proposed cut by more than 50 per cent. in the pay of the masters, serangs and drivers in their laid-up steamers with effect from the 1-4-32 in breach of terms of settlement made between the Union and the Joint Steamer Companies on 16-9-29. He advised the men to go on constitutional lines and give an immediate united front if they were really serious in the matter. The following resolutions were then unanimously adopted:-

(1) That the Union views with alarm the recent circulars of the I.G.N.&Railway Co.,Ltd., and the R.S.N.Co.,Ltd., arbitrarily reducing the wages of the masters, drivers and serangs of their laid-up steamers and flats by more than 50 per cent. approximately on average, in breach of the settlement made between the Joint Steamer Companies and the Union on 16-9-29. (2) That the Union strongly disapproves of the actions of the Joint Steamer Companies in circularising the aforesaid reductions in wages of laid-up steamers and flats to be enforced from the 1st April 1932 without consulting the Union, thereby preventing them to put their point of view in the matter. (3) That the aforesaid reduction in wages by more than 50 per cent. is not

warranted by any unforeseen economic conditions by which the Joint Steamer Companies may plead trade depression etc. (4) That the Joint Steamer Companies be requested forthwith to withdraw their circulars, in order to avoid a serious situation that may arise in the steamer services in Bengal in case the aforesaid reductions be enforced from the 1-4-32. (5) That special general meetings be held within this month in all the important centres in order to ascertain the views of the men.

(The Trade Union Record, March 1932,  
Vol.3., No.1).

National Seamen's Union of India -

Amalgamation of two Bombay Unions.

At a general meeting of the members of the former Indian Seamen's Union Bombay, held on 5-3-32 under the presidency of Mr. R.S.Asavale, resolutions were passed cancelling the registration of the Indian Seamen's Union, Bombay, and urging the registration of an amalgamated Union composed of the Bombay Seamen's Union and Indian Seamen's Union, Bombay, under the name of the "National Seamen's Union of India, Bombay and urging the pooling of the moneys of the former Bombay Seamen's Union into the funds of the National Seamen's Union and advising the Indian seamen to take advantage of the newly opened Indian sailor's home at Bombay.

(The Trade Union Record,  
March 1932, Vol.3, No.1).

Migration.Cape Town Conference Parleys: Report Delayed.

At page 69 of the report of this Office for February 1931 reference was made to the conclusion of the Cape ~~Town~~ Conference on 4-2-32. The Indian Delegation to South Africa consisting of Sir Fazli Husain, the Rt.Hon.V.S.Srinivasa Sastri, Sir D'Arcy Lindsay, Mr. G.S. Bajpai and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, along with Sir K.V.Reddi, arrived in New Delhi on 28-2-32.

The Delegation had a meeting with the Viceroy and departmental officials concerned at the Viceroy's House on 29-2-32. The course of the negotiations in the Cape Town Conference and the conclusions reached by them were then, fully explained. But the only available official information is that no announcement can be expected for some time. One reason appears to be that the Conference did not carry the situation to a finished well-trimmed one, on which alone a public announcement would be suitable. It may be presumed that neither side can make an announcement without first arranging such a date. (The Times of India, 2-3-32).

The Indian Delegation to South Africa was summoned to New Delhi for a final Conference in the third week of March, the main business being to consider the reply expected from Dr.Malan re. amendments to the pending Land Tenure Bill. The Bill, against which Indian opinion has taken its stand, has been examined by the Indian delegation in detail and various amendments have been suggested to modify the effect of the anti-Indian provisions in the Bill. There is no confirmation or denial available ~~fr~~ of the press report which has emanated from Durban mentioning that the Conference has failed to achieve

substantial results and it is stated, in authoritative circles, that any premature statement on the subject would be unwise as delicate negotiations are still going on. (The Times of India, 21-3-32).

According to the Statesman of 27-3-32, the Report on the South African Conference will be published in the first week of April 1932.



Migrations.

Facilities for Indian Emigration To Brazil.

The following questions with regard to facilities for Indian Emigration to Brazil were asked in the Legislative Assembly on 1-3-32 by Mr. Bhupat Sing (on behalf of Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh). The answers given by Sir Evelyn Howell on behalf of the Government of India are also appended:-

Mr. Bhupat Sing (on behalf of Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh): (a) Is it a fact that the approximate number of Indians in Brazil is about 2,000; and are Government aware that Brazil is a vast country with abundant natural resources, and climatic conditions similar to those of India?

(b) Are Government aware that the Government of Brazil has opened her door on an equal basis, and without racial prejudice to all emigrants?

(c) Are Government aware that from 1926 to 1930 an annual average of one lakh of emigrants landed in Brazil from Europe, Japan, and other countries?

(d) Are Government aware that much propoganda is done in many European countries, and in Japan, with a view to encourage emigration to Brazil?

(e) Are Government aware of the existence of the Indo-South American Travellers' Aid Society, 189, Hornby Road, Bombay, which disseminates information on Brazil to intending emigrants and travellers?

(f) Do Government propose to explore the possibility of assisting the Colonial returned Indians to settle in Brazil by issuing necessary passports, and affording other facilities for emigration?

(g) Is there any officer located in Brazil to look after the interests of the Indians in Brazil? If so, who is he?

Sir Evelyn Howell: (a) Government are prepared to accept the information supplied by the Honourable Member as substantially correct.

(b) Government have no special information as to the general immigration policy of the Brazilian Government, but they are aware that it issued a decree prohibiting all foreign immigration for a period of one year with effect from the 1st January 1931. It is believed to be still in force.

(c), (d) and (e). Government have no special information.

(f) In view of the answer to part (b) Government do not consider that any useful purpose would be served by taking up the Honourable Member's suggestion at present.

(g) His Majesty's Ambassador in Brazil at Rio de Janeiro is responsible for looking after the interests of all British subjects in that country.