

C 1303/130

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

INDIAN BRANCH

Report for September 1939.

N.B. Every section of this Report may be taken out separately.

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1. <u>National Labour Legislation.-</u>	
<u>Government of India:</u>	
(a) The Draft Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Rules, 1939.	1
(b) The Workmen's Compensation (Second Amendment) Act, 1939.	1
<u>Ajmer-Merwara:</u>	
(c) The Draft Ajmer-Merwara Employment of Children (Workshops) Rules, 1939.	1
<u>Bombay:</u>	
(d) Extension of the Factories Act to Brick Manufacturing Concerns.	2
(e) Extension of the Factories Act to Gur Manufacturing Concerns.	2
(f) Amendment to Payment of Wages Rules, 1937.	2
<u>British Baluchistan:</u>	
(g) Extension of the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act, 1939.	2
<u>Central Provinces and Berar:</u>	
(h) The Draft C.P. and Berar Employment of Children (Workshops) Rules, 1939.	3
(i) Draft Amendment to the Factories Rules.	3
<u>Delhi:</u>	
(j) The Draft Delhi Province Employment of Children (Workshops) Rules, 1939.	3
<u>Punjab:</u>	
(k) The Proposed Lahore Municipality Rent Restriction Bill, 1939.	3-4
<u>United Provinces:</u>	
(l) The U.P. Shops Bill.	4
<u>Burma:</u>	
(m) The Cargo-Boats Crew Wages Bill, 1939.	5
(n) The Draft Burma Boilers (Amendment) Bill, 1939.	5
2. <u>Conditions of Labour.-</u>	
(a) Institute of Industrial Fatigue and Psychology for India: Indian Mining Association opposes Scheme.	6
(b) Government Proposals for Improving Labour Conditions in Bengal Mines: Indian Mining Association's Partial Support.	6-7
(c) Views of Millowners' Association, Bombay, on C.P. and Berar Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery Bill, 1938.	7-8

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Pages</u>
(d) Grievances of Building Workers of Bombay; Demands formulated.	8-9
(e) Conditions of Work in Bidi Industry in C.P.: Government orders Enquiry.	9
(f) Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for various Centres in India during July 1939.	10
(g) Changes in Railway Labour Administration; Offices of Conciliation Officer and Supervisor of Railway Labour Amalgamated.	10-11
3. <u>Enforcement of Conventions.-</u>	
(a) Factory Administration in Assam, 1938.	12
(b) Factory Administration in Burma, 1938.	13-14
4. <u>Intellectual Workers.-</u>	
The Employment of Teachers' Bill, 1939, Burma.	15
5. <u>Social Conditions.-</u>	
(a) Opium-smoking declining in India: Findings of Enquiry by School of Tropical Medicine.	16
(b) Prohibition in Jharia Coalfields: Labour Welfare Centre formed.	16-17
6. <u>Public Health.-</u>	
(a) Food and Nutrition Exposition: Initiative of Calcutta Corporation.	18
(b) Incidence of Tuberculosis among Calcutta Jute Mill Workers: Results of Enquiry by I.R.F.Association.	18-19
(c) Public Health Problems in India in 1937.	20-22
7. <u>Education.-</u>	
(a) Progress of Adult Education in Bombay.	23-24
(b) The B. & O. Primary Education (Amendment) Bill, 1939; Bihar Efforts to introduce Compulsory Primary Education.	24-25
8. <u>Agriculture.-</u>	
(a) The Burma Land Purchase Bill, 1939.	26
(b) Working of the Debt Redemption Scheme in Bhavnagar State.	26-27
9. <u>Maritime Affairs.-</u>	
(a) Demand of Indian Seamen for Compensation for War Accidents: Government sanctions Compensation Clause in Articles of Agreement.	28
(b) Increase Wages for Indian Seamen: Decision of Steamship Companies.	28-29
(c) Mr.P.N.Sapru's Resolution regarding Enquiry into conditions of Indian Seamen; Withdrawn on Government's Assurance.	29-30

	<u>pages</u>
10. <u>Migration.</u> -	
(a) Working Conditions in Ceylon: Report of the Controller of Labour, 1938.	31-37 31-37
11. <u>General.</u> -	
(a) Labour Policy of C.P. Government: Industries Minister's Statement.-	38-40
(b) National Planning Committee: Pandit Nehru urges Committee to function fully during War Period	40.
12. <u>List of more important publications received in this office during September 1939.</u>	41-42

National Labour Legislation.

+ Attention is directed to the following:

Government of India:

The Draft Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Rules, 1939.

The above rules have been proposed to be adopted by the Government of India under the Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Act, 1939.

