

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
New Delhi Branch.

Report for April 1929.

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GENERAL.

Enough pabulum has been furnished to the ~~members~~^{press} and to the sensation-mongers by some of the political happenings of the period under report. On the 20th March 1929, a general round-up of the communist leaders in India was organised and carried out under the orders of the Government of India, and arrests were made in such centres as Bombay, Poona, Calcutta, Allahabad, Meerut and Lucknow. Almost all the arrested persons are connected with labour organisations, ^{the} Youth Movement, and the Peasants' and Workers' Association. They have all been taken to Meerut where the trial is to take place. Lightning strikes of short ~~period~~^{duration}, involving some 20,000 workers in Bombay, occurred when the news became public, but these were short-lived, and there has been no general serious disturbance to speak of. On the 21st March 1929, in reply to a short notice question, the Home Member made the following statement in the Indian Legislative Assembly:-

"Under the authority of the Governor-General-in-Council, a complaint has been laid against 31 persons from various parts of India on a charge of conspiring to deprive the King of the sovereignty of British India. The complaint was laid in the court of the District Magistrate of Meerut and the court in the ordinary course of the law under the Criminal Procedure Code issued processes. In pursuance of these, house searches and arrests have taken place in different parts of India.

With regard to these I am unable at present to give full particulars, as I am not yet in possession of complete information. The names of persons against whom warrants have been issued ~~are~~ as follows:-

Philip Spratt, Calcutta.
B. F. Bradley, Bombay.
Ajodhya Prasad, Calcutta.

Shaukat Usmani, Bombay.
 Puranchand Joshi, Allahabad.
 Gaurishankar, Meerut.
 L. R. Kadam, Jhansi,
 V. N. Mukharji, Gorakhpur.
 Dharamvir Singh, Meerut.
 Dharani Goswami, Mymensingh.
 Shibnath Bannerjee, Khulna.
 Muzaffar Ahmed, Calcutta.
 Gopal Basak, Dacca.
 Shamsul Huda, Calcutta.
 Kishorilal Ghosh, Calcutta.
 Gopendra Chakravarty, Dacca.
 Radha Raman Mitra, Burdwan,
 Sripad Amrit Dange, Bombay.
 Sachchidananda Vishnu Ghate, Bombay.
 S. H. Jhabwala, Bombay.
 Dhondiraj Thengdi, Poona City.
 Keshav Milkant Joglekar, Bombay.
 Shantram Savalram Mirajkar, Bombay.
 Raghunath Shivram Nimbkar, Bombay.
 Gangadhar Moreshawar Adhikari, Bombay.
 Motiram Gangjanaan Desai, Bombay.
 Arjun Atmaram Alwe, Bombay.
 Gobind Ramchandra Kasle, Bombay.
 Sohan Singh Joshi, Amritsar Suburb.
 M. A. Majid alias Abdul Majid, Lahore.
 Kedarnath Sehool, Lahore.

The ~~Complaint~~ of Mr. R. A. Horton, Officer, on special duty under the Director of ^{the} Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, shows :-

1. That there exists in Russia an organisation called the Communist International. The aim of this organisation is, by the organisation of armed revolution, to overthrow all the existing forms of government throughout the world, and to replace them by Soviet republics subordinate to and controlled by the Soviet administration in Moscow.

2. That the said Communist International carries on its work of propoganda through various committees, branches and organisations controlled by and subject to itself e.g., the Executive Committee of the Communist International and various sub-committees of the same, including the sub-committee concerned with Eastern and Colonial affairs, the Communist Party of Great Britain which is a section of the Communist International, the Red International of Labour Unions, the Pan Pacific Trade Union, the Secretariat of the League Against Imperialism, the Young

Communist League and various other bodies.

3. That the ultimate objective of the said Communist International is the complete paralysis and overthrow of the existing Governments in every country (including India) by means of a general strike and an armed uprising.

It has outlined a programme or plan of campaign which will be followed, for ^{the} achievement of this ultimate objective.

Among the methods so ordained are

- (a) The incitement of antagonism between Capital and Labour
- (b) The creation of Workers' and Peasants Parties, Youth Leagues, etc., ostensibly for the benefit of the members thereof, but in fact for the purpose of propaganda and the domination of such parties by Communists pledged to support the aims of the Communist International and the unification of such bodies under one control subservient to the Communist International.
- (c) The introduction of factions or ~~the~~ nuclei of such Communists, with illegal objects as aforesaid, into existing trade unions, nationalist bodies and political and other organisations, with the object of capturing the trade unions and bodies or obtaining their support in the interests of the Communist International.
- (d) The encouragement of strikes, hartals and agitation.
- (e) Propaganda by speeches, literature, newspapers, celebration of anniversaries connected with the Russian Revolution, etc.
- (f) The utilization and encouragement of any movements hostile to Government.

4. "That in the year 1921 the said Communist International determined to establish a branch organisation in British India and the accused Sripad Amrit Dange, Shaukat Usmani and Mizaffar Ahmed entered into a conspiracy with certain other persons to establish such branch organisations with a view to deprive King ^{the} Emperor of his sovereignty over British India.

5. "That thereafter the various persons, including the accused Spratt and Bradley, were sent to India by the Communist International through the medium of one of its branches or organisations, and with the object of furthering the aims of the Communist International.

6. "That the accused named in this complaint reside at different centres throughout British India. They have conspired with each other and with other persons, known or unknown, within or without British India, to deprive the King Emperor of his ~~sovereign~~ sovereignty over British India and for such purpose to use methods and carry out a programme and a plan of ~~campaign~~ outlined and ordained by the Communist International and in fact they used such methods and carried out such plan and campaign with the assistance of and financial support from the Communist International.

7. That the accused have met and conspired together as aforesaid at various places within and without British India, and amongst others at Meerut, and in pursuance of ~~a~~ such a conspiracy as aforesaid, the accused formed the Workers' and Peasants' Party at Meerut and there held a conference thereof."

"As stated above, a complaint has been laid on a charge of conspiracy under Section 121-A, Indian Penal Code, in respect of which the case for the prosecution will be that acts had been committed, falling within the terms of the section quoted, at various places and at various times extending over a period of several years. Owing to the comprehensive nature of the case, I am unable to give the specific dates of the places. The sanction for this prosecution was given on March 14 and the complaint was laid on March 15. As the case is now sub judice I, at this stage, am unable to give further particulars which might prejudice the merits of the case. Warrants of arrest have been issued only against persons in whose case Government are assured there is strong prima facie evidence, but search warrants

have been issued in cases where there are good grounds for believing that important evidence in connection with the case might be recovered. I hope the House will appreciate that the policy of Government in this case is to bring before the courts, under the ordinary law, a conspiracy which, in their view, is an infringement of the ordinary law of the land and is an attempt to carry out in India the programme of the Communist International. It is not directed against propaganda and activities of any persons or organisations except those who are believed to have taken active part in this particular conspiracy".

A motion for adjournment of the House to discuss the policy underlying the arrests was then sanctioned by the President, but was disallowed the same evening by the Governor General on the ground that the matter could not be discussed without detriment to public safety.

On the 2nd April, the President read out a statement in the course of which he advised the Government, in view of the intimate connection between the Public Safety Bill and the Meerut arrests (two of the accused in the Meerut case being Bradley and Spratt, foreign agitators directly affected by the Bill) to drop either the bill or the prosecution, so that matters sub judice may not be discussed in the House. He considered that there could be no adequate discussion of the Bill without a full reference to the Meerut affair, and before giving a ruling on this difficult point wanted to know what the Government proposed doing. The Home Member replying to this statement on the 4th April stated that it was beyond the powers of the Chair to withhold the Bill from consideration after it had been once introduced, and that the Government were unable to accept either ^{of} the alternative suggestions put forward by the President. The President allowed a public discussion in order to elicit the opinion of the members as to whether it was possible to have a real and reasonable debate on the Public Safety Bill in view of the pending prosecutions at

Meerut, and secondly, whether the Chair had the power to intervene at this stage. The discussion took place on the 5th April, after which the House proceeded with the discussion on the Trades Disputes Bill, as the President wanted time to consider ^{the} arguments raised before giving a ruling as to the procedure to be adopted in regard to the Public Safety Bill. It was evident from the discussion in the lobby that the relations between the Assembly and the Government were getting more and more strained and all sorts of wild rumours are afloat as to what the Government would do ~~with~~ if the President were to give a decision adverse to the Government. Meanwhile, the discussion on the Trades Disputes Bill continued, and the Swarajist leaders arranged to close the discussion as early as possible in order to enable the President to give an earlier ruling.

On the morning of the 8th April the Assembly once again met, tense with ~~the~~ excitement. The third reading of the Trades Disputes Bill was concluded towards 12.30 p.m. and when the Bill had been carried by a majority of 56 to 38, the President stood up to give his ruling when two bombs were suddenly flung from the visitors' gallery above on to the Government benches, and the Assembly broke ^{up} in confusion. Two revolver shots were also heard. Some five minutes afterwards, after partial order had been restored, and the bomb throwers taken into custody, the President announced that the House stood adjourned till the morning of Thursday the 11th April. The newspaper cuttings enclosed deal with the occurrences of the 8th instant, and publish in extenso a manifesto, copies of which were thrown into the House by the bomb-throwers. In the manifesto it was stated that it was ^{as} a protest against the Public Safety and the Trades Disputes Bills that this extreme action was taken, and the manifesto itself purported to come from the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army.

