

(110)

C 1903/10

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE B. I. T. Registry
Indian Branch
Report for September 1929.
<u>Contents.</u>

	Pages
1. <u>General</u>	
Assembly Hot Weather Session :- President Patel's ruling on Public Safety Bill, Interchange of letters with Lord Irwin; Proposal for Committee on Rural Conditions; Child Marriage Bill; Adjournment Motion re: Jatin Das' death; Bill to amend Criminal Procedure Code; Bill to Amend Indian Railways Act; Motion re: non-ratification of Geneva Convention on Wage fixing machinery; - Withdrawal of Protection to ^{Steel} Industry; - East African Indian Deputation in India; - Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's election to Congress presidentship 1 - 10
2. <u>References to the League of Nations</u> 11- 12
3. <u>References to the I. L. O.</u> 12- 15
4. <u>National Labour Legislation</u>	
(a) Bill to Amend the Indian Railways Act 16- 18
5. <u>Conditions of Labour</u>	
(a) Calcutta Strike situation 19
(b) Bombay Textile Strike 19
(c) Findings of the Strike Inquiry Committee, Bombay. 20- 22
(d) Report of the Bombay Riots Inquiry Committee. 23- 24
(e) Inquiry into Grievances of Indian Telegraphists 24
(f) The Tinsplate Workers' Strike, Jamshedpur 24- 25
(g) Factory Administration in Bombay, 1928 26- 32
(h) Factory Administration in the Punjab, 1928 32- 35
(i) Factory Administration in the Central Provinces and Berar, 1928 35- 38
(j) Factory Administration Bihar & Orissa, 1928 38- 39
(k) Factory Administration in Bengal, 1928 39- 43
6. <u>Industrial Organisations</u>	
(a) The United Provinces Trade Union Conference 44- 45
(b) Indian Seamen's Union 45- 46
(c) Madras Labour Union 46- 47
(d) All India Railwaymen's Federation 47- 48
(e) Asiatic Labour Congress 48- 50

			Pages
7.	<u>Economic Conditions</u>		
	(a) Indian Hide Industry	51
	(b) Madras Cottage Industries Committee	51
	(c) Textile Conference Committee	51- 52
	(d) Tata Iron and Steel Company	52- 55
8.	<u>Co-operation</u>		
	(a) Progress of the Co-operative Movement in India	56- 57
9.	<u>Agriculture</u>		
	(a) Indian Sugar Committee	58
	(b) Shellac Industry in Bihar	59
	(c) Jute Industry in Bengal	59- 60
	(d) Assam Tea	60
	(e) Indian Rubber Statistics	61- 62
10.	<u>Migration</u>		
	Indian Labour in Ceylon Plantations	63- 66

General.

The fifth session of the third Indian Legislative Assembly was held at Simla from the 2nd to the 25th September 1929. On the opening day, the President, Mr. Patel, read out a letter which he had addressed to the Viceroy in regard to the general interpretation placed upon the latter's speech in proroguing the House last April, and His Excellency's reply thereto. The Viceroy, in his prorogation speech, had stated that the President's action in ruling out of order further consideration of the Public Safety Bill was not in conformity with the original intention of the Indian Legislative Rules, but that since the President was the only appropriate person to interpret the rules within either House of the Legislature, the Government's only remedy was to obtain, by due authority, such amendment of the rules that the recurrence of any similar interruption in the normal legislative procedure may be prevented in future. In addition to this "threat" to limit the powers of the President, the Viceroy also announced that the Public Safety Bill, the progress into law of which was held up by the presidential ruling, would be issued by him as an Ordinance. The Ordinance appeared in the Gazette of India in due course, and a notification of the Legislative Department appeared on the 24th August last, adding a new clause (Rule 17-A) to the Indian Legislative Rules which took away from the President the power to prevent or delay the making or discussion of any motion relating to a Bill made by the member in charge of the Bill, or to refuse to put, or delay the putting of, the question on any such motion, unless such power is expressly conferred on him. In the light of these two

events, there was considerable speculation as to the nature of the correspondence that passed between Mr. Patel and Lord Irwin. Mr. Patel's letter referred to the Viceroy's criticism of his ruling as an unprecedented encroachment on the dignity and the authority of the Chair; and stated that the only way to impugn his conduct as President was by a direct appeal to the House. In the Viceroy's reply, it was stated that it was no part of his intention either to criticise the President's ruling or to pass censure upon him for it, and that His Excellency regretted that his words should have been so interpreted, though such an interpretation was under circumstances perhaps inevitable. Even before these letters were read out, a short notice question elicited from the Government the fact that they were not bringing up for discussion at this session the Public Safety Bill. Though this was a partial victory for the opposition, the fact remained that the President's powers had been curbed by the amendment of the Indian Legislative Rules. A further opportunity to bring home to the Government the emptiness of their victory in adding Rule 17-A to the Indian Legislative Rules occurred when the question of the admissibility of Mr. S.C. Mitra's resolution stating that Lord Irwin's part in the enactment of this rule was reprehensible came up for consideration. The opposition contended that under the new rule the President had no power to disallow the resolution, even though the reference in the Resolution to Lord Irwin contravened the terms of Standing Order 29. The Government were this time forced to ask the President to exercise his inherent power - thus more or less going back upon their attitude when the Public Safety Bill was

stopped by the President. Mr. Mitra's resolution was finally dis-
 allowed by the President on the Government's making a statement that,
 in all matters of important amendment of rules, they would consult
 the Legislative Assembly before they submit their proposals to the
 Secretary of State except in cases of emergency. The opposition
 thus gained another tactical victory; and with this incident one
 phase of the controversy between the Government and the President of
 the House may be said to be closed.

... ..

A resolution moved by Mr. K.V. Rangaswami Iyengar recommending
 the appointment of a mixed committee of officials and nonofficials
 to examine the rural conditions obtaining in the various provinces and
 to recommend ways and means for establishing in each village or group
 of villages an efficient village panchayat, elected on the adult
 franchise system and possessing sufficient legal powers and financial
 resources for administering village concerns such as agriculture,
 minor irrigation and forests, cottage industries, village sanitation,
 education, co-operation, trade and banking, and for deciding civil
 and criminal suits up to a certain limit, was carried in the House by
 35 votes as against 33, the Government opposing.

... ..

The pièce de resistance of the present session was the Child
 Marriage Bill introduced by Rai Saheb Harbilas Sarda, the nature and
 provisions of which have already been set out in some detail in this
 office's report for February 1929. Though it is generally felt that

social legislation of this nature affecting enormous masses of the population can after all only be in the nature of propaganda, nevertheless, there was a considerable mass of opposition to the Bill headed by the "orthodox" Hindus and by a certain section of the Mahommedans. Earlier in the debate - which was a very protracted one - the leader of the House made a statement that the Government was in favour of the Bill and thereafter the discussion was more or less robbed of its interest as the issue was a foregone conclusion. The passing of the Bill towards the end of the session has been hailed with great joy throughout the entire country, as it has all along been realised that the system of child marriages has been one of the most fruitful causes of the physical deterioration of the population of India.

... ..

In earlier reports of this office, mention has been made of the fact that some of the under-trial prisoners in the Lahore and Meerut Conspiracy cases had gone on hunger-strike, on the ground that "political prisoners" should not be treated as common felons under the law, and that in any case they should be given some of the more rudimentary amenities of life such as a cake of soap, special diet, some literature to read and immunity from forced labour. After 63 days of voluntary starvation, one of the hunger-strikers, Mr. Jatindra-nath Das, died while the Assembly was sitting, and the national newspapers have hailed him as a martyr who has laid down his life for an elementary principle of justice. On the 14th September the leader of the opposition asked for leave to make a motion for adjournment of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance,

namely, the situation arising out of the action and policy of the Government regarding the treatment of the accused under trial in the Lahore Conspiracy case. The motion for adjournment was carried by 55 votes as against 47, the Government opposing.

Another difficulty that the Government had to face, which also arose directly out of the hunger-strike, was that, according to the existing provisions of the law, they found it impossible to proceed with the trial so long as one or more of the hunger-strikers were too ill to attend Court and persistently refused to appoint counsel to defend them. In order to get out of this difficulty, the Government sought to introduce a Bill to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure by the addition of a new section 540 B. By this clause, if any accused person by his own voluntary act renders himself incapable of appearing before the Court and declines to be represented by counsel, the Court has the discretion, in such circumstances, to dispense with his presence and carry on the trial. There was naturally a great deal of excited opposition to the Bill ~~in~~ which was commonly referred to in public discussions as the Anti Hunger-Strike Bill, and the death of Das lent special strength to the opposition. As a result of prolonged discussion, the Government's motion for taking the Bill into consideration was replaced by an amendment for circulating the Bill for eliciting public and legal opinion thereon; and in so far as this meant that the Government's desire to be armed with the special authority given under the new section for dealing with the Lahore cases was frustrated, the decision of the House must be taken as a defeat for the Government.

Two items of special importance to the International Labour Office were taken up for discussion during the session. The first was the introduction by sir George Rainy, the Member for Railways, of a Bill to amend the Indian Railways Act. In moving on the 9th september 1929 that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, sir George Rainy explained that the necessity for this legislation arose from the obligations which the Government of India have undertaken under the Washington and Geneva Conventions. Under the Washington convention the Government undertook that the principle of the 60 hours' week should be adopted in such branches of railway work as might be specified for the purpose by "competent authority". Under the Geneva convention, a weekly day of rest must be extended to the same classes of workers. What the Bill proposes to do is to make the Governor General in Council "the competent authority". sir George recognised that the more usual practice would have been to add certain substantive provisions in the law itself, as has been done in the Indian Factories Act, instead of asking the Assembly to delegate its powers to the Executive authorities. The Government, however, have found it a difficult and complicated business to work out exactly what provisions should be made applicable to Indian railway workers, and they have not been able so far to put forward definite provisions which could be incorporated in an Act of this nature. The Bill, according to sir George, only meant that the Government was asking the legislature to affirm that the time has come when by legislation a competent authority should be set up to specify the branches of railway work to which the weekly day of rest

and the principle of the 60 hours' week should apply. The motion was adopted after Messrs. Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Diwan Chaman Lal, V.V. Jogiah and others had pressed upon the Government the necessity for limiting the number of hours a day to eight and for incorporating in the act itself the substantive part of the rules instead of giving a blank cheque to the Government. Mr. V.V. Jogiah urged that "the competent authority" should be a committee consisting of representatives of the Government (on behalf of the employers) and of the All India Railwaymen's Federation (on behalf of the employees). The Railway Member's reply to these points was that they could be considered in the Select Committee.