(Notification No. M-955, dated 24-8-1939: The Gazette of India, Part I, dated 26-8-1939, pages 1469 to 1473).

Government of India:

The Workmen's Compensation (Second Amendment) Act, 1939.

The Government of India introduced on 21-9-1939 the Workmen's Compensation (Second Amendment) Bill, 1939, in order to make provision for war risks of Indian seamen. The statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill points out that under the British Personal Injuries (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1939, amongst other groups, seamen who sustain injuries in certain circumstances are entitled to compensation from the State. Under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 (VIII of 1923), seamen sustaining similar injuries are in certain circumstances entitled to claim compensation from their employers. To prevent the possibility of this double claim for the same injuries, it is proposed to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, taking away from seamen any right to claim compensation under that Act in cases where they are entitled to compensation under the Personal Injuries (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1939. A similar provision is contained in the latter Act as regards persons to whom the Workmen's Compensation Acts of the United Kingdom apply. (The Gazette of India, Part V, dated 23-9-1939, pages 257 to 258).

The Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 29-9-1939. The text of the Act is published at page 229 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 30-9-1939. (The Statesman, 23-9-1939).

Ajmer-Merwara:

The Draft Ajmer-Merwara Employment of Children (Workshops) Rules, 1939.

These rules which the Chief Commissioner, Ajmer-Merwara, proposes to make under the Employment of Children Act, 1938, deal with the powers of Inspectors appointed under the Act and with the form of certificate of fitness required under it. The rules are to apply to workshops.

(Notification No. 233-C/85-A/39 dated 18-8-1939: The Gazette of India, Part II-A, dated 26-8-1939, page 519).

2
Bombay: †

Extension of the Factories Act to Brick manufacturing Concerns.

Reference was made at page 14 of our November 1937 report to the extension of the Factories Act to a variety of concerns till then unregulated, including those engaged in manufacturing bricks which employed 50 or more persons without using power. It is now notified that the Act has been extended to brick manufacturing concerns employing 20 or more persons without using power.

(Notification No. 1822/34 dated 23-8-1939: The Bombay Government Gazette, Part IV-A, dated 31-8-1939, page 1600).

Bombay:

Extension of the Factories Act to Gur Manufacturing Concerns.

The Government of Bombay has extended the Factories Act to power-factories engaged in gur manufacturing from sugarcane juice which employ 10 or more workers.

(Notification No. 2217/34 dated 31-8-1939: The Bombay Gazette, Part IV-A, dated 7-9-1939, page 1700).

Bombay:

Amendment to Payment of Wages Rules, 1937.

The amendment relates to the form in which returns regarding wages paid by employers have to be submitted to the Government.

(Notification No. P.119 dated 12-9-1939: The Bombay Government Gazette, Part IV-A, dated 21-9-1939 page 1721).

British Baluchistan:

Extension of the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act, 1939.

The Government of India has notified the extension of several central enactments to British Baluchistan; among the Acts extended is the Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act, 1939.

(Notification No. 178-F dated 22-8-1939: The Gazette of India, Part I, dated 26-8-1939, page 1450).

Central Provinces and Berar :The Draft C.P. and Berar Employment of Children (Workshops) Rules, 1939.

These rules which the Government of the Central Provinces and Berar proposes to make under the Employment of Children Act, 1938, deal with the powers of Inspectors appointed under the Act and with the form of certificate of fitness required under it. The rules are to apply to workshops.

(Notification No. 3901-1368-VII, dated 30-8-1939: Central Provinces and Berar Gazette, Part III, dated 1-9-1939, page 1213).

Central Provinces and Berar :Draft Amendment to the Factories Rules.

The Government of the Central Provinces proposes to amend the Factories Rules so as to dispense with, in the case of factories which regularly observe Sunday or any other fixed day as weekly holiday or which observe holidays according to a list approved by the Inspector, the obligation imposed on employers to submit monthly returns of holidays observed in their factories.

(Notification No. 4063-1445-VII, dated 11-9-1939: The Central Provinces and Berar Gazette, Part III, dated 15-9-1939, page 1283).

Delhi :The Draft Delhi Province Employment of Children (Workshops) Rules, 1939.

These rules which the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, proposes to make under the Employment of Children Act, 1938, deal with the powers of Inspectors appointed under the Act and with the form of certificate of fitness required under it. The rules are to apply to workshops.

(Notification No. F-37/39-L.S. G/Industries, dated 19-8-1939: The Gazette of India, Part II-A, dated 26-8-1939, page 522).

Punjab :The Proposed Lahore Municipality Rent Restriction Bill, 1939.