(Hindustan Times supplement 12-4-29)

About the Trades Disputes Bill itself, it may be said that it has been passed by the House as it emerged from the Select Committee, and that it will be considered, and in all likelihood passed, by the Council of State on Thursday, the 11th instant. The Standing Orders has been suspended in order to render this possible.

On Saturday, the 6th April, Mahasha Rajpal, ^{last year} a Hindu Arya-Samajist leader, who attracted a great deal of publicity on account of his anti-mussalman attitude, was ^{stabbed to death} ~~shot dead~~ at Lahore by a Mussalman. On the attempt of the Hindu leaders to take out a feneral procession against the orders of the police, a scuffle ensued in the course of which, according to newspaper reports, some 86 persons were injured. This ^{incident} ~~instance~~ has naturally led to more strained feelings between the two religious communities in the Punjab, and it is to be very much feared that the feeling will soon spread to other centres as well.

The Simon Commission which has been at Delhi for the last three weeks taking evidence, and consulting the various provincial committees, will be leaving Bombay on the 13th instant for England. It is said that opinion in the Indian Central Committee which has been cooperating with the Simon Commission is hopelessly divided, and that the consultations with the various provincial committees have not, by any means, paved the way for a unanimous report. The attempts made by some of the members of the Indian Central Committee to ^{prolong} ~~pull on~~ the life of the present Central Legislature seem to have been discouraged by the Viceroy; and as many of the members of the Central Committee fear that they would not be returned at the next general elections, they are feeling disgruntled and are afraid that they would have no opportunity to take part in the deliberations which would follow the publication of the Simon report.

The Viceroy himself will be leaving India next June for a period of not more than four months, so that he may be on the

spot in London when the ^{new} constitution ^{al} schemes are being considered. Lord Goschen, the Governor of Madras, is to officiate for Lord Irwin during this interval.

Among the newspaper cuttings dealing with the League of Nations is one which gives a summary of the discussion in the Indian Council of State on Sir Phiroze Sethna's resolution about ~~the~~ appointing an Indian to lead the Indian Delegation to the 1929 session of the League of Nations Assembly. As the Government have agreed to appoint an Indian leader this year there is much speculation as to who will be chosen for this place, and the lobby ~~talk~~ talk is that Sir Muhammad Habibullah, the Member in charge of the Department of Education, Health and Lands, and the Leader of the Council of State, may, in all likelihood, be chosen for the place.

No formal announcements have yet been made regarding the personnel of either the Royal Commission on Labour or of the Delegation to the 12th session of the Labour Conference. As regards the latter, however, it is understood that the Government have issued letters to the following gentlemen:-

Employers' Delegation.

Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Ahmedabad Millowner	---	Delegate
Mr. R.K. Shanmukham Chetty, M.L.A.)	
Mr. B. Das, M.L.A.)	
Mr. P. Mukerji, Chairman, Punjab Chamber of Commerce.)	---
)	Advisers

Labour Delegation.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, M.L.A.	---	Delegate
Mr. Abdul Matin Choudhury, M.L.A.))	
Indian Seamen's Union, Calcutta)	
Mr. B. Sir Shiva Rao, Madras Labour Union,)	
Mr. V. R. Kalappa, All India Railwaymen's Federation,)	---
Mr. G. Sethi, Jamshedpur Labour Union.)	Advisers
)	

Most of the delegates and advisers will be leaving Bombay on the 4th May by the P. & O Boat, "Viceroy of India".

Addendum.

The Legislative Assembly met this morning at 11 A.M. (11-4-1929), in continuation of its work after the bombing incident, when the President gave his long expected ruling on the question of the procedure to be adopted with regard to the Public Safety Bill. According to the hasty telephonic communication received in this office, the President considered the various arguments advanced in the House for and against his ~~opinion~~ that, pending the Meerut trials there could be no reasonable discussion of the Bill, and, following the precedent of the House of Commons, held that he had the right under the circumstances to disallow further consideration of the Bill. After the President had read out his ruling, the House was informed that the Governor General desired to address ^{it} the next day, viz. 12th April, in order to make a pronouncement. The House ^{was} therefore adjourned; and it is rumoured that the Viceroy will withdraw the Public Safety Bill from the House and issue it as an Ordinance. The political atmosphere continues to be tense with excitement.

References to the I.L.O.

The Statesman of 13th March 1929 and all papers give prominence to a Reuter's agency message from Geneva dated 12th March 1929, containing the report of a meeting of the Governing Body of the I.L.O. at which Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, the British Labour Minister, expounded Britain's reasons for not ratifying the Washington 48 Hour Week Convention.

... ..

The Pioneer of 15th March 1929 publishes a fuller message about Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland's explanation of British objections to the Washington Convention on the ground of the ambiguous nature of its provisions.

... ..

The Bombay Chronicle of 15th March 1929 has an editorial note entitled "Procrastination", condemning the attitude of the British Government in delaying the ratification of the Eight Hour Convention and the reply given by Sir Atul to M. Jouhaux at the last Governing Body meeting. It says that Indian working classes will be glad to have an impartial enquiry into the present conditions of wages and work here.

... ..

The Tribune (Lahore) of 17th March 1929 also condemns the British attitude regarding the Eight Hour Convention in an editorial note and hopes, when in October 1929, a revision of the Convention will have to be undertaken, the capitalists will not forget the lesson of this Geneva General Body meeting.

... ..

Commenting editorially on ^{the} British criticism of the I.L.O Budget, the Hindustan Times in its issue of 20th March 1929 points attention to Britain's indulgent attitude towards the League of Nations budget and her critical attitude towards the I.L.O. budget. The following is a relevant extract on the point from the paper :-

"It is curious that Britain did not take up such a strong attitude against increase of expenditure when the general budget of the League of Nations was voted some-time ago. At that time it was left to India's representatives - such as they were - Lord Lytton and the Nawab of Palanpur - to make a strong protest against the huge increase in the League's expenditure. Is it the view of the British Government that an increase of expenditure on the political activities of the League is not so objectionable as an increase on account of its economic work? India must take up quite a different attitude on this question. The International Labour Office is the only organization connected with the League of Nations which has shown any active interest in Indian affairs and has tried to do something in this country. The Workers' Delegates, who are able to appreciate the value of the work done by the International Labour Office, are reported to have generally favoured the estimates while the Employers' Delegates opposed them. We are glad that Sir Atul Chatterjee, India's representative on the Governing Body, was not led away by the example of his British colleague but voted in favour of the estimates".

... ..

The Hindustan Times of 16th March 1929 and all papers publish the purport of a discussion held at the International Labour Office on 12th March 1929 on the Washington Convention. According to the report, the German and French Employers' Delegates and the Swedish Government Delegates supported the British proposal for revision of the Washington Convention, but all the Workers' Delegates opposed it. Mr. Khaitan, the

Indian delegate, declared that "Britain had placed all her cards on the table and urged others to follow suit". Sir A.C.Chatterji declared that "the threat of Mr. Jouhaux, the French workers' delegate that if a revision of the Convention was accepted, he would ask for a revision of the clauses governing labour conditions in India, left him cold. Until the Europeans had set their house in order they would not secure better industrial conditions elsewhere".

... ..

The Pioneer of 15th March 1929 publishes a brief message to the effect that Germany has ratified the Slavery Convention of 1926.

... ..

The Statesman of 17th March 1929 and the Times of India of 18th March 1929 contain references to the personnel of the Indian delegation to the Geneva Labour Conference. The papers state that Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai will be one of the employers' delegates and that Mr. B. Das and Mr. Shanmukham Chetty will be advisers to the employers' delegate.

... ..

The Statesman of 19th March 1929, the Pioneer of 20th March 1929, the Hindustan Times of 20th March 1929, and all papers publish a Reuter's message from Geneva dated 17th March 1929, to the effect that the British Government delegate "strongly criticised the increasing annual expenditure of the I.L.O. at a meeting of the Governing Body, when the budget estimates of the I.L.O. were presented providing for disbursements totalling £ 348,520. The message states that Sir A.C.Chatterjee voted for the estimates, but reiterated his

request that in the interests of economy, when two conferences are held in one year, they should follow each other immediately.

... ..

The Times of India of 21st March 1929 and all papers publish a press communique issued by this office through the Associated Press of India and the Free Press of India on the tour in the Far East of M. Albert Thomas, the Director of the I.L.O. The Communique makes reference to the Director's efforts to ensure the direct and complete representation of China at the International Labour Conferences and active participation in the work of the organisation. Dealing with the Director's activities in Japan, the communique says that he discussed with members of the Japanese Government the position of Japan as regards the Geneva Conventions, examined the possibilities of further ratifications and inquired into the application of the Conventions already ratified. The communique points out that the visit "was an opportune response to the invitations from states which constitute a considerable part of the population of the world and was meant to emphasise the world-wide character of the International Labour Organisation."