The second point of direct interest to the I.L.O. was the motion made by Sir B.N. Mitra on the 26th september last for the non-ratification of the Geneva convention regarding minimum wage fixing machinery. In support of his motion he said that the Labour Commission would soon be making an exhaustive enquiry on this subject in India and that this was not the time therefore to ratify the convention. Diwan Chaman Lal urged the postponement of the discussion to the Delhi session. This was carried by 17 votes as against 5, Government remaining neutral. There was a very interesting discussion on this resolution in the Council of state, where most of the non-official members voted against Mr. Ryan's motion, which was worded on the same lines as that of Sir B.N. Mitra. In that House, however, it was carried.

... ..

A deputation from the Indians settled in East Africa was touring in the country during the period under report explaining the disabilities to which Indians were subject in the East African Colonies and in the Mandated territory of Tanganayika, and the directions in which they wanted a modification of the recommendations of the "Closer Union" committee presided over by Sir Edward Hilton-Young. It will be recalled that the British Colonial office had sent out Sir Samuel Wilson to East Africa to explore the situation once again, and that the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was sent out by the Government of India to collaborate with him. It was however generally known that Mr. Sastri's mission was a failure, and that Sir Samuel Wilson had expressed himself definitely against a common electoral roll for which the Indian population of these areas was strenuously fighting. It is understood that the East African Indian deputation which came to India waited on the Government of India and explained their case, and that the Government's reply was not very reassuring. During the present session of the Assembly, an occasion arose for discussing the entire situation. On the 26th September the matter was discussed in the House, when the Government explained that before any final decision was come to regarding the implementing of either the Hilton-Young report or that of Sir Samuel Wilson, the Assembly will have an opportunity of expressing its opinion on the points involved.

This Debate has however not cleared the air; on the other hand, certain passages in the speeches from the official benches, particularly where they referred to the Government of India being "mere advocates" in the cause of Indians in East Africa were

disappointing and discouraging. In fact statements like these show that the Government of India have resiled from the strong position they had taken up in such matters during the Imperial Conferences of 1921 and 1923.

It is understood that Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru has left for England to represent the cause of East African Indians before the colonial office in London.

... ..

On the 24th September, the Legislative Assembly carried by 51 votes against 42, the Government opposing, a resolution moved by Pandit Milkanta Das for the withdrawl of protection granted to the Tin plate Industry as the tinsplate company of Golmuri (Jamshedpur) was no longer an Indian concern. The occasion for the resolution was the prolonged strike at Jamshedpur, Mr. Das making it clear that the basis of his contention was that the Company's treatment of its labour force was unsatisfactory, and that the Government had failed in their duty in not appointing a Court of Enquiry under the Trade Disputes Act. Sir B.N.Mitra, in his reply on behalf of the Government, said that the strike was due to political influences, and that the Bihar Government, within the territorial jurisdiction of which the strike took place, had made out a good case as to why they should not intervene. The resolution however was carried.

... ..

At a meeting of the All India Congress Committee held at Lucknow on the 28th September, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President of the forthcoming session of the Indian National

Congress at Lahore. His election was the result of Mr. Gandhi's persistent refusal to accept the Presidentship for the year. Pandit Jawaharlal, it will be remembered, is the General Secretary of the Congress, and is, besides, the President of the All India Trade Union Congress.

settlers in the Mandated Territories.

On 24-9-1929, Mr. F. E. James interpellated ^{the Government} in the Madras Legislative Council on the action, if any, that has been taken in ~~the~~ schools and colleges to familiarize students with the ~~aim~~ aims and objects of the League. Even more interesting than the detailed reply given by the Government were the supplementary questions in which the members expressed their opinion that the League served no useful purpose to India, because it did not concern itself with the attainment of swaraj in India.

The Indian newspapers announce the arrival on 25-9-1929 at Rangoon of the League of Nations Opium Commission consisting of Monsieur Ekstrant (Chairman), Max Leo Gerrard and Jean Havlasa (members), and Monsieur Wilson, (Secretary). This Commission was set up by the League last March in accordance with a resolution passed by the 1928 Assembly. The League's Malaria Commission has now been in India for two weeks, and is now at Delhi.

References to the I.L.O.

Most of the Indian dailies published in extenso the press communiqué issued by this office on the 13th (Maritime) Labour Conference. Cuttings from the Statesman of 12-9-1929, Hindustan Times of 9-9-1929 and the Pioneer of 13-9-1929 have been forwarded to Geneva to show that the programme of the forthcoming conference has received considerable publicity.

A press communiqué issued by the Government of India announcing the personnel of the Indian Delegation to the 13th Conference has been widely reproduced in the Indian press.

... ..

A Free Press of India message dated the 21st September says that the Committee of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, as also of the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, have protested against the appointment of Mr. Brown as an adviser to represent Indian employers at the 13th (Maritime) Conference. A protest has also been lodged with the Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India.

... ..

A Reuter's message from Geneva giving the gist of Monsieur Albert Thomas' spirited defence to the attack made on him by the Norwegian delegate Mr. Hambro in the 4th Committee of the League Assembly has been reproduced in all the papers. The Statesman of Calcutta, in its issue of 20-9-1929, commenting on this message observes that Monsieur Thomas' defence seems to be very satisfactory, and that as ~~he~~ the official of the B.I.T., whom Monsieur Thomas had permitted ^{to be proposed} for election to the British Parliament was opposing an avowed communist, "it is not necessary to suspect M. Thomas of anything very red".

... ..

Mr. B. Shiva Rao, who was the Indian Workers' Adviser to the 12th Conference, contributes an article ^{on "International Labour"} to the Statesman of 15-9-1929 giving his impressions of the Conference. He ~~xxxxxx~~ stresses the importance of having direct representatives from coloured workers from the Colonies at the Conference. In spite of this ^{difficulty} ~~difficulty~~

in the composition of the Conference, "there is not the least doubt that the Conference is becoming a real force in improving labour conditions in the world. So far as India is concerned, it would not be accurate to say that the pressure of Geneva has been negligible. The Central Legislature has been responsible, ~~at~~ during the current decade, for a number of important labour measures; and in almost every instance the inspiration may be traced to Geneva. The discussions of problems affecting the interests of millions of human beings who cannot speak for themselves are in themselves of the utmost importance, while Governments are sensitive to criticism at Geneva and do not appreciate exposures of their methods. The force of the world's public opinion is thus becoming increasingly potent in directing national policies. It is a great piece of work which is being done at Geneva; the I.L.O., from the Director downwards, is staffed by men who show a zeal for work and a faith in its potentialities which are ~~in~~ an inspiration to those who visit Geneva".

... ..

The Hindu of 17-9-1929 publishes^{ed} a fairly long account of a speech delivered by Mr. Shiva Rao at Madras on 16-9-1929. He referred to the decision to hold an Asiatic Labour Congress, and to the decision taken by Mr. Joshi and himself to organise an All-India Textile Federation. He concluded his speech with an exhortation to his audience to ~~study~~ ^{study} the workers' case carefully for submission to the ~~Whitley~~ Whitley Commission.

Mr. Ernest Kirk contributes an article on "Labour and the Colour Bar" to the Hindu of 21-9-1929, in the course of which he refers at length to Mr. Joshi's speech commenting on the report of the I.L.O. Director presented to the 12th Conference. The article deals with the economic aspects of the colour bar in labour, and proceeds to deal with conditions in South Africa, China, America, Australia, etc.

... ..

The Ceylon Independent of 19-9-1929 publishes a short note on the visit of Mr. Yonekubo and his friends to Colombo on their ~~return~~ ^{way to} Geneva. Addressing a meeting of the Ceylon Labour Union, the Japanese delegates spoke about the proposed Asiatic Labour Congress and canvassed support for the idea.

... ..

In its issue of September 1929, pages 368-371, the monthly magazine "Education" published at Cawnpore, reproduces in its entirety the Geneva "educational" communiqué on the 12th Labour Conference.

... ..

In its issue of October 1929, pages 64-69, the "Calcutta Review" publishes in extenso our communiqué on the 12th session of the International Labour Conference.

... ..

In its issue of October 1929, pages 522-529, the "National Christian Council Review" of India, publishes an article entitled "the Christian Church and the International Labour Office" by Dr. P.P. Pillai.

... ..

National Labour Legislation.

(The following Bill was introduced in the Indian Legislative Assembly on 2-9-1929 and referred to ~~the~~ Select Committee on 9-9-1929.)

A
BILL

Further to amend the Indian Railways Act, 1890, for certain purposes.

IX of 1890

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Indian Railways Act, 1890, for the purposes hereinafter appearing; It is hereby enacted as follows :-

1. This Act may be called the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, Short title | 1929.

IX of 1890

2. After section 47 of the Indian Railways Act, 1890 (herein-

Insertion of new sec- | after referred to as the said
tion 47A in Act IX of 1890 | Act), the following section

shall be inserted, namely :-

"47A. (1) The Governor General in Council may make rules

XII of 1911.

IV of 1923.

Power to make rules | generally to regulate the hours
to regulate the hours |
of work and periods of | of work and periods of rest of
rest of railway ser- |
vants. | railway servants, or any class

of railway servants, who are not employed in a factory within the meaning of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, or in a mine within the meaning of the Indian Mines Act, 1923.

(2) The rules may provide that any person committing a breach of any of them shall be punishable with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees".

3. In section 143 of the said Act, after the word and

Amendment of sec-
tion 143, Act IX of
1890.

¶
¶
¶

figures "section 34" the word
and figures "section 47A" shall

be inserted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

1. The Washington Convention, limiting the hours of work in industrial undertakings, provides inter alia that in British India the principle of a sixty-hour week shall be adopted for workers in the industries covered by the Indian Factories Act, 1911 (XII of 1911), in mines and in such branches of railway work as shall be specified for this purpose by the competent authority.
2. In the Geneva Convention concerning the grant of weekly rest in industrial undertakings, the definition of 'industrial undertakings' is subject to the special national exceptions contained in the Washington Convention, from which it follows that the concession of the weekly rest is also prescribed for the same categories of workers in British India as are covered by the Washington Convention.
3. These Conventions were promulgated in 1919 and 1921, and ratified by the Government of India in 1921 and 1923, respectively, and their application to Indian railways has been the subject of prolonged investigations. Persons employed in

workshops and collieries have already been brought under the Conventions by the amendment of the Indian Factories Act, 1911, and the enactment of the Indian Mines Act, 1923.