The Government of the Punjab is proposing to introduce shortly the Lahore Municipality Rent Restriction Bill, 1939. The Bill seeks

G.4.

to restrict in Lahore City the increase of rents of premises fetching monthly rentals of Rs. 400 and under. The statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill states that, in consequence of the tax imposed on buildings and lands within the limits of the Lahore Municipality, it has been found that attempts are being made by landlords to pass on the extra burden to tenants. This would press heavily on the middle and poorer sections of the community; it has, therefore, been deemed necessary to protect this class of tenants and to ensure that their rents are not increased on account of the new tax on buildings and lands.

(The Government Gazette Extraordinary Punjab: dated 20-9-1939, pages 315 to 318).

United Provinces:

The U.P. Shops Bill.

Reference was made at page 6 of our August 1939 report to the proposed U.P. Shops Bill. The salient features of the Bill are given below:

- (1) Children under fourteen years of age are prohibited from employment.
- (2) The maximum working hours, including interval, is fixed at nine hours.
- (3) All the shops, barring exceptions noted in the Bill, shall be closed for a day every week.
- (4) Shops will also be closed on all public holidays and for all such holidays pay will be given to employees.
- (5) Wages shall be paid fortnightly and within a week after they are due.
- (6) No employee shall be discharged without a month's notice.
- (7) In case of contravention of any provisions of the Act by any employer, a fine up to Rs. 100 in the first instance, up to Rs. 250 in the second instance, and up to Rs. 500 in subsequent instances shall be imposed.

The Act applies to the whole of the United Provinces, but, in the first instance, it shall be enforced only in cities with a population of 100,000 or over.

(September 1939 issue of "Public Information" issued by the Public Information Department of the Government of the United Provinces).

Burma:

Burma :The Cargo-Boats Crew Wages Bill, 1939.

The Cargo-Boats Crew Wages Bill, 1939, a non-official measure, has recently been introduced in the Burma House of Representatives.

In the statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill, it is pointed out that certain boat-owners of Rangoon and other places have been making considerable delay in the payment of wages or salaries to the crew of their boats. In other cases, the serangs or tindals take bribes from their crew at the time of engaging them; bribes are also paid whenever there is a change in the personnel of the crew or the serangs or tindals. The Bill is designed to prevent these abuses.

(The Burma Gazette, Part III,
dated 2-9-1939, page 198).+

Burma :The Draft Burma Boilers (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The Government of Burma proposes to introduce shortly a Bill to amend the Boilers Act. The statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill points out that, as the Law now stands, an Inspector of Boilers cannot pass orders in respect of any steam-pipe of 3 inches diameter or under, or on any feed-water-pipe, no matter in what state of disrepair they may be, or however unsafe the design of the installation may be. The object of the Bill is so to amend the Boilers Act that supervision of all steam-pipes and feed-pipes, including all fittings, shall be exercised by the Boiler Department with a view to reducing to a minimum, danger to person and property.

(The Burma Gazette, Part III,
dated 9-9-1939, page 228). +

Conditions of Labour.Institute of Industrial Fatigue and Psychology
for India: Indian Mining Association opposes Scheme.

Reference was made at page 7 of our August 1959 report to the suggestion of the Bihar Labour Enquiry Committee that an Institute of Industrial Fatigue and Psychology should be established in India. The Committee of the Indian Mining Association has, in expressing its views on the suggestion, stated that while the Committee supported the proposal in principle, it felt that India was not yet ready to ~~entertain~~ ^{establish} an Institute of this nature and that present conditions of labour in the country were such that its establishment would lead to further labour unrest. The Committee added that it was in agreement with the views expressed by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that there are many more practical and useful amenities which have still to be provided in the industrial and labour fields before funds can be devoted to ^a scheme, such as that proposed by the Bihar Labour Enquiry Committee, and it was considered that for the present the matter should be left to individual enterprise.

(Printed Proceedings of the Meeting of the Committee of the Indian Mining Association, Calcutta, held on 24-8-1959).+

Government Proposals for Improving Labour
Conditions in Bengal Mines: Indian Mining Association's
Partial Support.

Reference was made at page 15 of our April 1959 report to the proposals put forward by the Labour Commissioner, Bengal, to improve conditions of labour in Bengal mines. The Committee of the Indian Mining Association, expressed its views on the proposals as follow:

Minimum Wage Rates.- The establishment of a minimum wage rate per tub would be difficult in its general application to all collieries owing to the differing conditions prevailing in different mines, and the different methods of ~~winning~~ ^{winning} coal, by hand cutting, by machines, and by roof and floor blasting. The Association would be prepared, however, to examine the question in consultation with

7.2. Government.

Sickness Insurance Schemes.- Contributory schemes of sickness insurance would be unworkable in collieries in Bengal on account of the migratory habits of the labour force.