... ..

According to the Hindustan Times of 22nd March 1929, Mr. D.P. Khaitan, interviewed by Reuter on his return from Geneva after attending the meetings of the Governing Body, emphasised the need of permanent representation of Indian employers on the Governing Body of the I.L.O. Mr. Khaitan declared that "Asiatic countries resented the imposition of the will of Europe upon them" and suggested that in order to secure the friendly co-operation of overseas countries to a larger extent there should be larger representation of eastern countries both on the staff of the

office, as also on the Governing Body and the Permanent Committees.

... ..

All Indian papers publish fairly long reports of the annual meeting of the Delhi-Simla branch of the League of Nations Union held in the St. Stephen's College Hall, Delhi, on 25th March 1929. The meeting, which was well attended, was presided over by His Excellency Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood, the Commander-in-Chief, and the speakers were Sir George Schuster, the Finance Member of the Government of India, and Dr. Pillai. Sir William Birdwood referred to the League's increased interest in the problems of the East, and cited as an instance in point the establishment of the League's Epidemiological Bureau at Singapore. Sir George Schuster devoted his speech to explaining the work of the League in the domain of European financial rehabilitations, and the administration of Mandated areas. He expressed the opinion that the League was the nearest attempt to organise the conscience of humanity, and pleaded for greater sympathy, and co-operation from India. Dr. Pillai in his speech differentiated between the political work of the League of Nations and its social and economic work, which it had delegated to the I.L.O. He utilised the occasion to defend the I.L.O. against the current criticism that it was "unduly forcing the pace of labour legislation", and pointed out that the I.L.O., while running the gauntlet of ~~xxxx~~ criticism from extreme conservatives and extreme radicals for different reasons, had the solid support of the great bulk of moderate opinion. Referring to the recent criticisms of the I.L.O.'s increasing budgets, Dr. Pillai pointed out the unfounded nature of the charge, and cited figures in support of his contention. While concluding, Dr. Pillai stressed the fact that even if Geneva was asking for more money, it was the result of the new

work assigned to the Organisation by the member-states and that therefore, public opinion should rally in support of the Geneva organisations.

(Times of India, 28-3-1929 and all papers).

... ..

The reports of the proceedings of the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce for January and February 1929 contain a reference to the circular issued by this office re. the opening of the Indian branch of the I.L.O. as from the 15th November 1928.

... ..

The Monthly Circular for January and February of the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association makes reference to this office's circular letter re. the opening of the Indian branch of the I.L.O. and records its decision to supply this office with all possible information when required to do so.

... ..

The report of the Indian Delegation of the British Social Hygiene Council on venereal diseases dated the 11th August 1927 submitted to the Government of Madras and published as part of G.O. No. 489, Public Health, dated the 3rd March 1928 of the Government of Madras ~~and Appendix II~~ refers to the I.L.O.'s action in regard to seamen's welfare in ports. *Similar appreciative references are found in the report submitted by this body to the Government of Bombay & the Government of India.*

An Act further to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, for certain purposes.

The following Act of the Indian Legislature received the assent of the Governor General on the 29th March, 1929, and is hereby promulgated for general information:-

Act No. V of 1929.

An Act further to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, for certain purposes.

Whereas it is expedient further to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, for certain purposes hereinafter appearing; It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. This Act may be called the Workmen's Compensation Short title. (Amendment) Act, 1929.

2. In the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 (hereinafter referred to as the said Act), the word "or" at the end of clause (b) and the whole of clause (c) shall be omitted.

3. (1) Section 5 of the said Act shall be renumbered as sub-section (1) of section 5, and in that sub-section as so re-numbered, in the Explanation, for the words "this section" the words "this sub-section" shall be substituted.

(2) To the same section as so re-numbered the following sub-section shall be added, namely :-

"(2) The provisions of sub-section (1), other than the proviso, shall apply to the calculation of wages for the purposes of clause (n) of sub-section (1) of section 2 and of sub-section (3) of that section".

4. In section 8 of the said Act,-

Amendment of section
8, Act VIII of 1923.

(a) for sub-sections (1) to (3) the following sub-sections shall be substituted, namely :-

"(1) No payment of compensation in respect of a workman whose injury has resulted in death, and no payment of a lump sum as compensation to a woman or a person under a legal disability, shall be made otherwise than by deposit with the Commissioner, and no such payment made directly by an employer shall be deemed to be a payment of compensation :

Provided that, in the case of a deceased workman -

(a) an employer may make to any dependant or other person, by whom the funeral expenses are to be or have been incurred, an advance not exceeding fifty rupees for the purpose of defraying the same in whole or in part, and may make other advances to dependants on account of compensation, not exceeding however an aggregate of one hundred rupees in the case of any one dependant;

(b) the amount of any advance made in accordance with the provisions of clause (a) to defray funeral expenses may be deducted by the employer from the lump sum to be deposited with the Commissioner, and the amount of any other advance so made to a dependant, or so much thereof as does not exceed the compensation apportioned to him, shall be deducted by the Commissioner from such compensation and be repaid to the employer.

(2) Any other sum amounting to not less than ten rupees which is payable as compensation may be deposited with the Commissioner on behalf of the person entitled thereto.

(3) The receipt of the Commissioner shall be a sufficient discharge in respect of any compensation deposited with him.";

(b) in sub-section (4), after the words "under sub-section (1)" the words "as compensation in respect of a deceased workman" shall be inserted; and after the words "fifty rupees" the following words shall be inserted, namely :-

"or so much of that cost or of fifty rupees, whichever is less, as has not already been advanced by the employer on account of such expenses";

(c) for sub-section (5) the following sub-sections shall be substituted, namely:-

"(5) Compensation deposited in respect of a deceased workman shall, subject to any deduction made under sub-section (4), be apportioned among the

dependants of the deceased workman or any of them in such proportion as the Commissioner thinks fit, or may, in the discretion of the Commissioner, be allotted to any one dependant.

- (6) Where~~xx~~ any compensation deposited with the Commissioner is payable to any person, the Commissioner shall, if the person to whom the compensation is payable is not a woman or a person under a legal disability, and may in other cases, pay the money to the person entitled thereto.
- (7) Where any lump sum deposited with the Commissioner is payable to a woman or a person under a legal disability, such sum may be invested, applied or otherwise dealt with for the benefit of the woman, or of such person during his disability, in such manner as the Commissioner may direct; and where a half-monthly payment is payable to any person under a legal disability, the Commissioner may, of his own motion or on an application made to him in this behalf, order that the payment be made during the disability to any dependant of the workman or to any other person whom the Commissioner thinks best fitted to provide for the welfare of the workman"; and
- (d) sub-section (6) shall be renumbered as sub-section (8) and after ~~xx~~ that sub-section the following sub-section shall be added, namely:-
- "(9) Where the Commissioner varies any order under sub-section (8) by reason of the fact that payment of compensation to any person has been obtained by fraud, impersonation or other improper means, any amount so paid to or on behalf of such person may be recovered in the manner hereinafter provided in section 31."

5. To section 23 of the said Act after the words "material objects" the following words shall be added, namely:-

Amendment of section 23, Act VIII of 1923.

*
V of 1898.

"and the Commissioner shall be deemed to be a Civil Court for all the purposes of section 195 and of Chapter XXXV of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898."

6. In sub-section ~~23~~ (1) of section 28 of the said Act,-

Amendment of section 28, Act VIII of 1923.

- (a) for the words "to a person under a legal disability" the words "to a woman or a person under a legal disability" shall be substituted;
- (b) clause (b) of the proviso shall be omitted; and
- (c) in clause (d), for the words "to a person under any legal disability" the words "to a woman or a person under a legal disability" shall be substituted.

7. In Schedule II of the said Act, --

Amendment of Schedule
II, Act VIII of 1923.

(1) for clause (v) the following clause shall be substituted, namely :-

"(v) employed for the purpose of loading, unloading, fuelling, constructing, repairing, demolishing, cleaning or painting any ship of which he is not the master or a member of the crew; or";

(2) in clause (vii), for the word "cable" the words "line or cable or post or standard for the same" shall be inserted; and

(3) after clause (ix) the following clauses shall be added, namely :-

"or

(x) employed upon a railway as defined in clause (4) of section 3, and sub-section (1) of section 148, of the Indian Railways Act, 1890, by a person fulfilling a contract with the railway administration; or

(xi) employed as an inspector, mail guard, sorter or van peon in the Railway Mail Service; or

(xii) employed, in connection with operations for ~~winning~~ winning natural petroleum or natural gas, as a rig-builder, driller, driller's helper, oil-well puller, or in bailing or cleaning oil-wells or putting in and taking out casings or drill pipes in oil wells; or

(xiii) employed in any occupation involving blasting operations."

*
IX of 1890

8. In Schedule IV to the said Act, for the words and

Amendment of Schedule
IV, Act VIII of 1923.

letters "clause (a) or clause (b)"

the word and figure "sub-section

(1)" shall be substituted.