With regard to the railway staffs, efforts have hitherto been directed towards the application of the principles of the Conventions to railway servants in India by executive orders to the State-managed railway administrations and by invitation to the Company-managed railway administrations.

In the opinion of the Governor ~~General~~ General in Council the time has now arrived to institute measures for giving effect to the statutory obligations incurred by the ratification of the Conventions, and the first step in this direction is to create a competent authority which will specify the branches of railway work and frame other rules for this purpose.

4. It is accordingly proposed to amend the Indian Railways Act, 1890, by the insertion of a new section 47A ~~empowering~~ empowering the Governor General in Council to make rules generally to regulate the hours of work and periods of rest of railway servants other than those working in factories and in mines (for whom adequate provision is already made in the Factories and Mines Acts) and the proposed amendment is embodied in clause 2 of the Bill.

Clause 3 amends section 143 so as to secure that the rules made under section 47A shall not come into force until they have been published in the Gazette of India.

Simla;
The 1st August, 1929.

||
||
||

G. RAINY.

Conditions of Labour.

Calcutta strike situation.

The Calcutta Jute workers' strike (see pages 12-15, September 1929 report of this office) has ended. The few lightning strikes which were declared at the end of August collapsed by the beginning of September. According to the Times of India of the 16th September 1929, with the exception of two mills, all the other jute mills of the city and its suburbs were working on that day.

Bombay Textile strike.

The Bombay textile strike (see pages 15-16, September 1929 report), has practically ended. According to a communiqué issued by the Bombay Millowners' Association, the number of workers attending the Bombay textile mills on the 11th September 1929 was 1,21,328 and that on the 25th September 1929 was 1,31,642. The Girni Kamgar Union issued a hand-bill on the 11th September 1929 urging the millhands to hold on and to continue the strike, but seeing the futility of such appeals in view of the increasing attendance at the mills, the Union withdrew all its pickets from the mills on the 18th September 1929. The strike, however, has not yet been formally called off.

¹⁵
Findings of Strike Inquiry Court, Bombay*

Reference has been made at page 14 of the report of this office for the month of July 1929 to the Court of Inquiry appointed by the Government of Bombay to inquire into the Bombay textile strike. The Court of Inquiry has recently published its report after a prolonged enquiry. The terms of reference of the Court were as follows:-

1. To inquire into and ascertain the exact nature of the dispute or disputes between the employers and workmen of the ~~XXXXX-XXXXX~~ 64 textile mills which led to the strike in those mills in March and April 1929.
2. If there was any such dispute, to what extent the employers or workmen or both are responsible in matters connected therewith?
3. What are the causes of the prolongation of the strike? whether the employers or workmen or both are responsible for such prolongation, and if so, to what extent?
4. What are the difficulties in the way of a settlement of the dispute or disputes between the employers and the workmen?

The principal grievances which led to the general textile strike as formulated by the strikers were the following:- (1) dismissal of 6,000 men of the wadia mills; (2) victimisation of the Girni Kamgar Union men; (3) obstacles to the Union's activities by the management; (4) objection of the millowners to collection of union

* Government of Bombay, Report of the Court of Inquiry 1929 - (Price-As. 3 or 4d), pp iii + 64, Bombay: Printed at the Government Central Press, 1929.

subscriptions inside the mills.

The Court of Inquiry has pronounced the following findings about these grievances of the strikers, the justifiability of the strike, and the responsibility for the circumstances that led to the strike:-

(1) The leaders of the Girni Kamgar Union took advantage of the conditions prevailing in October 1928; viz., the discontent prevailing among the workers due mainly to the fear that there would be both a cut in their wages and unemployment resulting from the proposed introduction of the standardisation and efficiency schemes recommended by the Fawcett Committee, and fostered an atmosphere favourable to the declaration of a strike. (2) The Girni Kamgar Union leaders have adopted an ~~an~~ unconstitutional method in converting the Mill Committees from advisory into executive committees, and their policy of encouraging individual action among Mill Committee officers even on such matters as the declaration of strikes is unjustifiable. (3) The Girni Kamgar Union, instead of taking corporate action and trying to encourage formation of corporate agreements is guilty of stimulating antagonism between the workers and the millowners and has thereby caused several lightning strikes without just cause prior to the declaration of the general strike with a view to foment general unrest. (4) There was nothing in the attitude of the representatives of the millowners at the Conference of 24-4-1929 (see page 25 of May 1929 report of this office) which justified the officials of the Girni Kamgar Union in breaking off negotiations and resorting ^{to} the extreme step of declaring a general strike. (5) The Girni Kamgar Union has failed to establish the charge of victimisation and to justify its demand for the reinstatement of the strikers in the wadia group of mills. (6) The disputes which preceded the

general strike partook more of the nature of disputes between the Girni Kamgar Union and the Millowners' Association than that of a dispute between the general body of workers and the owners. In this struggle the millowners were largely on the defensive. It is highly probable that in certain instances the millowners and their officers did not act with the same ~~circumspection~~ circumspection as they might have done in a more favourable atmosphere, but the blame for precipitating such an atmosphere lies wholly at the door of the officials of the Girni Kamgar Union. (7) The main causes of the prolongation of the strike are:- (a) the aggressive and mischievous propaganda of the officials of the Girni Kamgar Union and the inflammatory appeals made by them to the workers, (b) picketing and intimidation by the strikers and acts of violence committed by them on non-strikers. Hence, the blame for the prolongation of the strike rests mainly upon the officials of the Girni Kamgar Union. (8) The main difficulty in the way of a settlement is the uncompromising attitude of the officials of the Girni Kamgar Union; but there is an under-current of discontent among the workers due inter alia to (a) the proposed cut of 7 1/2 per cent on the wages of the workers; (b) the fear of unemployment in consequence of the proposed introduction of the efficiency schemes, and (c) the non-payment of April 1929 wages. (9) Other difficulties in the way of a settlement are the absence of contact between the millowners and the workers, and the absence of any machinery such as an arbitration board to settle disputes as they arise.

Report of the Bombay Riots Inquiry Committee.

The report of the Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay to inquire into and report on the communal riots which took place in Bombay City in February 1929 (see pages 25-27, February 1929 report of this office) has recently been published. It has to be pointed out that the communal riots of February 1929 in Bombay, were an off-shoot of the textile strike in Bombay and that the riots were in a great measure due to the antagonism between the strikers, who were mainly Hindus and the non-strikers who were mainly Mohammedans. Another factor which accentuated communal hostility and gave a communal colouring to the riots was that the immediate cause of the riots was the animosity smouldering among the Hindu millhands against the pathan money-lenders who on occasions exacted even 150 per cent interest from the mill-hands, the large majority of whom are Hindus. The riots of February 1929 have, therefore, a dual character, They had their origin in the general unrest created by the labour strike, but were given a communal turn by the fact that the majority of the non-strikers were Muslims, and that the extortionate money-lenders also were Muslims. In view of these facts, the recommendations of the Bombay Riots Inquiry Committee have a strong bearing on the labour situation in the city of Bombay.

The following are the Committee's principal recommendations:-

- (1) Drastic action should be taken against the Communists. *
- (2) During a riot immediate action should be taken to get rid of or confine all hooligans. (3) The question of control of pathan money-lenders, in Bombay City and the suburban area should be referred to the Banking Inquiry Committee. (4) Special constables should be enrolled to relieve some unarmed police for

5

riot work. (5) The police force of Bombay should be strengthened by 500 more constables. (6) The Committee favour the Prevention of Intimidation Act (see pages 19-21, August, 1929 report of this office). (7) Action should be taken against newspapers and other publications which excite communal hatred. (8) As regards the Hindu Muslim tension, the Committee are of opinion that it is an all-India problem, and that what is required is a change of heart.

Inquiry into Grievances of Indian Telegraphists.

The Times of India of 26-9-1929 says that at the request of Col. Gidney, M.L.A., Sir B.N. Mitra has consented on behalf of the Government of India, to institute an inquiry into the grievances of Indian telegraphists with the aid of representatives of the employees from the Indian Telegraph Association and the All India Telegraph Union.

The Tinplate workers' strike, Jamshedpur.

The Jamshedpur Tinplate workers' strike (see pages 16-17 of the September 1929 report of this office) is still being continued. While a state of deadlock continues at Jamshedpur, during the period under review the active fight has been transferred to other parts. On 6-9-1929 a motion for the adjournment of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council to discuss the situation arising out of the Tinplate strike was carried by 41 votes to 39. Mr. Srikrishna Singh, the swarajist leader who moved the adjournment motion, condemned the attitude of the management, and urged that it was the plain duty of the Government to intervene and appoint a conciliation Board to

inquire into the grievances of the men as provided for in the Trades Disputes Act. The Hon'ble Mr. whitty, speaking on behalf of the Government, said that the managements' attitude throughout was conciliatory, that the strike was declared without notice and had no justification, that the works are being run with the full complement of nearly 3,000 men composed of loyal and newly engaged hands, and that, therefore, there was no occasion for Government intervention. (statesman, 8-9-1929). The Governor-in-Council after full consideration of the situation decided on 13-9-1929 that for the reasons given in the Hon. Mr. whitty's speech, no useful purpose can be served by the appointment either of a Court of Inquiry or a Conciliation Board under the Trades Disputes Act for the settlement of this strike.

Pandit Nilakantha Das' motion that the steel Protection Act, 1927 should be amended with a view to withdrawing the protection granted under the Act to the tinplate industry furnished an occasion on 24-9-1929 to the Legislative Assembly to discuss the situation created by the strike. The motion to withdraw the protection accorded to the industry was carried by 51 to 42 votes. Fuller reference of this is made in the section of this report dealing with general affairs.

The statesman of 25-9-1929 publishes two comprehensive statements regarding the strike, one issued by the management of the company and the other by Mr. Subash Chandra Bose on behalf of the workers, which set forth the causes of the strike and its history from the viewpoints of the employers and the workers respectively. Special attention is invited to these cuttings. (Cutting is forwarded separately).