Management-controlled Shops and Stores.- Many colliery bazars already exist under the supervision and control of the colliery manager, and the Association would be prepared to encourage the extension of these with controlled prices for foodstuffs and other necessities.

Arbitration Boards.- The Bengal coalfield has been so far singularly free from labour disturbances and the setting up of arbitration boards is, at the moment, unnecessary and might have the effect of unsettling the labour force.

Recognition of Unions.- With regard to trade unions, the Committee expressed the opinion that colliery labour was too migratory to permit of the formation of genuine labour unions, but added that they would be prepared to advise members of the Association to recognise any union which conformed with the conditions which were set out in a note prepared by Industrial Legislation Sub-Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce in May 1938.

(Printed Proceedings of the Meeting of the Committee of the Indian Mining Association, Calcutta, held on 24-8-1939).+

Views of Millowners' Association, Bombay, on C.P. and Berar Minimum-Wage Fixing Machinery Bill, 1938.

References were made at pages 6 and 4 of our November 1938 and August 1939 reports respectively to the C.P. and Berar Minimum-Wage Fixing Machinery Bill, 1938, now before the Central Provinces Legislative Assembly. The following views on the Bill have been expressed by the Millowners' Association, Bombay.

No accurate Data of Present Conditions available.- The C.P. Provincial Textile Labour Inquiry Committee stated: "In the absence of a properly conducted wage census or periodical enquiries into the wages in the textile industry, it is scarcely possible to make an accurate survey of the wage position in the industry in the Province."

The Inquiry Committee themselves did not conduct a regular wage census, nor did the Central Provinces Government conduct an enquiry subsequently. In the circumstances, the statement that "the workers in industrial and other occupations are paid very low wages which are considerably below the real value of the work done" is not justified and the Association maintains that in the case of cotton

mill workers the statement is entirely unwarranted.

What is a reasonable Standard of Living.- The Bill seeks to provide machinery "for fixing minimum wages based on reasonable standard of living." The Bill should have provided for a definition of the term "reasonable standard of living of workers" and what items it includes. Any legislation to provide for the payment of a minimum wage of the nature contemplated must be preceded by exhaustive investigation — which must be as broadly based as possible — to ascertain and report on: (a) what constitutes a reasonable standard of living for unskilled workers? (b) what is the average composition of a worker's family and whether the earnings of all members of the family should be taken into account or only the earnings of the head of the family? (c) what items should be provided for in fixing such a standard? (d) whether a minimum should be fixed only for adult unskilled workers or all workers? (e) the capacity of the industry to pay the wage proposed.

Machinery not needed for Textile Industry.- Article I of the I.L. Convention regarding Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (1928) prescribes the setting up of minimum wage fixing machinery only to those trades "in which no arrangements exist for the effective regulation of wages by collective agreement or otherwise, and wages are exceptionally low." Referring to this Convention, the Bombay Strike Inquiry Committee in 1928-29 said: "It thus excludes from its scope trades, or ~~or~~ even parts thereof, in which although wages may be exceptionally low the workers are sufficiently organised to conclude collective agreements, or, even if un-organised, are protected by other equally effective arrangements." The textile industry in India is by no means a sweated industry and textile workers must be included among the more prosperous members of the working class, and, in the circumstances, the Association feels that, even if the Central Provinces Government desires to proceed with the Bill, a case exists for its application being limited to industries which fall within the scope of the Convention adopted by the International Labour Conference.

(Summarised from the Report
of the Millowners' Association,
Bombay, for 1938).+

Grievances of Building Workers of Bombay:

Demands formulated. +

A meeting of Bombay City's building workers, numbering about 60,000, was held on 19-9-1939 at Bombay with Mr. Jalal-Uddin Bokhari in the chair to consider the grievances of building workers and to formulate their demands; the meeting, the first of its kind, was held under the auspices of the Bombay Building Workers' Union.

Presidential Address.- In the course of his presidential address, Mr. Bokhari said that ~~the~~ building construction was one of the most important industries in Bombay. For the last few years there had been a boom period in it. This had attracted thousands of rural workers to the trade but they have been working under very unfavourable conditions. The wages were very low and varied for the same work under different employers. Hours of work were not fixed and employers did not make any arrangement for the housing of the workers. Mr. Bokhari also stressed the need for building workers to be better organised for getting their disabilities redressed and advised them to join the Building Workers' Union in large numbers.