(The Gazette of India, 6th April 1929).

Maternity Benefits Bill, Bombay.

The Bombay Legislative Council passed ^{on 15-3-29} the Maternity Benefits Bill, a non-official Bill introduced by Mr. Asavale, M.L.C., ~~on the 15th March 1929.~~ The principal provisions after the alterations made by the Select Committee are as follow :

The Select Committee made the act applicable to the principal industrial towns only in the first instance. The ~~period~~ period of compulsory rest for four weeks following ~~the~~ confinement was considered sufficient rest for the mother and it has been made illegal for the woman millworker to work in any factory during this period of compulsory rest.

The Select Committee do not consider necessary the establishment of a maternity benefit fund. The benefit should be paid directly by the employer at the fixed rate of eight annas per day, for the actual period of absence, not exceeding three weeks before ~~the~~ confinement, and ^{for} four weeks immediately after ~~the~~ confinement. In order that a woman be entitled to maternity benefit, she should have worked in the factory of the employer for not less than six months immediately preceding the date on which she gives notice. The select committee also recommended that a pregnant woman can absent herself after notifying her intention owing to approaching confinement. Penalties are also proposed against the infringement by the woman herself of the provision of the bill intended solely for her benefit.

(Hindustan Times, 18th March 1929).

(The full text of the Bill ~~will~~ be forwarded with the May report).

CONDITIONS OF LABOUR.

(General)

Index numbers showing the rise and fall in the cost of living
of the Working Classes at seven centres in Bihar
and Orissa during January 1929.

Of the accompanying tables, Table I shows the rise and fall in the cost of living for each centre separately and the numbers given under each centre bear no relation to the numbers given under other centres. Table II shows the relative cost of living at all centres. In the first table the number 100 represents the cost of living for each particular centre for the average of five years ending 1914 which has been taken as the pre-war normal period. In Table II, 100 represents the cost of living at Patna during January 1928 and all the numbers in that table are a percentage of this figure. The articles included in the index are food-grains other articles of food, fuel and lighting and clothing. They have been given the relative importance which they individually bear to the total aggregate expenditure. No allowance has been made for any change in the standard of living since the pre-war normal period.

During the month of January 1929, the cost of living fell in almost all the centres, except Patna and Jharia, where it was stationary. Of these, the fall at Monghyr, Janshedpur and Cuttack was a little marked and was as much as 10 points at Monghyr and 11 points at Janshedpur and Cuttack, while at Muzaffarpur and Ranchi the fall was 4 points. The fall was mainly due to the usual seasonal fall in the price of potatoes and onions under heading "other articles of food". The price of clothing continues to be stationary

in all centres. As compared with the corresponding month of the previous year the cost of living was almost stationary at Monghyr, Jamshedpur and Cuttack, higher at Muzaffarpur and Ranchi and lower at Patna. There was a general marked rise in the price of gram and pulse in all the centres, while the price of rice was lower at Patna, Monghyr, Jamshedpur, Jharia and Cuttack. The percentage of increase over the pre-war normal period was 58 at Patna, 55 at Muzaffarpur, 61 at Monghyr, 69 at Jamshedpur, 65 at Jharia, 36 at Cuttack and 52 at Ranchi.

These figures, as explained in Table No. I, have no relation to each other, but only to the pre-war base at each centre. Table No. II shows the relative cost of living at each centre, but here also the standards of living have been presumed to be the same. In the month under report Cuttack continued to be the cheapest centre for a workman to live in, while Jamshedpur was the dearest. Muzaffarpur and Jharia came next in point of dearness, while Patna continued to maintain its position as the cheapest centre next to Cuttack. Monghyr and Ranchi were almost equally cheap. The difference between the two extremes was about 32 points.

It may here be pointed out that of the seven centres, about which information is supplied, two, viz., Jamshedpur and Jharia, are the centres of the Indian iron-and-steel and coal-mining industries respectively.

(Supplement to Behar and Orissa Gazette,
dated the 27th March 1929).

Table No. I

Statement showing the rise and fall in the cost of living of the working classes at seven centres in Bihar and Orissa.

(100 = average cost of living for five years preceding 1914 at each centre, i.e., 100 has a different value for each centre.)

Commodities.		Patna	Muzaffarpur	Monghyr	Jamshedpur	Thana	Cuttack	Ranchi
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
(a) Food-grains -		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
(1) Rice (coarse)	(January 1928	163	133	155	176	169	119	136
	(December 1928	126	133	155	154	145	104	136
	(January 1929	126	133	140	154	145	104	136
(2) Wheat-flour	(January 1928	150	128	125	139	123	(a)	147
	(December 1928	174	175	167	150	139	(a)	147
	(January 1929	174	175	148	150	134	(a)	147
(3) Maize and barley	(January 1928	149	158	151	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
	(December 1928	225	204	200	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
	(January 1929	225	204	200	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)
(4) Gram and pulse	(January 1928	183	164	153	179	168	196	146
	(December 1928	227	223	206	221	190	263	169
	(January 1929	240	223	192	215	196	252	169
Total food grains	(January 1928	164	139	153	170	167	133	137
	(December 1928	150	153	166	165	151	133	140
	(January 1929	152	153	152	164	152	131	140
(b) Other articles of food	(January 1928	179	163	167	185	188	145	165
	(December 1928	187	186	186	224	194	195	189
	(January 1929	178	159	178	186	193	144	175
(c) Lighting and fuel	(January 1928	171	182	165	161	(c)	126	158
	(December 1928	177	172	177	171	(c)	126	158
	(January 1929	177	172	177	171	(c)	126	158
(d) Clothing	(January 1928	153	138	175	150	142	190	150
	(December 1928	153	138	175	150	158	180	150
	(January 1929	153	138	175	150	158	180	150
General average or total cost of living	(January 1928	166	146	159	170	130	137	147
	(December 1928	159	159	171	180	165	147	156
	(January 1929	158	155	161	169	165	136	152

N.B. The figures in any column bear no relation to the figures in any other columns.

- (a) Not consumed to any extent at these centres.
 (b) Includes sugar, salt, fish and meat, milk, ghee, spices, vegetables and food oils.
 (c) Supplied free to the miners.

Table No. II.

Statement showing the rise and fall in the cost of living relatively at seven centres in Bihar and Orissa.

(100 = average cost of living for January 1928 at Patna)

	Patna	Muzaffarpur	Monghyr	Jamshedpur	Jharia	Cuttack
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
January 1928	100	99	97	114	107	82
December 1928	96	107	104	120	104	88
January 1929	95	105	98	113	104	81

x†	Ranchi.
1	8
	Rs.
January 1928	96
December 1928	101
January 1929	99

Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee Report,
1928 - 1929.

(Main Conclusions and Recommendations)

(Extracted from the Report Chapters I & VIII of the Report)

1. The Bombay Strike Enquiry Committee was appointed by the Resolution of the Government of Bombay in the General Department, No. 7219, dated the 13th October 1928, which is reproduced below :-

"As a condition of immediate resumption of work by the Bombay Mill strikers, the Government of Bombay agreed to the appointment of an impartial Committee of Enquiry consisting of three members for the permanent settlement of the dispute.

"2. His Excellency the Governor in Council is now pleased to appoint with effect from the 13th October 1928 the following as members of the Committee:-

- | | |
|---|------------|
| (1) The Honourable Sir Charles Fawcett, Kt., | |
| I.C.S., Chairman. | |
| (2) M. P. Khareghat, Esquire, I.C.S. (retired)) |) Members. |
| (3) B. S. Kamat, Esquire | |

Mr. N. A. Mehrban, Investigator, Labour Office, should act as Secretary to the Committee.

"3. The terms of reference which the Committee should be asked to consider are :

(a) Whether the amended scheme of a standardized schedule of rates and of a standardized muster prepared by the Millowners' Association, and also the scheme prepared by the Strike Committee is fair and reasonable.

(b) Whether the Seventeen Demands advanced by the Strike Committee are fair and reasonable and to what extent, if any, they should be met.

(c) Whether the Standing Orders for operatives as amended and presented by the Millowners' Association on the 4th October 1928 are fair and reasonable.

"4. The Committee should be requested to submit their report to Government as soon as possible."

The general strike commenced on the 16th April 1928 in ten mills under the agency of Messrs. Currimbhoy Ibrahim and Sons employing 20,262 workers and spread by the 26th April to all the cotton mills in Bombay except one and nearly 150,000 textile workers were thrown out of employment. (For fuller details about the progress of the strike see Monthly Report of this Office for December 1928).