Factory Administration in Bombay, 1928*

The number of factories in the Bombay Presidency subject to the control of the Indian Factories Act (Act XII of 1911), increased during 1928 from 1596 to 1661. 103 factories were added to, and 38 factories removed from the register during the course of the year. The greatest increase in factories was recorded in Bombay, where 28 new factories were started during 1928. Ahmednagar comes next with 12 new factories, followed by Sholapur with 7 new factories, and Sukkur with 6 new factories. The number of stoppages of factories is also highest in Bombay City, where the troubled industrial conditions prevailing for major part of the year, ^{the} resulted in the closing down of 8 factories. The report states that the increase in the number of factories was mainly due to the increasing registration of concerns employing about 20 persons each. The efficient supervision of these small establishments has always been a difficult matter, as registration with them is seldom voluntary, and frequent combing of the industrial areas is necessary for ensuring their registration in full numbers. Out of the 1661 factories on the Register, the number which actually worked was 1498, as compared with 1426 in the previous year. Of these working factories, 715 were perennial and 783 were seasonal establishments. The preponderant position of the cotton industry in the Presidency is well established by the fact that 215 of the perennial, and 676 of the seasonal factories of the Presidency were connected with this industry. The total number of operatives employed

* Annual Factory Report of the Presidency of Bombay 1928. Price - Annas 4 or 5d. Bombay: Printed at the Government Central Press, 1929. pp 79.

in all industries as ascertained from the annual returns received from the factories was 3,56,083 as against 3,81,868 in the previous year. The total number of operatives employed in cotton mills during 1928 was 219,428, as against 245,509 in the previous year. The above figures show considerable decreases from those of last year, but if due allowance is made for the prolonged Bombay strikes of the year, it will be found that the decreases are more apparent than real.

Factory Inspection - The number of inspections made by the factory inspection staff registered considerable increase, and the inspections were conducted in a more thorough manner. Of the 715 perennial factories, 91 were inspected once, 206 twice, 177 thrice and 232 more than thrice while only 9 escaped inspection. Of the 783 seasonal factories, 264 were inspected once, 347 twice, 134 thrice and 32 more than thrice while only 6 were not inspected.

Sanitation - The sanitation in most of the industrial areas of the Presidency has improved considerably owing to constant vigilance. Most of the Bombay mills are now connected to the Municipal sewage system, but in a few the primitive system of basket privies continues. Steady pressure has been maintained to introduce up-to-date methods, and promises have been obtained from several managements of necessary changes when financial and labour conditions are more favourable.

In Ahmedabad, where mill development is going on at a greater pace than the improvement of municipal amenities, the sanitation problem is giving cause for much concern. As most of the new mills are being erected in the outlying areas, the difficulties, at any

rate, are not increasing. Several of the older mills have been prevailed upon to demolish insanitary latrines, and to replace them by modern ones.

In the other industrial centres in the ~~mofussil~~ mofussil, sanitation is more or less conditioned by the progress made by municipal and local boards, - but on the whole the standards of cleanliness maintained in mofussil factories are superior to the standards obtaining in the surrounding areas.

Ventilation - In the matter of the provision of improved ventilation arrangements, Ahmedabad, where the climatic conditions are very unfavourable to the growing textile industry, made very good progress. The installation of ventilating plants based on the evaporative cooling principle, has to a great extent neutralised the adverse effects of the climate, and in several mills working conditions have been changed beyond recognition. A fair idea of the progress made can be had from the fact that 37 spinning and weaving mills of the place have already spent Rs. 9,97,000 on ventilation improvements, ensuring thereby a more contented labour force, increased earning power to the operatives, and enhanced profits to the owners. In Bombay where climatic conditions are more favourable, and where mills are generally better designed, the progress in ventilation arrangements has not been so marked, but a notable innovation during the year was the provision in some textile mills of a cheap type of propeller fan driven from the loom staff and ordinarily clamped to the loom rail to supply greater air movement near the weavers. Factory inspectors report that in 1928 there was closer compliance with humidity rules, as also improvements in the

maintenance of hygrometers.

Wages and Strikes - The period under review was characterised by frequent strikes, the most important of which was the strike in the textile industry in Bombay city, which lasted for six months.

Towards the close of the year there were a series of strikes in the oil mills at Sewree, Bombay. Hours of work, wages, and allied questions were the causes of the majority of the strikes.

Employment of Women and Children - The total number of women employed in the Presidency in 1928 was 75,092, as against 80,155 in 1927, and 81,104 in 1926. The number of children employed in 1928 was 5,183 as against 6322 in 1927, and 7,078 in 1926. A noticeable feature of the situation is that the increase in the number of women ~~th~~ children employed is confined entirely to the mofussil due to increased activity in the seasonal industries, and that in Bombay City the figures were stationary with, if anything, a tendency to decrease. The double employment of children which was very prevalent in Ahmedabad, and of which on the occasion of one check in 1926 over 100 cases were detected, had during the year 1928 almost disappeared. Legislation and departmental action have thus led to an almost complete abolition of child labour irregularities in the Ahmedabad mills. The Bombay mills have for a considerable time practically ceased to employ children, the figures for Bombay City of such employment being only 164 in 1927, and 122 in 1928. The supply of children for employment, therefore, remains considerably in excess of the demand. The irregular employment of women in Sind has been considerably reduced by the surprise visits and prosecutions initiated during the past years.

Fencing of Machinery - Slow, but steady, advance in the fencing of machinery was kept up during 1928. The ginning factories, as a rule, have erected fences, but the ground-nut decorticating factories are still backward in this respect. In Bombay mills considerable progress has been made in the substitution of the bar type of loom guard for the hook variety. The new carding machines in the Bombay mills are being fitted with automatic locking machines on the cylinder doors. Gur (country sugar-cane crushing) factories are still being run in several cases, without fencing of any description, but as these are quasi-agricultural concerns they are being treated with a fair amount of leniency. Prosecutions for failure to fence machinery were instituted against 24 factories and all resulted in conviction.

Accidents - During 1928 there were 39 fatal accidents, 1,060 serious accidents, and 3,419 minor accidents, making a total of 4,518 accidents, as against 4800 in 1927, and 3,984 in 1926. The accident average per 100 operatives employed was 1.27 in 1928, 1.25 in 1927, and 1.04 in 1926. Safety Posters are becoming increasingly popular. The G.I.P. Railway authorities, and the Millowners' Mutual Insurance Association have produced suitable posters for the railway workshops and the textile industry respectively. An analysis was made of 1016 railway workshop accidents to ascertain whether fatigue had any bearing on accident causation. The results tended to show that accidents appear to depend solely on the activity of the workmen, and that fatigue was not a contributory factor to any material extent.

Prosecutions - 326 prosecutions were instituted in 1928 against

59 factories, and convictions were secured in all cases except one. The fines ranged from 1 anna to Rs.300. The fines imposed totalled Rs.8275-1-0, as against Rs.4,125-0-0 in 1927. The average per case was Rs.25, and per factory Rs.140. The report states that magistrates, on the whole, have been imposing reasonable fines for breaches of Factory Law.

Housing of Factory Hands - Very little advance has been made in this direction in 1928. The doubt is being increasingly entertained whether the housing of employees by owners is altogether in the interests of labour. These doubts are strengthened by the fact that in several cases where accommodation has been provided by employers, their men have refused to live in the quarters provided, and that consequently such quarters had to be let to operatives of other factories. The Bombay Development Chawls (quarters for workers), the biggest scheme of the kind, has resulted in a partial failure, since Bombay workers are preferring to live in their present insanitary quarters rather than go and live in the more distant and higher priced Bombay Development Chawls. The report says that both in Bombay and Ahmedabad the housing problem is very serious.

General Welfare - Despite the difficult situation created by the textile strike in Bombay much work was done in 1928 for the general welfare of Bombay labour. At the close of 1928, 14 creches were in operation in Bombay City entailing an average expenditure of Rs. 1700 a month. The creches are being increasingly made use of by the working class mothers. In September 1928 the average creche attendance was 124, in October 266, in November 316, and in December 304. The evil practice of drugging of infants with opium has been com-

bated to a large extent by the creche system. In Ahmedabad, 22 mill creches were in operation in 1928.

Other kind of welfare work are being undertaken by several mills both in Bombay and the mofussil. The provision of dispensaries and medical aid, anti-malarial operations in mills and their environments, the running of cheap grain shops, the starting of Benefit and Provident Funds, the advancement of loans on easy terms to the workers, the setting up of reading rooms and libraries, are some of the more frequent forms that such welfare work takes.

In Bombay, the problem of the education of the children of mill-workers has been solved by the progressive introduction of compulsory education in several of the municipal wards. In Ahmedabad, where the same facilities do not obtain, 8 schools are maintained by the millowners. The Agents at this centre also contribute Rs. 15000 yearly to schools run by the Labour Union, in which some 1300 children of the mill operatives are educated in 11 day and 16 night schools. In Sholapur also the mills maintain several schools.

Factory Administration in the Punjab, 1928*

The total number of factories subject to the control of the Indian Factories Act in the Punjab in 1928 was 602, as against 590 in the previous year. Of these, 559 actually worked, and 43 remained closed. The total number of all operatives in all factories increased from 50,088 in 1927 to 51,613 in 1928. The increase is ascribable mainly to the registration of new concerns. The total number of children certified by the Certifying Surgeons during the year was 827 as against 1,061 in 1927. Of these, 422 were rejected as being

either under 12, or over 15 years of age, and 28 were declared to be medically unfit.

Health and Sanitation - The health of the operatives throughout the year was satisfactory. Progress in sanitary conditions, was impeded by the lack of interest on the part of operatives, the bulk of whom are ^{to} illiterate to take advantage even of the existing sanitary arrangements. Almost all perennial factories are now lighted with electricity. In all newly erected factories ventilation showed a distinct advance, adequate consideration being given to the provision of windows, skylights, and exhaust fans. In cotton ginning factories ventilation continued to be a serious problem. During the year a set of draft rules with regard to the control of humidification in cotton spinning and weaving mills was framed and circulated among millowners for eliciting opinion.

Hours of Work, wages, and strikes - Hours of employment in perennial factories were within the requirements of Factory Laws. In railway workshops, the average did not exceed 48 hours a week, while other factories worked up to 60 hours a week during the busy season, but reduced working hours to 50 and even 48 when work was slack. In cotton ginning factories, during the busy season, there was observable a tendency to make employees work for longer hours than is allowed, as a result of which there were several prosecutions ending in convictions.