Resolutions: Workers' Demands.- A resolution was adopted setting forth building workers' demands; they are: (1) a 9-hour day with one hour rest interval; (2) a weekly day of rest; (3) 15 days' leave with pay per annum; (4) prompt payment of Wages before the 10th of every month; (5) licensing of contractors employing labour; (6) realisation by Government of adequate security amounts from contractors as a guarantee for prompt payment of wages, and (7) no dismissal of workers without reasonable cause.

Organisation of Workers.- The Conference also resolved to strengthen the Building Workers' Union by enrolling members in large numbers.

(The Bombay Chronicle,
21-9-1939). +

Conditions of Work in Bidi Industry in C.P:
Government orders Enquiry.

Reference was made at page 33/4 of this report under section "General" to the statement of the Industries Minister, Central Provinces, that his Government intended appointing a Committee to enquire into the bidi (country cigarette) industry of the Province. It is now understood that a Committee has been appointed which will study the position of the industry in the Province vis-a-vis the industry on an all-India basis and suggest measures to the Government to improve the position of the bidi industry of the Province. The Committee will also examine the grievances of the workers in the bidi factories regarding wages and security of service and investigate the complaint in regard to the application of the Unregulated Factories Act and the Payment of Wages Act to the bidi and lac factories and suggest modifications to suit local conditions and special requirements of the ^{two} industries

(The National Call, 22-9-1939).

(vide also page 862 of Part I of the C. P. & Berar Gazette dated 29-9-1939) +

10

Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers
for various Centres in India during July 1939.

The cost of living index number for working classes in various centres of India registered the following changes during July 1939 as compared with the preceding month.

Bombay.- The index number (base: year ending June 1934) of the cost of living for working classes in Bombay in July 1939 rose by 1 point to 105. The average for 1938 was 105.

Ahmedabad.- The index number (base: year ending July 1927) of the cost of living in Ahmedabad during July 1939 was unchanged at 72. The average for 1938 was 71.

Sholapur.- The index number (base: year ending January 1928) of the cost of living in Sholapur during July 1939 remained stationary at 74. The average for 1938 was 72.

Nagpur.- The index number (base: year ending January 1927) of the cost of living in Nagpur in July 1939 remained unchanged at 60.

Jubbulpore.- The index number (base: January 1927) of the cost of living in Jubbulpore in July 1939 rose by 1 point to 58.

Madras.- The index number (base: year ending June 1936) of the cost of living in Madras during July 1939 declined by 1 point to 98.

(Extracted from the July 1939 issue of the Monthly Survey of Business Conditions in India).

Changes in Railway Labour Administration:

Offices of Conciliation Officer and Supervisor of Railway Labour
Amalgamated.

There are at present two gazetted officers under the Labour Department of the Government of India concerned with labour on Railways, the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and the Supervisor of Railway Labour. These two officers now function separately. The duties of the Conciliation Officer, whose headquarters are at Calcutta, are to establish contact with the administrations of the railways with which he is concerned ^{and} with recognized Trade Unions of employees of these railways. His duty in case of any

dispute occurring or threatening is to endeavour to bring the parties to a settlement and, at other times, use his good offices to maintain harmonious relations. His duties at present extend to the East Indian and Eastern Bengal Railways. The Supervisor of Railway Labour is stationed at Delhi. His duties are to see that the Hours of Employment Regulations and the Payment of Wages Act are being properly administered in the various railways in India.

According to a communiqué issued by the Government of India, experience has shown that for a proper working of the organisation under the Supervisor of Railway Labour, there should be an intermediate officer between the Inspectorate and the Supervisor. It is also desirable to bring the Conciliation Officer, whose duties are now confined entirely to conciliation work, into more intimate contact with the day to day administration of labour law affecting railways. In the interest of efficiency, it is accordingly proposed that with effect from December 1939 the office of the Conciliation Officer should be combined with that of the Supervisor of Railway Labour, and that the Conciliation Officer should undertake the duties of the Supervisor of Railway Labour in addition to his own and that a new post of Deputy Supervisor of Railway Labour should be created to carry on day to day duties of Railway Labour Inspection. The Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour will be an officer^x drawn from the ranks of the Indian Civil Service and his headquarters will be at Calcutta. The Deputy Supervisor of Railway Labour will work with his headquarters at Delhi.

(The Statesman, 5-10-1939) ↓

* Mr A. Khaleeli, I.C.S., has now been appointed to
his post.

Enforcement of Conventions.

Factory Administration in Assam, 1938.*

Number of Factories.- The number of factories in Assam under the operation of the Factories Act at the end of 1938 was 783, an increase of 27. During the year under review 34 factories were brought on the Register and 7 factories were removed therefrom. Of the 783 factories 113 were perennial and 670 seasonal. 18 factories remained closed during the year.