The main grievances of the Strikers prior to the general strike can be summarised under the following heads:-

- (1) Direct cut in wages.
- (2) Reduction in monthly earnings owing to the following indirect causes;
 - (a) Introduction of new varieties of cloth at rates which did not bring the level of wages to those earned on the production of the old sorts;
 - (b) Reduction of piece-rates to meet unanticipated high production by individual operatives;
 - (c) Adjustments in rates made to bring them in line with the rates prevailing in other mills;
 - (d) No adjustments made to increase rates in cases where mills went on finer counts;
 - (e) Introduction of artificial silk and inferior raw material;
 - (f) Gradual withdrawal of bonuses such as good attendance and efficiency bonus, free railway passes to workers, etc.;
 - (g) Introduction of a method of paying wages on the weight of the cloth after it had undergone a subsequent process, instead of on the actual weight produced on the looms;
- (3) The introduction of new methods of work, involving a reduction in the number of operatives employed, notably in the Sassoon Group (i.e., three loom and double frame working) and the fear of the spread of this system to other mills in ~~in~~ the City.
- (4) The increase in the hours of work of mechanics in

some Mills from 8½ hours to 10 hours per day, and the declaration of a general intention to level up the hours of work for all mill operatives in all mills to 10 hours per day.

In addition to the above, there were several minor grievances in connection with the infliction of fines, dismissals, the practice of handing over spoilt cloth to the weavers in lieu of wages, etc. It would, we think, serve no useful purpose to go at length into the exact causes of the General Strike, or to attempt to apportion blame for it on either side. There were no doubt various contributory causes, but in our opinion it can be safely said that the chief reason for its commencement and continuation for a period of nearly six months was the fear of unemployment created by the new methods of work introduced by Messrs. E.D. Sassoon and Company in their mills.

On the 12th May, the Millowners' Association issued a statement to the press, giving categorical replies to each of the "Seventeen Demands" of the Joint Strike Committee. On the 17th May the Millowners' Association published a statement, defining the terms on which they would re-open the mills affiliated to their association and readmit their employees to work. The following are the six broad heads under which they grouped these terms :-

- (1) Standardized rates of wages;
- (2) Revised and Standardized Muster Rolls;
- (3) Full ten hours' work for all male operatives in all departments, without extra remuneration to those who had been doing work for less time previously;
- (4) Standardized rules and regulations for enforcing discipline;
- (5) Uniform system of calculating wages; and
- (6) Fines to be credited to a welfare fund; and unclaimed wages to be made available at any time on sufficient identification.

The public sittings of the Committee commenced on Monday the 29th October 1928 and continued till Friday the 15th February 1929, with one long adjournment during the Christmas Holidays, from the 17th December to the 3rd January, granted to enable the representatives from the Joint Strike Committee to attend various Congresses, and some shorter adjournments granted for the purpose of preparing their cases, for joint deliberation which resulted in a settlement of certain points, or on grounds of convenience, to either the Association or the Joint Strike Committee or both. Forty-seven public sittings in all were held, of which 29 were full-day sittings and 18 half-day sittings. During the course of our enquiry, we examined 106 witnesses in all, not including those witnesses examined in connection with complaints. Out of these, 33 witnesses were connected with the Agency Offices of groups of or individual mills and were called either by the Association or the Joint Strike Committee; 57 were workers called either by the Association or by the Bombay Textile Labour Union and the Bombay Girni Kamgar Union, of whom 42 were men and 15 women, 3 witnesses were connected with different Trade Unions in Bombay City, and 13 were persons not connected either with the Cotton Textile Industry or Trade Unions.

The following are extracts from Chapter VIII of the Report: "Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations":-

The general result of our enquiry is that we regard the proposals of the Millowners' Association (a) for Standardisation of wages, duties and numbers of operatives in a mill, and (b) for Standing Orders for the operatives about the conditions of their employment, as being in the main fair and reasonable. On the other hand we consider that, while there is justification for the Associations' proposal to make a cut of 7½ per cent. in weavers' wages, which is discussed in Chapter V, there are

reasonable objections to be urged against its adoption in the present circumstances, and we recommend that it should be dropped by the Association, provided the Labour leaders undertake to co-operate in working the Standardisation Scheme.

The main Standardisation Scheme, which was put forward by the Association on the 4th October 1928, was considerably modified as a result of meetings that took place between Sub-Committees of the Association and the Joint Strike Committee in January and February 1929, and this modified Scheme has been accepted by the Joint Strike Committee, subject to some general objections and some qualifications. Some general questions connected with the Scheme are considered in Chapter IV, and the disputed points in Chapter VI. We hold that the Scheme, as modified, is fair and reasonable, with a few minor alterations on some points of difference between the parties, but this is subject to such revision of the part of the Scheme that regulates the wages of weavers as may be necessary to prevent a cut of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in their wages, if our recommendation on this point in paragraph 239 is adopted. It is also subject to such further revision as may be shown to be necessary by experience on some points. Furthermore, the Scheme itself reserves various matters for subsequent standardisation, and it is proposed to revise it after a few months' trial. ~~With~~ With this object and that of avoiding strikes and lock-outs, machinery has been provided by the "Mediation Rules", agreed to by both sides for setting up Joint Committees to enquire into disputes arising under the Scheme and to endeavour to arrange for settlement. The part of the Standardisation Scheme, which is called the "Rational" or "Efficiency" System, and which aims at reducing the number of operative employed in mills, while raising their wages and providing conditions favourable for the extra efficiency ~~XXXXX~~ expected from the operatives, is also

held by us to be fair and reasonable.

Some proposals for amending and adding to the Standing Orders that were presented by the Millowners' Association on the 4th October 1928 were made before us by the Association on 15th January 1929. In Chapter II, we have considered, these as well as the original Standing Orders, and prepared a draft of the amended Standing Orders in the form in which we consider them to be fair and reasonable. The main alterations we propose are as follows :-

(1) The finality of the order of a manager or of the Managing Agents should be without prejudice to any right of an operative affected by his or their decision to resort to legal proceedings in a Court of Law.

(2) The Standing Orders should not be altered without the previous consultation of, and consideration of objections by, the operatives or their representatives.

(3) A rule should be added about granting leave.

(4) A rule should be inserted as to the method of calculating wages.

(5) The right to "play-off" for trade purposes should be restricted to a period of two days at a time.

(6) An operative who is "played-off" for a period longer than a week should be permitted to leave the Company's service on intimation of his intention without further notice.

(7) A rule should be added entitling an operative to compensation for detention in a mill for over an hour in the event of stoppage of work owing to breakdown of machinery, etc.

(8) The period of notice for termination of employment should be reduced to 14 days.

(9) A rule should be added as to payment of unclaimed wages.

The principal discussions in Chapter II are on the following points:-

(1) As to the advisability of an extra morning recess; we have agreed with the Tariff Board as to its advisability and have suggested it being tried as an experiment in suitable mills with a reduction of the working hours to 9½.

(2) As to exempting weavers from taking out and presenting attendance tickets; we have held that there is no sufficient reason to exempt them.

(3) As to the liability of operatives to be searched; we have held this to be reasonable.

(4) As to payment of wages being made earlier than at present; we have recommended an attempt to pay them by the 10th of each month.

(5) As to the legality and fairness of "playing-off"; we have held that there is no objection to this in the case of stoppages due to causes for which the employer is not responsible, but that it should be restricted to a period not exceeding two days at a time in the case of "playing-off" for trade purposes.

(6) As to the legality and fairness of forfeiture of wages for leaving without due notice; we have answered this in the affirmative.

(7) As to the legality of operatives striking work without notice or inciting others to do so; we have held that this can ~~be~~ rightly ~~be~~ treated as misconduct rendering an operative liable to dismissal.

(8) As to the proposed abolition of fines; pending the decision of the Legislature we have rejected this proposal.

(9) As to the compulsory purchase by weavers of spoilt cloth; we have held that its compulsory purchase is objectionable, and have suggested a rule on the subject to ~~restrict~~^{restrict} this present practice within reasonable limits.

The "Seventeen Demands" are discussed in Chapter III, and

we have held that Nos. 3 (as subsequently modified), 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 are fair and reasonable. All of these except 12 and 13 were eventually conceded by the Millowners' Association. Nos. 8 and 11 have been held by us to be unfair and unreasonable and the remaining three, viz., Nos. 1, 2 and 7, have been held by us to be partly fair and reasonable, and partly not.

The principal discussions in Chapter III are as to Demands numbers 2, 8, 11 and 12, and the opinions of the Committee may be summarised as follows:

(1) No. 2.- Employees in Mechanics' Shops have established a uniform practice of working for only $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours a day; and in standardising their wages on the basis of a ten hours' day; a pro rata increase should be given in any wage based on what they got for $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours' work a day. On the other hand, other employees, who now work for less than 10 hours a day in some mills, such as Warpings and Sizers, have not established such a uniform practice, and the demand that there should be no increase in their daily hours without paying overtime rates cannot be justified as fair and reasonable.

(2) No. 8.- In this enquiry we should not be justified in importing the principle of a minimum wage to the extent demanded, viz., the fixing of a definite standard of Rs. 30 below which the wages of no mill-operative in Bombay should fall, and we should confine ourselves to seeing that there is no diminution in ~~that~~ the wages of operatives who have been hitherto getting a low pay, and that relief is given in those cases where they are unduly low. The principle of equality of pay for males and females cannot properly be applied in this enquiry, and we should not be justified in going beyond seeing that the lowest pay of a woman under the Standardisation Scheme is sufficient to enable her to maintain herself, without

dependents. The wages proposed for male and female sweepers in the Standardisation Scheme are not unduly low.