The cost of labour continued to be much the same as during the past three years. Wages for casual labour were subject to fluctuations, but the average for the year remained unchanged. Industrial relationships continued to be peaceful, with the exception

of a strike in the New Egerton Woollen Mills, Dhariwal, where 1500 operatives went on strike from the middle of January to the end of May. The strike which ultimately fizzled out was due to purely economic reasons and had no bearing on the administration of the Factories Act.

Industrial Safety and Accidents - Considerable attention was paid to the fencing of machinery during the year. The factory inspectors gave frequent demonstrations and explanations regarding the handling of dangerous machinery. 1,019 accidents were reported to have occurred in 1928, as compared with 707 in 1927. Of these 29 were fatal accidents, 36 serious, and 954 minor, the ~~same~~ corresponding figures for 1927 being 16, 14, and 677. A comparison of the accidents statistics shows that while there were 62 accidents per 100 operatives in 1919, the figures have risen up to 197 per 100 operatives in 1928. Mill gearings, shafts, and pulleys claim the largest proportion of fatal and serious accidents. In Railway workshops injuries to workers' eyes form the major proportion of accidents, and workers have been provided with eye-protectors as safe-guard against such accidents.

Welfare Work - Big industrial concerns have begun to realise their obligations to their employees in the sphere of welfare work. The New Egerton Woollen Mills, Dhariwal, the biggest privately owned factory in the Punjab, has started an uplift club for its employees. The mill also conducts a school attended by about 500 children of operatives, and a co-operative society for supplying food-stuffs to employees at rates cheaper than those of the market. The housing of factory hands has not made much advance. Large factories in ~~xxxx~~

rural areas have generally provided excellent accommodation, but urban conditions in this respect are still unsatisfactory.

Factory Inspection - Of the 559 factories which worked during the year, 409 were inspected once, 102 twice, and 18 thrice. The total number of inspections was 667 in 1928, as against 596 in 1927. 58 inspections were made at night, resulting in 17 prosecutions for illegal employment of women and children. During the year, 130 cases were instituted under the Factories Act against the occupiers and managers of 41 factories, as compared with 91 cases against 33 factories in 1927. Of the total number of cases 108 resulted in conviction, 8 in acquittal, 11 were withdrawn, and 3 were pending at the end of the year. The fines imposed in the majority of cases were too light to have an adequate deterrent effect.

Factory Administration in Central Provinces
and Berar*

The number of factories subject to the control of the Indian Factories Act, in the Central Provinces and Berar was 868 in 1928, as against 800 in 1927. Of the 868 factories 98 were perennial, and 770 were seasonal factories. In 1928, 75 factories were added to the Factories Register, while 7 were removed from the register. The majority of additions to the register were seasonal ginning and

*

Report on the Administration of the Indian Factories Act, 1911 (Act XII of 1911), as modified up to the 1st June 1926, in the Central Provinces and Berar for the year 1928. Nagpur: Printed at the Government Press 1929. pp 39.

pressing factories, while, next in order, were the rice mills. The number of factories actually working was 758, consisting of 97 perennial factories, and 659 seasonal factories.

The average daily number of operatives employed was 44,130 men, 24,591 women, and 1439 children in 1928, as against 43,276; 23,627, and 1700 in 1927. The total average daily number of operatives increased from 68,603 in 1927 to 70,160 in 1928, the increase being accounted for in part by a revival of trade and the starting of new industrial ^{There} Enterprises, has been little or no variation in the wages of skilled and unskilled labour which had showed a slight downward tendency in the preceding year. Only one strike took place during 1928. This occurred in the Akola Cotton Mills, Akola, owned by Bombay capitalists, where the operatives struck work demanding an increased ^{dear} district allowance and rewards for regular attendance. The strike was more an off-shoot of the Bombay textile strike than the result of any genuine grievance.

Industrial Safety - Owing to the inferior quality of the materials used, the guards and fences for machinery in many factories had become unsuitable, and the inspecting staff had to make frequent requisitions for repairs. Prosecutions for non-compliance had to be initiated in many cases and several convictions were obtained. The oilmen and mochis (machine attendants) still show a marked disinclination to wear trousers instead of dhotis (loose Indian loin-cloth), though such practice is attended with great danger. The standard of lighting has shown a decided improvement, and electricity has been introduced in many factories. In the ginning and pressing factories ridge ventilation has been insisted upon. Speaking

generally, the perennial factories have a fairly ^{good} standard of lighting, while conditions in this respect are still far from satisfactory in the seasonal factories.

Accidents - Accidents are showing a tendency to increase. In 1928 there were 337 accidents as against 293 in 1927, and 243 in 1926. Of these accidents 11 were fatal, 34 serious, and 292 minor. Over Rs 6,000 was paid as compensation.

Welfare Work - Owing to the general trade depression not much progress has been made with welfare work among the operatives, the factory owners, in the absence of legal compulsion, showing apathy in the matter of undertaking work of this nature. Five factories granted maternity benefits in 1928, as against four factories in 1927. The sanitation in industrial areas still leaves much to be desired. The large perennial factories provide adequate accommodation for the majority of the operatives, but seasonal factories are still lagging behind in this respect. 7 cotton mills provide creches, where some 230 babies are looked after daily. There has been a continuous decline in the number of children receiving education in factory schools. In 1924 the attendance in such schools was 947; in 1927 it was 705, and in 1928 the figure was 651.

Factory Inspection - In 1928, 97 perennial factories and 653 seasonal factories were inspected, out of a total of 756 factories. The total number of inspections was 1,597 in 1928, as against 1,439 in 1927. There is still considerable laxity in the matter of the illegal employment of women and children and of ensuring strict observance of weekly holidays and correct hours of employment.

In 1928, 176 cases were instituted against managers of factories. Of these 84 cases have been disposed of with fines ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 400, and 92 are still pending. The report mentions that the fines for offences like the illegal employment of women and children are in many cases too small, and that, consequently, they have no deterrent effect. The number of children employed in the factories is showing a steady decrease.

Factory Administration in Bihar and Orissa, 1928*

In 1928 there were 261 factories on the register of the Chief Inspector of Factories, Bihar and Orissa, as against 255 in 1927. During the year 31 factories were added to the register, ~~none~~ 3 were removed from the register, and 22 remained closed, though not definitely abandoned. The number of persons employed in factories under the Indian Factories Act was 68,100, as against 71,400 in 1927. The decrease was confined mainly to the Iron and Steel industry in which there was a prolonged ~~strike~~ strike during the period under review. The gradual decline in the number of women employees continued, the number of falling from 6288 in 1927 to 5682 in 1928. The elimination of children is proceeding slowly, there being 934 children employed in factories in 1928, as against 1017 in 1927.

Sanitation and Health - The drainage of waste water from paddy-steeping vats in rice mills continued to engage the attention of the inspection staff, but as the Factories Act is not applicable to the

* Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in the Province of Bihar and Orissa, 1928 by H.W.Brady, Chief Inspector of Factories, Bihar and Orissa. Patna: Superintendent, Government Printing, Bihar and Orissa, 1929. pp 30.

nuisance which such water may cause outside mill precincts, much progress was not made in this direction. Orders were issued in 1928 to several mills to construct pucca enclosed drains up to the boundaries of the factory. Fair progress is reported in the ventilation and lighting of factories. In the larger factories and in some of the smaller ones which are under good management there is little room for complaint, but in several of the small establishments added to the register during the year conditions are not satisfactory.

Industrial Protection and Accidents - The standards in this respect in factories in rural areas are still very low and progress has been very sluggish. In spite of this there was a reduction in the total number of accidents, the number of factory accidents of all kinds being 1849 in 1928, which is 204 less than the figure for 1927. Of these 43 were fatal accidents, 420 serious, and 1386 minor.

Factory Inspection - The number of factories inspected was 154, against 115 in 1927, and the total number of visits was 220 as against 189 in 1927. Proceedings were taken against five factory managements for failure to fence machinery, for failure to make the prescribed returns, and for working excessive hours. In general, the penalties imposed were of an adequate nature.

Factory Administration in Bengal, 1928*

The total number of factories under the operation of the

* Government of Bengal. Annual Report on the Working of the Indian Factories Act in Bengal and Assam. For the Year 1928. R. P. Adams, O.B.E., M.I.(Mech.)E. Chief Inspector of Factories, Bengal and Assam. Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot 1929. Price - Indian, Rs.4-4; English, 7s. pp 65.

Indian Factories Act in the two provinces of Bengal and Assam rose from 1984 in 1927 to 2062 in 1928. During the year 112 factories were added to the register, and 34 were crossed off, resulting in an increase of 78 factories during the year. The average daily number of persons employed in registered factories in the two provinces rose from 608,453 in 1927 to 618,921 in 1928, and an increase of 10,468, of which Bengal accounts for an increase of 11,320, and Assam a decrease of 852. The jute industry of Bengal absorbed the majority of this accession to the labour ranks. The decrease in Assam was due to a smaller number of children being employed in the tea gardens.

Health and Sanitation - Progressive efforts towards better sanitation were made in the bigger industrial concerns. New construction of latrines and urinals, the overhaul of existing sanitary systems, the construction of surface and underground drains, the installation of flushing systems are amongst the many improvements that are being carried out. The Totagarh sewerage scheme, completed in 1927, and the Bhatpura improvement scheme, now in hand, are two noteworthy efforts in this sphere. Sanitary conditions in the smaller factories are not satisfactory. Efforts are also being made to remove, or at least mitigate, ventilation, lighting and structural defects in the older type of factory building. Malaria still continues to make its ravages, and is the principal cause of absenteeism. The jute mills are carrying on a campaign against malaria, the principal steps taken being the chlorination of wells, tanks, drains, etc, and the free distribution of genozone and essential oil mixture.

Employment of Women and Children - In Bengal, the average daily number of women employed in registered factories was 75,498, and the number of children 24,422, an increase of 2,591 women, and a decrease of 2,015 children as compared with the previous year's figures. The steady displacement of boys under 15 years of age by full-timers, and the changing over of more jute mills to the single shift system account for the decrease in the employment of child labour. The abuse of child labour has steadily decreased. The opening of a district labour office at Jalpaiguri has made it possible to devote special attention to women and child labour in the tea gardens.