Number of Workers.- The number of workers in registered factories during 1938 was 50,677 (as against 48,525 in 1937). Of these, 7,477 were in perennial factories and 43,200 in seasonal factories. Of the 50,677 workers, 10,681 were women, 3,394 adolescents and 1,062 children, while the rest were adult males.

Inspection Staff.- In giving evidence before the Retrenchment Committee of 1938, the Chief Inspector gave figures showing the increase in factories and electrical establishments and of the four-fold increase in correspondence handled. It is becoming impossible for him to tour as much as is desirable in an area like Assam where, until an adequate staff of experienced inspectors is built up, it is essential the Chief Inspector himself should tour if touch is to be properly maintained with industry.

The report also remarks that with only one whole-time inspector it is obvious that nearly 800 factories — particularly as the 670 odd tea factories only manufacture from April to November when roads are not too passable — scattered over hundreds of miles of distance cannot really be properly covered nor can Managements feel that they are liable to a surprise inspection at any time, when least expected. The district officers, who are part-time inspectors, also have an increasing amount of other work coming upon them and it is not easy for them to make numerous visits.

Shortage of funds also necessitated limiting the touring of both the Chief and Factory Inspector. The "economy" cut in the travelling grant for the financial year had to be restored just after the close of the year under review.

Inspection Statistics.- 420 factories were inspected once, 83 twice, 13 thrice and 1 over three times while 243 factories remained uninspected. Of the total of 517 inspections, 465 were of seasonal establishments and 52 of perennial establishments.

Prosecutions.- Ten prosecutions were filed during the year and in all cases convictions were secured.

* Annual Report on the Working of the Factories Act, 1934, for the year 1938 in Assam. Shillong: Assam Government Press. 1939.
Price Rs. 2 or 3s. 1d. *pp* 33.

Factory Administration in Burma, 1938*

Number of Factories.- At the close of the year 1938 the number of factories subject to the Factories Act was 1,077 as against 1,048 in 1937. Of these factories 1,019 were in commission. Factories which worked included 965 classed as perennial and 54 as seasonal for the purposes of the Act. New factories opened during the year totalled 64 whilst 35 were permanently closed down or otherwise ceased to come within the purview of the Act.

Number of Workers.- The total daily average number of workers employed in factories in 1938 was 86,383 as against 87,652 in 1937. Of this total, perennial factories employed 81,718 and seasonal factories 4,665. The decreases in daily average workers employed in perennial factories may be attributed to the labour troubles which occurred during the latter half of the year as a result of political unrest.

The average daily number of women employed in factories was returned at 12,017 as against 11,577 in 1937. More women appear to have been employed as rice mill coolies than in the previous year. Match factories, hosiery works and rubber shoe factories provide more or less permanent employment for large numbers. Returns show that 564 adolescents and 94 children were employed in factories during the year.

Inspection.- The number of factories inspected was 786 as against 217 in 1937, a total of 863 visits being made of which 855 were departmental inspections. Two new Inspectors of Factories were appointed in April 1938 and much more adequate control of factory conditions has been possible than in several preceding years. The Inspector of Mines as Additional Inspector of Factories was able to make a number of useful inspections without detriment to his main functions. As indicated in paragraph 17 the ~~the~~ functions under the Payment of Wages Act have added largely to the responsibilities and duties of the Inspectors of Factories. Some further addition to the staff is still considered necessary if the functions of the department are to be adequately carried out.

Prosecutions.- 13 prosecutions involving 12 persons were instituted and convictions obtained in 12 cases. All the cases concerned rice mills. 4 cases involved fencing irregularities, 5 irregular employment generally, and 1 case concerned employment registers which constitute a check on irregular working. In one

* Annual Report on the Working of the Factories Act (XXV of 1934) in Burma for the year 1938. Rangoon: Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, Burma. 1939. Price Rs. 2 or 3s. pp 32.

case taken in respect of employment of women at night the accused was acquitted as the Court was not convinced on the evidence that the women concerned were actually working. The case illustrates the difficulty experienced when the workers themselves, on whom the evidence depends, do not support a case. +

Intellectual Workers.

The Employment of Teachers' Bill, 1939, Burma. +

The above non-official Bill was introduced in the Burmese House of Representatives on 30-8-1939 by Mr. J.A.L. Wiseham to regulate the employment of teachers in Burma. The Bill stipulates that no teacher in ~~any~~ aided Anglo-Vernacular and English schools should be appointed without a written contract containing detailed provisions, inter alia, about (1) monthly salary; (2) annual increment; (3) period of employment (the period should not be less than 2 years in the first instance; the contract should be renewable at the option of the teachers from year to year subject to his having good reports from the inspecting authority); (4) option of teacher to terminate contract on a month's notice; and (5) leave with pay for one month in a year, with permission to accumulate leave up to six months.

The statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill points out that the remuneration of teachers is very low, while their hours of work are long.

(The Burma Gazette, Part III, dated 2-9-1939, page 195). +

Social Conditions.

Opium-smoking declining in India: Findings of Enquiry by School of Tropical Medicine. +

Certain investigations on the opium-smoking habit in India have recently been completed by the School of Tropical Medicine at Calcutta. It has been found that while the habit is particularly prevalent in Assam and the Central Provinces, it is met with in one form or other on a small scale in many of the large towns of India. All the same, the habit has considerably declined during the last 30 years.

Causes for Prevalence of Habit.- The method of preparing opium for smoking, the modes of indulgence, the type of addicts have been studied. In areas where this practice is common, social and economic factors were instrumental in the spread of the habit. The main causes of addiction have been found to be association with other addicts, disease or minor ailments, hard work, worry or strain. The dosage in a series of 300 cases studied ranged from 1 to 180 grains of opium daily.

Effects of the Habit on the Addicts.- The effects produced by the habit have been studied. The conclusions briefly are that excessive indulgence produces (1) economic loss by reducing the earning capacity of the addicts; (2) damage to health and loss of physical energy and deterioration of intellect; and (3) curtailment of longevity.

Enquiry into Hemp Drug Habit in India.- The enquiry on the hemp drug habit in India is nearing completion.

(The National Herald,
1-9-1939). +

Prohibition in Jharia Coalfields: Labour Welfare Centres Formed. +

Reference was made at pages 32-33 of our August 1939 report to the arrangements that are being made to introduce prohibition in Bihar coalfield areas. It is understood that a number of labour welfare centres and village panchayats have been formed as a result of the prohibition propaganda campaign in the coalfields since July 1939. Several miners' clubs have been opened for providing recreation and literacy to the miners in collieries

and a preliminary survey of miners' condition is being carried ^{out} for the regulation of the economic life of the miners. A perceptible change ~~which is~~ reported is ~~the~~ increase in the average attendance of workers in collieries and ~~the~~ regular work on Mondays.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika,
5-9-1939). +

Public Health.

Food and Nutrition Exposition: Initiative of
Calcutta Corporation.

With a view to disseminating the essential knowledge about food value and nutrition, the Publicity Department of the Calcutta Corporation proposes to organise a Food and Nutrition Exposition, the first of its kind in Calcutta, at the end of September 1939. An advisory Committee has already been formed for the purpose with Dr. Sundari Mohan Das as President and Mr. Jnananjan Neogy, Publicity Officer, Calcutta Corporation, as Secretary.

It has been proposed to demonstrate by means of charts and diagrams different aspects of food and nutrition with particular reference to constituents of ~~and~~ food-stuffs generally consumed in India, especially in Bengal. There will be a section containing exhibits and literature relating to balanced dietary — suggesting changes from the diet generally used, within a moderate family budget and also prescribing diets for the slum people and poor peasants in the rural areas. There will also be a demonstration of "hygienic kitchen" and the "ideal method of cooking at the cheapest possible cost and with minimum loss of food value.

(The Statesman, 31-8-1939).—

Incidence of Tuberculosis among Calcutta Jute Mill
Workers: Results of Enquiry by I.R.F. Association.

Reference was made at pages 23-24 of our January 1939 report to the enquiry undertaken under the auspices of the Indian Research Fund Association to find out the incidence of tuberculosis among the Jute workers in Calcutta. For the purpose, the Angus Jute Mills employing about 5300 workers was selected for the investigation. A communiqué was recently issued by the Association giving the results obtained so far.

Indication of "Samples".- 263 workers have been selected as "samples" and put to a thorough examination. About 1.9 per cent. of the workers were labelled as "definite" cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, 5.3 per cent. as "possible" cases and 59 per cent. as "arrested" or healed lesions. The "batching", "preparing" and "spinning" departments have been taken up first and so far 1,360 workers have been tested and examined. Physical findings suggestive of pulmonary tuberculosis have been found in 48 cases. Both exaggerated tuberculosis reaction and suspicious physical findings have been detected in 12. Bronchitis has been detected in 224, jute-eczema in 126 and catarrh in 49 persons.

Influence of Jute-Dust.- Bad Housing and its Effect on Tuberculosis.- Investigations including a survey of the house and its surroundings, the social customs and habits, income, general mortality and tuberculosis morbidity and mortality have been carried out in about 500 dwellings in barracks. It has been generally noticed that rooms have no ventilation, are over-crowded, general sanitation bad, and many customs prevail which are likely to favour the spread of infection, while the diet is inadequate and badly balanced.