(3) No. 11.- The complaint about a daily partial cleaning by a weaver of his two looms by brushing away the fluff that accumulates is unreasonable.

(4) No. 12.- On the whole we favour the proposal to consolidate the existing high prices allowance with the original wages, subject to the understanding that this will not affect any prospective revision of wages according to the cost of living.

We have considered the question of unemployment resulting from the Standardisation and "Efficiency" Schemes in Chapters IV and VII. In paragraph 292 we have made some suggestions for action by the Millowners' Association and the workers and their representatives towards alleviating unemployment, pending the carrying out of any recommendations that may be made by the proposed Royal Commission on Labour questions.

In paragraph 285 we have recommended that the Textile Trade Unions should combine to arrange for the assistance of an expert Technical adviser in dealing with disputes arising under the Standardisation Scheme.

In Chapter V, which discusses the proposed Wage-cut, we have made a suggestion that possible economies in management might be effected by an amalgamation of mills such as recently took place in Lancashire, or by a less extensive scheme for a combination to regulate the production of certain classes of goods, and their export and sale. On the other hand we have rejected the contention that the wage-cut is unjustifiable because all possible economies in management have not been effected, or because the Millowners failed to make proper provision in boom times for a future depression in the industry such as now exists. We have held, after a survey of statistical

and other information, that while there has been some improvement in the condition of the mill industry during the years 1926-27 and 1927-28, and the prospect is more hopeful than it was in the antecedent period, the depression in the industry is still undoubtedly prevalent. We have further held:-

(1) If the proposed cut in weavers' wages is otherwise fair and reasonable, the state of the industry supports this method of obtaining a decrease in the costs of production; on the other hand it cannot be said to be shown that the state of the industry imperatively demands the anticipated annual saving of about 14 lakhs of Rupees by this method.

(2) There are grounds for saying that the rise in the weaver's wage since 1914 is much higher than the rise in the cost of living and that the weavers' wages have risen in a higher proportion (at least 10 per cent.) than those of other male operatives; but objections can be urged against making a cut in view of the fact that their wages have remained at the same level for nearly 8 years and the fall in the cost of living has remained substantially at the present level since the beginning of 1923.

(3) The disparity between the weaver's wage and that of the spinner exists in some other countries; and the case of Japan, which was cited by the Tariff Board, is on a somewhat different footing to that of Bombay. Its extent in Bombay is not exceptional in India and it is even higher in some places.

(4) Such a disparity is consonant with the extra skill required of a weaver, but its percentage increase is higher than that existing in most countries, and it can therefore be said to be excessive.

(5) Though there are, thus, conflicting arguments that ~~can~~ can be urged for and against the proposal, we have held it on the whole to be justifiable.

(6) In view, however, of the necessity for the full co-operation of the Labour leaders in working the new Standardisation Scheme, we have suggested that the proposal should be dropped.

In Chapter VII we have discussed some points that have been raised in connection with the "Efficiency" System. We have held that the objection taken by the Joint Strike Committee that it imposes an undue strain on the operatives concerned has not been sustained and that the improved conditions essential for the proper working of the system are fulfilled in the case of the mills that have adopted it in Bombay. We have also held the contention that the adoption of the scheme should be deferred until the establishment of an Unemployment Insurance Scheme, and other similar steps for alleviating unemployment have been effected by Government and the Legislature, to be unreasonable; but as already mentioned we have made tentative suggestions on this point. We have discussed the question of the proportion of the savings from the increased efficiency that should go to the worker, and have held that the proposals in the scheme in regard to this are reasonable. We have also rejected objections that were raised as to the wages of some of the operatives.

We have endeavoured to deal comprehensively, and at the same time concisely, with all the wide points that are involved in the questions referred to us for opinion, but we are conscious that we ~~may~~ may have failed to notice in our report some of the ~~xxx~~ arguments raised before us. It would, however, have made it unduly long to deal with everything that was discussed at our sittings, and we believe we have dealt with all the important points. We hope our report will be of utility, not only to the Millowners and the workers and their representatives, but also to Government and the public in aiding them to form a

proper opinion upon the disputes, which led to this Enquiry. We think we can claim that both sides were given ample opportunities to ~~px~~ place their full cases before us; and even if the Enquiry serves no other useful purpose, it has resulted in the two sides getting nearer an agreement than they were in October 1928.

Tata Iron and Steel Company and Sickness benefits.

The Government of India have recently been considering the recommendations made by the Tenth International Labour Conference on the subject of medical relief and sickness insurance for industrial workers, and they have asked the provincial governments to explore the present position. An inquiry has been made by the Bihar and Orissa Government into the Tata Steel Company's provisions regarding sickness insurance, and of payment of unemployment allowance to workers while they are incapacitated for work.

Regarding these questions the General Manager of the Tata Steel Company has replied to the local Government stating that all employees of the Company who are absent from work due to injuries sustained by accident in the course of their employment are given full pay during the entire period they are incapacitated. The Company has no scheme for the payment of an unemployment allowance to employees absent from work for causes other than accidents sustained while on duty. Any time lost owing to sickness is usually charged against leave which, under the rules of the Company, the employee has due to him or against leave which will accrue. The General Manager also states that medical relief to all employees of the Company is rendered by the Company free of charge, either by their attendance at hospital or at their homes. In addition, all medicines and medical requisites are supplied free to employees.

(Times of India, 28th March 1929).

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION.

Indications are not wanting to show that there has been a stiffening of the attitude of both labour and capital during the period under review. The statements of Mr. J.B.Petit, the retiring chairman of the Bombay Millowners' Association, at the annual general meeting of that body held at Bombay on the 12th March 1929, and Mr. Arjunlal Sethi, the president of the Workers and Peasants Conference held at Rohtak on the 9th March 1929, are fairly typical of the hardened spirit animating both sections at the present moment. Mr. Petit expressed himself thus at Bombay "I repeat that we want peace and good will and that we do not want to fight. But, if in our own interests and for our very existence we are forced to do so, we shall fight with our backs to the wall. We will not tamely allow an industry in which over Rs. 60 crores have been sunk and which we have taken half a century to build up, to be ruined by the idiosyncracies and caprices of those who have set themselves up as labour leaders, but who apparently are guided and led by revolutionary organisations outside the country". (Times of India, 14th March 1929).

Mr. Arjunlal Sethi delivered himself with equal vehemence at the Rohtak Workers and Peasants Conference. "Imperialism and militarism, religion and capitalism are responsible for all the unrest in the world and unless they are destroyed there is no hope for peace" declared Mr. Sethi. According to him, the time had come for individualism to see its last days and socialism alone would live. Another speaker, the chairman of the reception committee of the conference, said that "socialism was the only remedy for the miseries of peasants and workers who were being scientifically murdered. If they wanted to live, they must shake off the slavery of capitalists".

(Pioneer, 11th March 1929).

Millowners' Association, Bombay.

At the annual general meeting of the Millowners' Association held on the 12th March 1929, Mr Jehangir Petit, the out-going Chairman, reviewing the position of the cotton mill industry in 1928, said that the partial advantage gained in 1927, though purely adventitious, soon disappeared owing to the unsatisfactory condition of the cotton, cloth and yarn markets. Though in local cottons since September selling was very cheap, manufacturers could not take advantage of the drop owing to the unprecedented general strike. The principal benefit of cheap cotton went to Japan and Italy. The position of the yarn market continued to be unsatisfactory and that of cloth during the year was seldom active.

The Trade Disputes Bill was supported by the Association, subject to the proviso that the powers should be brought under operation only when all direct negotiations for mutual settlement of disputes had been made and had failed. They were also in favour of special provisions for controlling picketing. The out-going Chairman regretted that the Maternity Benefits Bill was accepted by the Bombay Legislative Council, in spite of the opposition of the Government and those having first-hand knowledge of the conditions prevalent in factories. He asserted that under the provisions of the Bill, there was a danger of the industry being called upon to contribute the whole cost for giving maternity benefit to woman operatives. The procedure was unheard of in any other country of the world except Russia. Many recommendations of the Tariff Board for the reduction of the production cost had been already carried out. They were now negotiating for reduction of the municipal assessment on mills and of electric charges.

Referring to the general strike, the outgoing Chairman expressed the hope that the Facwcett Committee's findings would be loyally accepted by both sides and given a fair trial. He said, "there were clear indications that those controlling the Labour movement and claiming to speak on its behalf were not always acting to benefit ~~the~~ labour, but with the ulterior objects of disorganising the entire industry, destroying capital, embarrassing the powers-that-be and of creating chaos throughout the country. He warned them that if this process continued, concerted measures would have to be thought out not only by those engaged in the industries, but also by all sober and thoughtful elements of society to stamp out the movement.

(Hindu, 13th March 1929).

... ..

Indian Tea Association, Assam.

At the 1929 annual meeting of the Indian Tea Association, Assam, Mr. A. D. Gordon, M.L.C., the president, reviewed the conditions of the tea industry in India. Speaking about the recruitment of labour for the tea gardens of Assam, Mr. Gordon said:-

"As regards labour legislation, you are of course aware that the industry asked for the relaxation of certain recruiting restrictions which have been hampering its progress for some time past, and we are indebted to the Government of India for meeting us so reasonably and doing their best for the industry.