In ~~the~~ Assam the average daily number of women employed was 15,059, and the number of children 9,244, which registers an increase of 388 women, and a decrease of 2019 children as compared with the previous year.

Housing and Welfare Work - The living conditions of industrial labour in small factories where housing is not provided ~~are~~ difficult to estimate. In the quarters provided by some of the bigger jute mills the housing arrangements and general amenities are comparatively good, but the total accommodation is still inadequate. In the tea gardens provision of housing accommodation is looked upon as a necessity, and is usually provided free. The larger tea gardens are now replacing the old type of cooly lines with well constructed tenements. A feature peculiar to the tea gardens is that small allotments of land are given free to workers, who are thus able to supplement their wages by ~~marketing~~ ^{marketing} the produce grown the land.

Welfare work is carried on by the larger jute mills on a satisfactory basis. The health centres and baby clinics started in Calcutta are doing good work. Other welfare activities are the provision of hospitals, medicines, free medical attention, bathing and washing facilities and the supply of good drinking water. The small employers, however, as a class betray too much apathy in the matter of welfare work and think that they are doing more than their duty by barely fulfilling the conditions imposed by the Factory Act.

Wages and general conditions - The wage rates current during 1927 still obtain, and the cost of living has remained steady. With the exception of the rice-milling industry there has been little unemployment. The gradual change by the jute mills from the multiple to the single shift system has been the occasion for labour troubles in some of the mills. The report states that the new system has effected considerable improvement in the conditions of the workmen, and that the troubles are due to the machinations of "Babus" and "Sirdars" (mill clerks and jobbers), whose illicit earnings have been affected by the change. The multiple system lends itself to numerous abuses and irregularities not easy of detection, whereas the single shift system lightens considerably the work of the factory inspection staff.

During the year under ~~re~~ review there was considerable labour unrest, and stoppages of work were numerous. Most of the strikes were due to demands for higher wages and were short lived, the workers being ultimately forced to resume work unconditionally.

Accidents - The total number of accidents reported during 1928 were 3657, of which 79 were fatal, 1204 serious, and 2374 minor;

the corresponding figures for 1927 being 3551, 66, 1165, and 2320 respectively. The slight increase in the number of accidents is, however, offset by the increase in the number of persons employed. In Assam, the total number of accidents were 85, of which 2 were fatal, 40 serious, and 43 minor, the corresponding figures for 1927 being 67, 5, 34, and 28 respectively.

Prosecutions - In Bengal prosecution proceedings were instituted in 135 cases. Convictions were ~~was~~ obtained in 121 cases, 2 cases ended in acquittal, and 2 were withdrawn, 31 cases were instituted for employing persons beyond or without specified hours, 9 for irregularities in connection with the maintenance of employment registers, 10 for non-compliance with fencing orders, 14 for illegal employment of women, and 22 for illegal employment of children. The report refers to the inadequacy of the penalties imposed by many trying magistrates in cases under the Factories Act.

Industrial Organisation.

The United Provinces Trade Union Conference

The first session of the U.P. Trade Union Conference was held at Cawnpore on the 14th and 15th September 1929, with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the chair. In the course of his long presidential address, the Pandit observed that strikes were instruments to be used only on very grave occasions and ^{even} then after full deliberations and organisation of details. As for the Whitley Commission, he thought it could do no good to the Indian worker, and that it was a clever move on the part of Great Britain to divert the attention of the workers from the real struggle. The first demand of the workers before the Commission should be that the Commission should leave the country. The presence of two labour leaders on the Commission was no argument at all why it should not be boycotted.

At the second day's meeting (15th September), Principal Narendra-deva moved a resolution to the effect that the future constitution of India should pay due regard to the rights of labour and grant it adequate representation, and ~~also~~ ^{laying} special stress on guaranteeing a minimum living wage and unemployment benefits to every worker. The resolution was seconded by Maulana Hazrat Mohani and ^{was} accepted by the Conference.

Another resolution denounced the Government's repressive policy as manifested in the Trades Disputes Act, the Public Safety Ordinance, and the arrest of labour workers.

The resolution which evoked the greatest discussion was the one about the boycott of the Whitley Commission. It ran as follows:-
"In view of the fact that the Whitley Commission has been appointed

at a time when the Meerut Conspiracy case is going on against ~~the~~ a number of labour workers, which has not been withdrawn by the Government in spite of repeated requests of the workers, this Conference is of opinion that co-operation with the Commission is detrimental to the interests of Indian workers, and hence it should be boycotted! The opposition to the resolution was led by Pandit Rajaram Sastri, who said that one failed to understand on what grounds the boycott was advocated of a Commission which had as its object the betterment of the conditions of large masses of workers of the country. Even if the recommendations of the Commission were not accepted, their investigations would at least bring to light the real state of Indian workers. The resolution was, however, adopted.

Another resolution appointed a Committee consisting of Messrs. Jawaharlal Nehru, R.V. Dhulekar, Ganesh Shanker Vidharthi, ~~Khaliquzzaman~~ Khaliquzzaman and Harihar Nath Sastri to investigate into the labour conditions in the United Provinces and prepare a report before the 31st March 1930, based on ^{personal} evidence~~s~~ and statistics, embodying the grievances of the workers and the ways and means of removing them. (summarised from the account given in the Hindustan Times, Delhi, of 20-9-1929).

Indian Seamen's Union.

The annual general meeting of the Indian Seamen's Union, Bombay, was held at Bombay on the 16th September 1929 with Mr. R.S. Asavale in the chair.

According to the annual report presented to the meeting, the general position of the Union had vastly improved, as a result of its registration under the Trade Union Act, and its existence has

been recognised both by the Government and by the shipping companies. As between December 31, 1927 and March 1929 it had increased its members by nearly 3,000. The economic distress prevailing among a considerable section of Indian seamen, due to long terms of unemployment was also reviewed; and a reference was made to the deputation of the Union which waited on the Government of Bombay asking for the appointment of an officer for the purpose of recruiting seamen in Bombay. The financial position of the Union for the year ending 31st March 1929 showed an excess of income over expenditure to the extent of Rs. 90,000, the bulk of which, however, represented arrears of subscriptions.

After the adoption of the report, resolutions were passed advocating payment of compensation to Indian seamen in the event of premature discharges, provision of better and more adequate rations to seamen on board ships, and also improvement of sleeping accommodation ^{of} ~~to~~ seamen aboard ships.

The Madras Labour Union.

The annual meeting of the Madras Labour Union was held at Madras on the 11th September 1929, with Mr. B.P. wadia in the chair.

In the course of the annual report it was stated that though there were over 7,000 members on the rolls of the Union, only about 4,000 could be regarded as regular members. The system of death benefits to the members of the Union, and maternity benefits for the women workers of the Choolai Mills ~~were~~ have been continued. The ~~panel~~ of lawyers helping the Union on legal questions, conducted 12 cases before the Commissioner for ~~the~~ workmen's compensation, and a sum of about Rs. 2,000 was obtained as workmen's compensation by

the members of the Union during the year. The Labour Investigation Bureau of the Union has been carrying on its work of collecting information, which it is expected will be worked up into a memorandum for presentation to the Whitley Commission. Efforts have also been made during the period under report to establish textile unions in various south Indian Textile centres with the object of coordinating them later on into a Textile Federation of India. The Union also noted with satisfaction that the Government have agreed to reserve seats in the Madras Corporation for labour representatives.

In his concluding address the president warned the Union against the dangers attendant upon allying the labour movement of India with foreign movements, whether Bolshevik or not. According to him, it was only by eradicating the causes for disunion from their own ranks that they could succeed in establishing a sound labour movement in the country,

All-India Railwaymen's Federation.

The general council of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation met at Nagpur on the 29th September, 22 representatives from various affiliated unions being present. At the outset, discussion centered on the question of co-operation with the Whitley Commission. While one section wanted it to be completely boycotted in view of the Government's repressive policy and its anti labour measures, another section was prepared for co-operation provided the entire staff of the various railway ^{systems} of India was brought within the scope of the enquiry and representatives chosen by the Federation were given the same status, privileges, and facilities as those enjoyed by the Commissioners themselves during their enquiry. A third section recognised the

futility of such commissions and advised co-operation so as to give a last chance to test the bona fides of the Government. It was finally resolved to defer consideration of the question to the annual convention of the Federation which is to meet at Nagpur in November or December next.

Another resolution considered that the reply of sir George Rainy, the Member of the Government of India in charge of Railways, to the deputation which waited on him last May was unsatisfactory, and appointed a Committee to carry on propaganda throughout the ~~country~~ railways so that within the next three months workers might be prepared for a general strike if the Government do not satisfactorily deal with their minimum demands.

Asiatic Labour Congress.

At page 6 of the special report on the All India Trade Union Congress sent by this office on 3-1-1929, reference has been made to a resolution passed by the executive committee of the All India Trade Union Congress to hold an Asiatic Labour Congress at Bombay in the near future. Mr. Yonekubo, General secretary, Japanese seamen's Union, on his way to Geneva to attend the Maritime session of the International Labour Conference, stopped in India for a few days to confer with the representatives of the All India Trade Union Congress with a view to make final arrangements for the proposed Congress. It may be pointed out that the initiative for the Congress, the first of its kind, was taken when the Japanese and Indian delegates to the 11th session of the International Labour Conference issued a joint memorandum from London in July 1928

advocating the desirability of holding such a Congress. At the informal meeting between the representatives of the All India Trade Union Congress and Mr. Yonekubo that took place on 11 and 12-9-1929 at Bombay, the following proposals were agreed upon:-

(1) The first formal session of the Asiatic Labour Congress should be held towards the end of April or beginning of May, 1930.

(2) The session should, as far as possible, be held in Bombay; but in case, it is found that the time available to the Japanese and Chinese delegates proceeding to Geneva may not be enough so as to enable them to stay in Bombay for the whole session owing to the inconvenient timings of the steamers, the session may be held in Madras.

(3) The session may be held for about a week.

(4) In addition to the agenda^{off} the International Labour Conferences of next year, the Congress should consider inter alia the conditions of the workers in the textile industry in India, Japan, and China.

(5) The draft of the Constitution and the standing Orders may serve as a basis for holding the first session of the Congress.

These proposals, the Constitution, and the standing Orders should be placed before the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Japanese Joint Council, and will be considered as being adopted by them only when they are approved and confirmed by them".