"The Government of India have declared their avowed policy to be 'free labour and free recruiting'. Had this been known to the industry when we submitted our ~~pro~~ proposals in 1928, I think I am right in saying that the industry would have pressed for the abolition of all restrictions, provided that ~~recruiting~~ recruiting was conducted by authorized agents and

that registers were kept of all labour recruited. Whatever mistakes Assam may have made in its recruiting methods in the past, there is no reason to anticipate that these will be repeated.

"Moreover, if an Act is necessary for Assam, it should be equally necessary in the Dooars; but on the contrary, Dooars enjoys absolute freedom which is not being abused. We consider that the Assam Labour Board has outlived its period of usefulness and, as the technical irregularities which concern it will disappear with the new Recruiting Act, any malpractices can be dealt with by the new Act and the Indian Penal Code. It is to be hoped that the proposals now put forward by the Industry in the form of its draft Bill, will be taken into consideration without delay; but from unofficial advices which have recently come to hand, it would appear that legislation is unlikely to come forward within the life of the present Indian Legislature.

"Recruiting for estates in Northern India has presented, and always will present, serious difficulties, as coolies, like everybody else, are disinclined to leave ~~their~~ their native homes unless forced to do so through economic conditions or attracted by employment elsewhere which appeals to them. It, therefore, behoves the tea industry to continue to do its utmost to make conditions, and life generally, on tea gardens such as will attract and encourage labour to settle on the estates."

(Statesman, 26th March 1929).

Workers and Peasants Conference, Rohtak.

A session of the Workers and Peasants Conference was held at Rohtak in the Punjab on the 9th March 1929, under the presidentship of Mr. Arjunlal Sethi. In his presidential address he declared that "Imperialism and militarism, religion and capitalism are responsible for all the unrest in the world and unless they were destroyed, there was no hope for peace". He pleaded for the establishment of the socialist order in the country and advocated the abolition of individualism. "Our goal is to end the domain of capital, to end all wars, wipe out state boundaries and form a co-operative brotherhood of the world". He also made flank attacks upon the political leaders of India and asked the peasants to put an end to the exploitation by the "so-called labour leaders" whose sole aim was to attend the Geneva Conference."

Continuing he condemned the Trades Disputes Bill and the Public Safety Bill and expressed his disapproval of the Whitley Commission.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru speaking at the Conference advised the peasants to spread a net of peasant organisations throughout the country and take united and determined action to remove their miseries by following the example of ^{the} Bardoli peasants, "who had brought Government down on its knees," He urged the Jats to refrain from taking any part in the next war which may be more dangerous than the last and may be fought ^{at} ~~in~~ India's doors.

(Pioneer, 11th March 1929)

... ..

B.N. Railway Indian Labour Union.

A mass meeting of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union was held at Gondia on the 18th March 1929. At the

meeting Mr. V. R. Kalappa, who is one of the Workers' delegates for the 12th Conference condemned the Trades Disputes Bill, characterising it as "the blackest of all bills ever introduced".

Resolutions urging every patriotic Indian member of the Assembly to throw out the Public Safety and Trades Disputes Bills were passed.

Another resolution protesting against the 84 hours' week was unanimously passed, after the shelving of the Washington and Geneva conventions had been condemned.

... .. (Pioneer, 22nd March 1929)
... ..

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.Indian Banking Inquiry.

Full details are now available of the Government scheme for the Indian Banking Inquiry, announced in a Government press communique of 17th ~~December~~ ^{February} 1929 (pages 46-47 of the March report). The following are relevant extracts from a letter addressed by the Finance Member, to the provincial governments in which the plan of the inquiry is outlined.

"The Government of India feel that if investigation is to be adequate and is at the same time to be completed within a reasonably short space of time it would be impracticable to entrust the whole of the work to a single committee," "The proposal which so far met with approval is that there should be set up (a) a Central Committee and (b) a number of provincial Committees to deal with special requirements of the different provinces.

To arrive at a clear definition of the scope and functions of the Central and Provincial Committees respectively, it is necessary to analyse in some detail the subjects which it is intended that the inquiry as a whole should cover, and the analysis arrived at in the course of preliminary discussions is as follows : * regulation of Banking with the object of protecting depositors and thereby increasing confidence in the banking system; banking education with the object of providing facilities for obtaining training in banking, and generally of creating a body of people who have real knowledge of the principles and practice of banking and development and extension of banking on sound lines. The last item is capable of further sub-division as follows: industrial banks, and credit facilities for India's main * industries like cotton, jute, coal, etc.; financing of

foreign trade; ~~agricultural~~ agricultural credit (including co-operative credit); and credit facilities for small industries; mortgage banks and financing of internal trade in connexion with all the above headings.

It is suggested that ~~the~~ heads (1), (2) and (3) should be definitely excluded from the purview of Provincial Committees and that head (3)(a) might also be treated from the beginning as primarily the concern of the Central Committee, although it is recognized that there are certain aspects of the subject to which Provincial Committees might make a useful contribution.

Cultivator's Interests.

The essential purposes which it is desired to secure so far as the interests of the rural population are concerned are that the cultivator should be enabled to secure the credit he needs both for the improvement of his land and its equipment and for marketing his produce, and that on the other hand, means should be devised to stimulate the habit of investment and attract banking deposits.

The Central Committee would act as adviser to the Government of India in laying down at the outset the main lines on which the Provincial Committees should conduct their inquiry, and later in sifting the material. The second stage of the inquiry will be reached when the Government of India contemplate that they should invoke the assistance of a small body of outside experts (say three or four) selected by the Government either from England or from other countries with well-developed systems of rural credit and industrial banking.

These outside experts would act as advisers to the Central Committee. They would carry out joint discussions with the Committee with a view to assisting the latter in making its recommendations to the Government of India as to the best way of dealing with the state of affairs disclosed by the preliminary

inquiries. The experts will further be entitled to submit separate reports of their own, if necessary, to the Central Committee, which will include it in its own Report, submitted to the Government of India."

As now planned, the first meeting of the Central Committee will be held in Simla about the middle of May, when a memorandum laying down the heads of enquiry to be undertaken by the Provincial Committees will be drawn up. The actual enquiry might begin before August.

(Statesman, 7-4.1929).

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.Child Slavery in Ceylon.

At the annual meeting of the Colombo Friend-in-Need Society held at Colombo on the 27th March 1929, Mr. H.E. Newham, Mayor of Colombo and President of the Society, made an important statement about the existence of forms of child slavery in the city of Colombo and in various parts of Ceylon. In the course of his speech Mr. Newham said:-

"It is known that small children are obtained from the villages in consideration of monetary payment. Their parents and these children are taken far from their homes and used as domestic servants in return for the mere provision of food and clothing. Undoubtedly the majority are well treated, but in the last year there have been 13 cases brought to the courts in which children have been grossly and cruelly ill-treated by those who have no excuse whatever for such brutality. The average age of these suffering children was eight years.

Six were burnt with fire-brands and three with other heated substances. One child of 10, suspected of theft by her employer, was beaten until the cane broke. She was then burnt with heated oil and the sores rubbed with a substance causing severe irritation to the skin. Finally a nest of red ants was let loose on the child's body.

"It is time that a system which permits such abuses to occur with such a slender chance of detection should be abolished from ^{the} social life of the country. What is needed is a more rigorous enforcement of the regulations with regard to compulsory education so that these children shall attend school, where at least they will have some moments in their lives of freedom from ~~xxxx~~ their taskmasters.

"Such provision would also tend to make them of less value to their taskmasters and help to lessen the number of cases of such employment.

"All children who are removed from the care of their parents should be under some adequate supervision by disinterested parties, who should satisfy themselves that they are properly treated. I was today authorized by the Colonial Secretary to state that Government contemplates action upon these lines. A bill has been drafted to regulate the employment of children as domestic servants.

"Under it it is proposed that parents and those taking over children shall produce the children before a magistrate, who will have power to enquire into the case and impose such conditions as he deems necessary. Probation officers will have power to enter and inspect at any time of the day premises at which such a child is kept and severe penalties are provided for ill-treatment and cruelty.

"I can only hope that a Bill on these lines will be introduced with as little delay as possible, and that the country will not rest until it has removed this reproach which at present darkens its social system".

(Statesman, 29th March 1929).

The Central Provinces Opium Smoking Act.

The Central Provinces Opium Smoking Act, IV of 1929, received the assent of the Governor General on the 13th March 1929. It is meant to control the practice of opium smoking, to prevent the assembling of persons for the purpose of such practice, and to secure the ultimate prohibition of opium smoking. The Act, with the exception of section 7 which makes it unlawful for any person to smoke opium, will come into force only on such date as the Central Provinces Government may, by notification, appoint in this behalf, and section 7 will come into force 3 years after the above date.

(Central Provinces Gazette, March 23, 1929, Part VI, pages 6 - 9).

... ..

The Bihar and Orissa Opium Smoking Act.