In the draft constitution of the Congress, the objects are stated to be, inter alia:-

(a) To bring about unity among the working classes of Asia by developing closer relations between the trade unions in the affiliated countries.

(b) To remove ~~the~~ disabilities of a discriminatory character

imposed upon Asiatic workers and bring about equality of treatment in working conditions, irrespective of race, nationality, or colour.

(c) To remove the exploitation of workers in Asiatic countries under foreign domination.

(d) To improve the conditions of life and work of the workers in Asiatic countries so as to remove the existing disparities and bring them on a level with those obtaining in countries where social legislation is sufficiently advanced.

(e) To promote the development of international social legislation.

(f) To avert war, establish international peace, and to combat Imperialism and Capitalism.

These objects are to be achieved by democratic and recognised trade union methods, which include co-operation with other organisations in so far as such co-operation appears useful in the interest of the Trade Union Movement in Asia.

The Congress will be open to all the National Trade Union ^{Organisations} Centres in Asiatic countries which accept its objects and methods. The management is vested in the hands of the Executive Council, ^{consisting} of a President, three Vice-Presidents and one General Secretary. The autonomy of each affiliated country is guaranteed. The headquarters of the Congress will be in Bombay, India.

Economic Conditions.

Indian Hide Industry.

A Simla message of the 28th september states that the Government of India have appointed an ad hoc Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Meek, Director of Commercial Intelligence, with seven others as members, including the representatives of the tanning industry and the export trade in raw hides, to inquire ~~into~~ and report on ~~xx~~ articles on which a cess might suitably be imposed, and the rate of cess on each article of export of raw hides. The cess is to be administered by a Committee on the lines of the Central Cotton Committee for the benefit of the industry as a whole.

Madras Cottage Industries Committee.

The Hindu, in its issue of the 16th september announces the appointment of a Committee consisting of Messrs. C.E. Wood, M.L.C., L. K. Tulsiram, M.L.C., Naganna Gowd, M.L.C., T.N. Kalidoss, and Rev. Mr. Thiell of Panruti, to consider the reports of the special Officer, who recently made a survey of cottage industries in several districts of the Presidency, and to recommend proposals to stimulate private effort in the organisation and development of such industries.

Textile Conference Committee.

~~In accepting~~ The Hindu, in its issue of the 14th september says that in accepting the recommendations of the Textile Conference, Government have appointed a Committee to advise them on the steps to be taken to encourage the textile industry in ~~this~~ ~~the~~

Presidency. The Development Minister will be the Chairman of the Committee and the Director of Industries, ^{an} ex-officio member.

Tata Iron and Steel Company.

The 22nd ordinary ~~gms~~ general meeting of the Company was held on 26-9-1929 at Bombay, when the annual report of the company was taken up for consideration. Mr. J.D. Ghandi presiding, said that production during the present year was improving steadily. There was every reason to hope that it would improve still further, and in the cold weather, the company would recover the position it would ^{had} have in the cold weather of last year had there been no strike.

The financial position of the company had become much worse, but fortunately, certain special sums, set aside largely on account of income-tax expected to be paid on profits, were available, since with the disappearance of profits ^{disappeared also} it ~~gained~~ the need for retaining these reserves. The profit and loss account for the year shows a loss of Rs.681,543. The following are the relevant passages from the report:-

"External conditions were not unfavourable, the cost of coal being low and prices remaining fairly stable; but during the entire year from April 1928 to March 1929 ~~the~~ labour at the works was unsettled. Repeated partial strikes and stoppages during April and May culminated in a complete strike on June 1, and most of the units in the works were closed until the men returned to work under a settlement on September 12. This settlement with labour provided for the ultimate reduction of the company's labour force by some 3,000 to 3,500 men, for increments to labour amounting to seven to

eight lakhs of rupees annually, and for a bonus of ten lakhs of rupees a year on normal production. All men leaving the company's service were adequately compensated. The disorganisation following so long a shut-down and the condition of the coke ovens, blast furnaces, steel furnaces and mechanical and electrical equipment generally throughout the plant resulting from it, prevented a rapid return of normal working conditions and, even after the settlement, constant labour agitation and unrest ~~continued~~ continued owing to the disputes between the rival Unions. Further stages and strikes were threatened during December and January, and labour was again agitated by the strike in the Tinsplate Company's works which, though settled originally, broke out again after the close of the year. ~~The~~ ^Production was very seriously affected by this incessant and continued agitation among the men and the consequent loss of profit to the company has been very great.

This is shown in the figures of the production for the year:-

	1927-28 Tons	1928-29 Tons
Coke	739,539	566,182
Pig Iron	644,296	496,737
steel ingots	599,565	396,055
Finished steel products	428,654	275,841

The company, therefore, supplied to the country about 150,000 tons less of steel than in the previous year and this quantity was replaced by imports from foreign countries.

The strike has set back seriously the progress anticipated in

plant operating conditions and in the completion of the programme of construction by which a substantially larger output of steel was expected at a considerably lower cost. The necessity for keeping the shops engaged more on maintenance work and less on construction work has precluded the possibility of completing various items in the construction programme by the anticipated ~~xx~~ dates. The greater part of the new construction programme will be completed by the end of December 1929.

Despatches of raw material from the steel Company's properties have been as follows:- Iron ore 831,129 tons, Dolomite 2,257 tons, Limestone 16,017 tons, Manganese ore 12,660 tons, Magnesite 1419 tons and Fire-clay 1,379 tons.

During the year orders were booked for the following steel materials:- (in tons) Rails 123,485, fishplates 2,990, bars 57,476, light structural 25,517, heavy structural 26,381, plates 33,339, black sheets 15,284, G.C. sheets 9,584 and G.P. sheets 1,914.

The confusion caused by labour troubles at the works interfered considerably with the work of the sales department. ~~xx~~ supplies were not regular and orders booked had to be cancelled and re-booked and cancelled again until the works settled down to normal production and deliveries. One result was a marked increase in the import from other countries of British standard material which is usually required for engineering purposes and which has to be delivered by definite dates. Stock-yards in different parts of India have been started and a large proportion of our steel will ultimately be distributed through them.

One of the chief grievances of our employees is the shortage

housing accommodation. In order to remedy this, the Board sanctioned a town development programme which is estimated to cost Rs.36 lakhs during the next three years. During the year we have constructed 71 blocks of various types which would accommodate 264 families.

A new wing of the Hospital was opened during the year with accommodation for 70 more in-patients.

sir Malcolm Watson visited Jamshedpur during the year at the invitation of the board of directors and prepared a programme for the prevention of malaria both in the town and at the mining camps. This programme is being carried out by the company and should materially improve the health of the town.

The average daily attendance of labour at the works from October 1928 to March 1929 was 19,025 and that of the outside departments was 2,119; both figures exclude contractors' ~~pay roll in the~~ ~~at of April 1928~~ labour. The covenanted staff on the pay roll on the 1st of April 1928 was 148, and on the 31st March 1929, 134, a reduction of 14. Locally employed Europeans number 25 as against 28 in the previous year".

CO-OPERATION.Progress of the Co-operative movement
in India*

A recent publication of the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics of the Government of India gives interesting details about the progress of Co-operation in the country.

The principal types of Co-operative Societies in India are (a) Central Unions (including Provincial and central Banks and Banking Unions), (b) Supervising and Guaranteeing Unions (including Reinsurance Societies), (c) Agricultural Societies (including Cattle Insurance Societies), and Non-Agricultural Societies. The progress of the Co-operative movement in India can be gauged from the following figures :- In the period 1906 - 07 to 1909 - 10 there were 1926 societies of all kinds in India; in the period 1910 - 11 to 1914 - 15 there were 11,786 societies; in the period 1915 - 16 to 1919 - 20 there were 28,477 societies; in the period 1920 - 21 to 1924 - 25 there were 57,707 societies; and in 1927 - 28 there were 96,091 societies. The number of societies per 1,00,000 inhabitants in 1927-28, stood at 35.5 in British India, and 40.9 in the nine Indian states for which figures are given. The total number of members for primary societies for India is as follows :- In the period 1910 - 07 to 1909-10 -- 161,910 members; 1910 - 11 to 1911 - 15 -- 548,253 members; 1915 - 16 to 1919 - 20 -- 1,128,961 members; 1920 - 21 to 1924 - 25 -- 2,154,607 members; 1925 - 1926 -- 3,058,025 members; 1926 - 27 -- 3,421,905 members; and 1927 - 28 -- 3,780,175 members. The number of members of primary societies per

*Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, India. Statistical Statements relating to the Co-operative Movement in India during the year 1927-28. Published by order of the Governor-General in Council. Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch, 1929. Price Annas 14 or 1s.6d. (pp 21).

100 inhabitants in 1927-28 stood at 13.5 for British India, at 15.0 for Indian States, and for the whole of India at 13.5. The figures for Working Capital for all India is as follow :- In the 1906-7 to 1909-10 -- Rs.68,12,000; 1910-11 to 1914-15 -- Rs. 5,48,42,000; 1915-16 to 1919-20 -- Rs.15,18,47,000; 1920-21 to 1924-25 -- Rs.56,36,26,000; 1925-26 -- Rs.57,60,39,000; 1926-27 -- Rs.67,95,61,000; and 1927-28 -- Rs.76,70,87,000. The Working Capital of Co-operative Societies expressed in terms of annas per head of the population in 1927-28 stood at 46 annas in British India, and 30 annas in the Indian States, or at 44 annas for the whole of India.

The financial position of all classes of Societies ~~was in a~~ ^{seems to be} sound ~~conditions~~ In 1927-28, 589 provincial and Central banks with a membership of 109,150 individuals and 93,087 societies had reserve funds amounting to Rs.1,30,26,659, working capital amounting to Rs.26,90,74,961, and a profit of Rs.48,28,751. No less impressive are the figures in these respects for agricultural and non-agricultural societies. In 1927-28, 84,559 agricultural societies with a membership of 2,870,575 had reserve funds amounting to Rs.4,57,66,332, working capital amounting to Rs.30,09,41,838, profits amounting to Rs.1,05,45,785. Similarly, in the case of non-agricultural societies, 903,447 societies with a membership of 8,60,48,124 had reserve funds amounting to Rs.77,18,674, working capital amounting to Rs.11,76,77,328, and profits amounting to Rs.45,25,425.