The area of the operation of the Bihar and Orissa Opium Smoking Act (~~1928~~. Act II of 1928), which is similar to the Central Provinces Opium Smoking Act of 1929 referred to above, has by an order of the Governor in Council dated the 22nd February 1929 been extended to the district of Angul, another district in the same province.

(Bihar and Orissa Gazette, 27th February 1929, Part II, page 203.)

WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Some of the provincial legislatures have been busying themselves recently with legislation to combat the menace of organised prostitution among the womenfolk of certain Indian castes. Prominent among such castes are the Devdasis of the Madras Presidency and the Naik Caste of the United Provinces. The Naik Girls' Protection Act which has been passed as Act II of 1929 by the Legislature of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and which received the assent of the Governor General on 11th March 1929, has been published for general information in the United Provinces Government Gazette dated the 30th March 1929. The Act is intended to prevent minor girls of the Naik caste from being trained for the profession of prostitution.

ACT NO. II OF 1929.

The Naik Girls' Protection Act.

Whereas it is expedient to terminate the custom whereby minor girls of the Naik caste in the United Provinces are trained for prostitution, and whereas the previous sanction of the Governor General has been obtained under sub-section (3) of section 80-A of the Government of India Act to the passing of this Act;

It is hereby enacted as follows :-

1. (a) This Act may be called the Naik Girls'

Short title and Protection Act, 1929.
extent.

(b) It extends to the whole of the United Provinces.

2. The district magistrate may from time to time by general or special order which shall be published in the prescribed manner require any member or members of
- Power of the district
magistrate to demand
information

the Naik caste for the time being present within the local limits of his jurisdiction to appear before him and furnish him with such information as may be prescribed for the purpose of this Act.

3. The district magistrate may, from time to time, by

Power of the district
magistrate to order
restriction of move-
ments of Naik minor girls.

order in writing direct any
person or persons having under
his or their guardianship or

control a minor girl or girls of the Naik caste within the local limits of his jurisdiction to take such steps as he may by the said order specify to restrict or otherwise regulate the movements of such minor girl or girls or to remove her or them to the Kumaun division in order to prevent her or their being trained to the profession of prostitution or living in immoral surroundings.

4. If the district magistrate is of opinion that there

Power of the district
magistrate to arrange
for custody of Naik
minor girls.

is danger that a minor girl of
the Naik caste within the local
limits of his jurisdiction may

be sold, let for hire, trained or otherwise disposed of with the intent that she shall be employed for the purpose of prostitution or for any unlawful and immoral purpose, he may order that she shall be sent to a settlement and there detained for such period as may be prescribed, or that she shall be placed under the guardianship of any person of the same faith who is willing and in the opinion of the district magistrate fit to have charge of her, and may take such steps as may in his opinion be necessary for the enforcement of such order.

5. Whoever, having been required by a district magis-

Penalty for failure
to furnish information.

trate under section 2 of this
Act to appear before him and

furnish him with information, without lawful excuse fails so

to appear or refuses or fails to furnish information which it was within his power to furnish or furnishes false information shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or with fine not exceeding two hundred and fifty rupees or with both.

Provided that a substantive sentence of imprisonment shall not be passed against a person who is convicted under this section for the first time.

6. Whoever without lawful excuse disobeys, or resists, or in any way obstructs the execution of, any order of a district magistrate made under section 3 or section 4 of this Act shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding one year or with fine not exceeding five hundred rupees or with both.

7. The local Government may make rules consistent with this Act for carrying out the purposes of this Act, and may by such rules prescribe the nature of the orders which may be made by the district magistrate under this Act including an order exempting any member of class or group of Naiks from the operation of sections 2 and 3 of this Act and the conditions under which such orders may be made; provided that the power of the local Government to make rules under this section shall be subject to the condition that the rules shall be made after previous publication in the gazette and in the localities mainly occupied by Naiks; and after an opportunity has been given to the Council to discuss them; provided further that the rules shall not take effect until they have been published in the gazette in their final form.

Admission

Definitions. 8. In this Act --

- (a) "minor girl" means a girl who is under the age of eighteen years,
- (b) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules under this Act,
- (c) "settlement" means any home or institute for the custody of girls declared by the local Government to be a settlement for the purposes of this Act, provided that such home or institute shall belong to and be managed by persons of the same religion as that of the girls concerned.
- (d) "member of the Naik caste" includes a prostitute born of Naik parents or of a Naik prostitute.

Prevention of traffic in women in Kashmir.

The following press communique has been issued by the Kashmir Durbar in March 1929:-

"Kidnapping women and trafficking in them had of recent years assumed such proportions in the Jammu and Kashmir State that His Highness' Government had to devise exceptional measures to stop this nefarious practice. Various legislative and administrative measures have been sanctioned by His Highness to eradicate this evil from the State. The law bearing on this had been greatly stiffened and the State Penal Code has been amended so as to raise the penalty for kidnapping and abduction from 3 to 7 years and that for enticing married women from 2 to 5 years. Provision has also been made to empower the Courts to award whipping in lieu of or in addition to other sentences in these cases. The age of consent has

been raised from 12 to 13 for marital and from 13 to 14 for extra marital relations. A new Section has also been added to the Criminal Code providing providing penalty for the procurement of girls for illicit purposes. The Code of Criminal Procedure has also been amended to enable the Magistrate to take security proceedings against persons who habitually commit kidnapping or abduction. The Government of India have agreed to make the offences under Section 498 I.P.C. extraditable so far as the Jammu and Kashmir State is concerned.

On the administrative side the measures adopted are to bind the Zaildars, Numberdars and Chowkidars to assist in prevention and detection of such offences and in the event of such cases occurring frequently in their Ilaqas they will be liable to dismissal. All Revenue Officers are required to use their influence to check this evil and the Courts have been given instructions to bring to the notice of the Revenue Department the conduct of village officers in connection with these cases. The Police have been instructed to make special efforts to unearth the agencies at work in this nefarious trade.

It is hoped that as a result of these measures this inhuman and degrading evil will soon be wholly put down".

(Hindu, 14th March 1929).

MARITIME AFFAIRS.Night Work in Bombay Docks.

The Bombay Port Trust asked in January 1929 the views of the Committee of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce in regard to the feasibility of closing down night work in the docks at 1.30 a.m. except in unavoidable cases.

The Committee after consulting the Docks and Railways Sub-Committee, replied stating that they were definitely of opinion that there should be no further curtailment in the total number of working hours at the Docks. The Committee pointed out that Bombay compared very unfavourably with Karachi in respect of the hours of night work which were understood to be 10 hours, i.e., from 7.30 p.m. to 6.30 a.m. with an hour's recess. If the proposal of the Port Trust Dock Staff Union was adopted the competition which Bombay was experiencing from Karachi and other ports would be aggravated.

The Committee were of the opinion that it would be of advantage if work could be started earlier in the morning when labour was fresh, say, at 7 a.m. instead of 8 a.m., the hours of work to be adjusted accordingly. If this suggestion was adopted night work would stop at 2.30 a.m. instead of 3.30 a.m. as at present or at 1.30 a.m. as suggested by the Port Trust Dock Staff Union.

The Committee did not desire to put forward detailed suggestions for the readjustment of the hours of work as that was a matter for the Bombay Port Trust. They felt, however, that closing down day work at 5 p.m. which would result from putting back all the hours of work by one hour, would be too early, and that it would be preferable to close down at 5.30 p.m. It was suggested that this might be done either by adjusting the recess intervals or, better, by lengthening the day work and shortening the night work if that was possible. This point was submitted for the consideration of the Port Trust in the

event of the Committee's suggestion for starting work earlier being found feasible.

(Times of India, 28th March 1929).

... ..

Hours of Work on Board ^{Indian} Ships.

The Shipping Master, Bombay forwarded in January 1929, to the Bombay Chamber of Commerce a copy of a letter addressed by Sir Atul Chatterjee, the High Commissioner for India, to the Hon'ble Mr. A. C. MacWatters, in connection with the question of the international regulation of hours of work on board ships. With a view to assisting the International Labour Office in the preparatory work for the Special Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference to be held in October 1929, the High Commissioner desired to receive precise information on the following points :- The determination of the kind of work done by men of different categories, the normal hours of labour both at sea and in port; the importance of overtime work and the kinds of payment therefor; the necessary numbers of men required for different tasks, etc- according to the type of navigation, and all other necessary complementary and related problems. The Shipping Master asked to be furnished with all the information possible on the question.

The Committee of the Chamber, in consultation with the Shipping and Export Sub-Committee, replied stating that the normal hours of duty on board ships at sea and in port on vessels in the Indian trade were the same now as they were in 1927. As far as the Committee were aware no payment was made for overtime work done on board ships, but when such overtime work was performed, the men generally were given a corresponding reduction in the hours of work the following day, if this was

possible. The Committee did not think it necessary to give a detailed description of the nature of the work done and the number of men required, as the members of the Conference must have knowledge of the former, while as regards the latter the number of men must necessarily vary according to the class of ship.

(Times of India, 28th March 1929).