Agriculture.

Indian Sugar Committee.

Following the announcement of the British Colonial Office of the terms of reference of the west Indian sugar Commission on the 16th september, the Government of India has appointed a sugar Committee under the auspices of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research to advise on the steps which should be taken to assist the Indian sugar Industry. The personnel of the Committee is as follows:-

- Chairman : Sir T. Vijayaraghavacharya, Vice-Chairman of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research;
- Members : Mr. B.C. Burt, Agricultural adviser to the Council
 C. Mukhtar Singh, M.L.A.;
 Mr. W. Hirachand, C.I.E., Bombay;
 Mr. G. W. Clarke, U.P. Department of Agriculture;
 Khan Bahadur Fatehuddin of the Punjab Department of Agriculture;
 Mr. G.S. Henderson of the Bihar and Orissa Department of Agriculture;
 Dr. W. McRai, Pusa Research Institute;
 Mr. T.S. Venkataraman, Madras Agricultural Department;
 Babu H.S. Gupta, Zemindar, U.P.,
 sardar sir Sunder Singh Majithia, Zemindar, Punjab
- Secretary : Mr. A.S.M. Hydari, Secretary of the Council.

The Committee, which will have power to co-opt, is expected to begin its work on the 19th October 1929.

Shellac Industry in Bihar.

As another example of the close ~~xxxxxx~~ connection between ~~the~~ Imperial economic policy and the development of Indian industries, it may be mentioned that the British Empire Marketing Board is collaborating with the Bihar Government for developing the shellac industry in that province. A Lac Marketing Expert in London has been appointed for 5 years to whose salary the Empire Marketing Board will contribute £500 per annum. For the last 5 years research has been carried out at the Lac Research Institute at Ranchi for improving methods of cultivation and securing a steady supply of the natural product. The next step necessary is to fix standards of quality according to which shellac is to be manufactured. For this purpose it is necessary to ascertain the requirements of other industry^{ies} utilising shellac and see how far Indian samples comply with these standards. The appointment of the Expert will facilitate this organising, intelligence and research work. The creation of a new officer has been considered necessary since this industry is of vital importance to Bihar and Orissa which supply more than half the world's lac requirements.

Jute Industry in Bengal.

The Statesman of 18-9-1929 gives an account of a lecture on the jute industry delivered by the Director of Industries, Bengal.

The speaker said that the manufacture of gunny chats from jute fibre was essentially an indigenous industry, and it was a widespread cottage industry till the middle of last century. The connection

of Dundee with the Jute industry dates from 1830, and it was not till 1838 that the problem of adapting jute fibre to the kind of machinery previously utilised for flax was solved. There are approximately 90 jute mills in the Calcutta area stretching over a length of 50 miles from Budge Budge to Bansberia along the river Hooghly. Of these mills some six are entirely owned and managed by Indian companies, while the rest are still managed mostly by Scottish concerns. The daily production today is approximately 5,000 tons of spun yarn and some 8,000 miles of woven cloth.

Assam Tea.

In his report on tea culture in Assam for 1928, the Director of Agriculture in Assam says that the number of gardens at the end of 1928 was 980, of which 220 belonged to Indians. The total area under tea continued to increase from 423,891 acres in 1927 to 427,225 acres in 1928, the increase being fairly well spread over the whole province, except Nowgong. The area plucked also increased from 399,930 acres to 403,906 acres during the year and represents 94.5 per cent of the total area under tea. The area owned by Indians was 43,101 acres.

The total area of land comprised within the tea estates in Assam was 1,629,524 acres, of which 26.2 per cent was actually under tea. Of this acreage, 230,939 acres were owned by Indians.

The daily average number of labourers employed in the gardens during the year was 543,920, the permanent garden labour being 468,391, permanent outside labour 33,368 and temporary outside labour 42,161. Shortage of labour still prevails in the districts of

Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur. The incidence of area under tea on labour during the year comes to .78 acre per man against .79 acre in 1927.

Indian capitalists continue to take keen interest in the industry as is evidenced by the fact that the area under tea continued to be on the increase and that more gardens were started by them during the year. There is still a crying need for labour in places as recruitment is poor.

Indian Rubber statistics, 1928.

The number of plantations in 1928 was 2,782, covering an area of 245,809 acres, as against 1,912 with an area of 228,756 acres in the preceding year. New lands planted with rubber in the estates during the year 1928, so far reported amounted to 18,076 acres, and the area of old cultivation abandoned to 3,317 acres, showing a net increase of 14,759 acres over the total area of 152,257 acres in 1927. The total area under rubber in the year under report was thus 167,016 acres, which is nearly 10 per cent above the area of the previous year, and of this area only 108,585 acres were tapped. Of the total area under cultivation, about 53 per cent was in Burma, 30 per cent in Travancore, 9 per cent in Madras, 6 per cent in Cochin and 2 per cent in Coorg and Mysore.

The total production of raw rubber during the year is reported to be 26,839,332 lbs. a year ago. The yield per acre of tapped area was 280 (259) lbs in Cochin, 260 (255) lbs in Travancore, 240 (219) lbs in Madras, 239 (256) lbs in Burma, 174 (166) lbs in Coorg, and 20 (36) lbs in Mysore, the figures for 1927 being shown in brackets.

There was a general increase in the production in the year under review, except in Burma which showed a slight fall.

The daily average number of persons employed in the plantations during 1928 was returned at 58,292, of which 40,982 were permanently employed and 17,310 temporarily employed, as compared with 52,899 (46,236 permanent and 6,663 temporary) in the preceding year.

The total stock of dry rubber held on the 31st December, 1928 was estimated at 5,854,148 lbs as against 4,327,246 lbs on the same date of 1927.

The exports of rubber by sea from British India to foreign countries during 1928-29 amounted to 25.8 million lbs, showing an increase of about 2 per cent as compared with the preceding year. The United Kingdom absorbed 37 per cent, Ceylon 24 per cent, the Straits Settlements 21 per cent and the United States of America 14 per cent of the total exports. Madras accounted for 55 per cent and Burma 45 per cent of the total trade.

MIGRATION.

INDIAN LABOUR IN CEYLON PLANTATIONS*

According to the report on the working of the Indian Emigration Act and of the Labour ordinances of Ceylon during the year 1928, recently issued by the Agent of the Government of India in Ceylon, out of a total population of 5.25 millions in the island, about 90,000 were Indians (Labourers and others). The average number of Indian labourers reported as working in Ceylon estates during the quarter ending the 30th September 1928, was 718,728 of which 238,132 were men; 232,470 were women, and 248,126 were children. The number of the estates employing Indian labour during the year was 1,967. 133,712 Indian estate labourers went into Ceylon during the year, and the number of departures from Ceylon to India was 93,596 leaving a net flow of immigration into the island of 40,116. Recruitment is undertaken by "Kanganies" who are licensed for the purpose, and the number of recruiting licenses issued by the Agent of the Indian Government during the year was 20,326. Only 28 cases of alleged irregular recruitment were brought to the notice of the Agent, and in all these cases he recommended prosecution under section 28 of the Act.

All the provisions of the Minimum Wage Ordinance, with the exception of the cardinal one relating to the payment of minimum rates of wages, came into force on 24-12-1927 when the ordinance received the assent of the Governor. Sometime later were set up Estates Wages Boards, and the award of these boards were finally approved towards the end of the year. The Minimum Wage Ordinance

* Report on the working of the Indian Emigration Act, 1922 (VII of 1922), the rules issued thereunder and of the Labour Ordinances of Ceylon during the year 1928. By the Agent of the Government of India in Ceylon, Calcutta Government Press, Central Publication Branch, 1929. Price Re.1 or 1s.9d. pp 22.

therefore came into effective force only from the beginning of 1929. With the coming into force of this ordinance, the Agent thinks that the limit of what can be achieved in securing reasonable conditions of work and wages for Indian labour, apart from the provision of adequate medical facilities which question still awaits solution, has for some time to come been reached. The extent to which Indian labourers benefit under the new ordinance will depend largely upon their own efforts to assert their rights under it. There are certain classes of abuses which exist on certain estates in the removal of which the labourer himself can play a more effective part than any Government Department.

While it is no doubt true that, considered purely from the point of view of his daily existence, the Indian labourer in Ceylon seems to be fairly well off, the Agent still feels that his economic position in Ceylon is yet susceptible of improvement by his own efforts. The factors that which operate against him are his lack of education, his inability to look ahead, his periodic migration from estate to estate and lastly his disinclination to put in any more work than is needed to bring him enough for his daily wants. The Agent considers that what the Indian labourer in Ceylon needs is a more positive kind of help than being merely protected against oppression. He must be trained to make better use of his opportunities and to lead a fuller life than he does to-day. So far as the education of the labourers' children is concerned, it is satisfactory to note that some progress is being made. The

number of registered estate-schools at the end of 1928 was 364 as compared with 304 a year earlier, and the total number of children of schoolgoing age at the end of September 1928 was 81,858 of whom 37,400 were attending school.

Every estate labourer is entitled to get free medical attendance, but it is not always that he gets it. In 1928 there were only 81 hospitals and 684 dispensaries maintained by the estates; though, in addition, there were 65 hospitals and 104 dispensaries maintained by the Government for Indian labourers. The slow progress made in the voluntary provision of facilities for the treatment of maternity cases on estates as well as the fact that there are even today some estates which employ no "dispenser" at all make the speedy passage of a Medical Wants Ordinance a matter of urgency. In this connection it may be noted that while the rate of infant mortality per thousand for the whole of Ceylon was only 160 in 1927, that among the Indian estate population in the island was so high as 228. It is also worth noting that while the general death rate per thousand of the population was 21.7 for the whole of Ceylon in 1927, that among the Indian estate population was 28.2. These figures make it obvious that the standard of health on the estates is lower than that in the entire Island, and explain the insistence with which the Agent of the Government of India presses for a speedy enactment of the Medical Wants Ordinance.

As regards the general question of the presence of a large number of Indian workers in Ceylon, the Agent makes a remark which is worthy of notice. He says that extreme critics both in Ceylon and in India of the emigration system overlook two considerations -

One is that the Indian Emigrant labourer, whether assisted or not, does not displace indigenous labour but fills a void which the latter cannot fill,; the other is that the emigrant would not leave his home if, after weighing the balance of economic advantages, he did not consider it worth his while to do so.