Influence of Jute-dust.- The different processes through which the jute-fibre passes to be finally baled emit a large amount of dust. In order to determine the size and concentration of suspended dust particles, 144 samples from various departments have been examined. A majority of the dust particles were below five microns in size.

Examination of Children.- About 221 children below 15 years have been examined and followed up since last year, bringing the total to 838. Owing to the difficulty of a home survey of scattered houses and of bringing the contacts for X-ray service in the hospital, the progress has not been as rapid as was expected.

It is proposed to examine completely 1,000 cases before final deductions are drawn. As soon as the tubercular homes are surveyed, a study will also be made of a certain number of non-tubercular homes, if possible, for purposes of comparison. In all, 110 tubercular homes, containing 319 children, have been surveyed, of which 94 contained "open" pulmonary tuberculosis cases. Sanitary condition was bad in 56 per cent. of the houses and 39 per cent. of the houses were one-room tenements. About 49 per cent. of the houses contained inmates with a low economic status, the average monthly income per head being less than five rupees. Nearly 56.7 per cent. of the contact children lived in houses with bad hygiene conditions and 36.6 per cent. in one room tenements.

Out of 319 children, 196 slept in the same room with the patient who was the source of contagion. As the majority of cases belonged to the poor classes no significant correlation could be found between the incidence of infection, morbidity rate and economic status.

(The National Herald, 25-8-1939).

Public Health Problems of India in 1937*

The Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India for the year 1937, published recently, contains, inter alia, valuable information ~~for India~~ regarding population trends, housing, industrial hygiene, public health in mines and factories, nutrition and public health aspects of rural hygiene, in addition to an interesting review of progress in health conditions in India during the ^{last} 40 years. A brief summary of the salient features of the Report is given below. (It is understood that a copy of the Report has been sent to Geneva direct by the Manager of Publications, Delhi.)

Vital Statistics.- The principal vital statistics of British India for 1937 are given below:-

	1937	1936
Mid-year estimated population ..	272,406,436	269,058,609
Density per square mile	358	354
Births (Number)	9,388,457	9,566,379
(Rate per mille)	34.5	35.6
Deaths (Number)	6,112,375	6,111,358
(Rate per mille)	22.4	22.7
Infantile death rate per 1,000 live-births. ..	161.7	161.0
Vital Index	153.6	156.5

Progress in Raising Health Standards.- The Report notes that recent years have witnessed an increasing awareness, on the part of both Provincial Governments and the educated public, of the magnitude of the problems associated with the building of national health on sure foundations. Advance has been made, for instance, in the provision of public health staffs in the provinces, in the better control of festival centres and in the free distribution of quinine to malaria-stricken populations, whilst the efforts of individuals, of voluntary organisations and of public health staffs in educating public opinion in different ways, have been a commendable feature in different parts of the country. Further, a number of intensive experiments in restricted areas are in progress, the object of these "Health Units", as they are called, being to evolve types of public health organisation suited to rural populations. In a wider sphere, also, a measure of co-ordination between the provinces of British India and Indian States has been secured by the

* Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India for 1937. Volume I. With Appendices. Published by the Manager of Publications Delhi. 1939. Price Rs.3 or 5s. *pp-345*

inauguration of the Central Advisory Board of Health on which the Government of India, the Provinces and States are all represented.

The advent of provincial autonomy and the conferment of extensive powers on Provincial Governments have been followed in many provinces by social legislation which will undoubtedly have far-reaching effects on the economic life and general well-being of the people. Agricultural indebtedness, land tenure and industrial problems, to cite a few examples, are all receiving serious attention and, in so far as legislative and administrative action in these directions goes to raise the standard of life, these measures will inevitably help in improving the state of public health.

Need for Study of Population Trends.- In view of India's vast territory and the varying nature of the problems which the population question presents in different parts of the country, it seems desirable to have one or more committees for population studies. Apart from this the committees can and should consider the possibility of coordinating, as far as possible, all agricultural, economic and social investigations now in progress. Recent years have witnessed increasing interest in respect of such matters as improved agricultural practice, marketing, nutrition, animal husbandry, irrigation and forestry research and the coordination of these studies in relation to national planning for improvement of the general standard of life is one of greater importance than is generally realised. In addition to official agencies, universities and research institutions should be induced to assist and the work could perhaps be suitably coordinated by the formation of a committee in each province to plan the necessary investigations and to place its expert knowledge at the disposal of the Government so that a sound economic and social policy might be reached. Such a committee could also perform the extremely useful function of educating public opinion on correct lines.

Housing.- Some of the salient features of the housing problem in rural, urban and industrial areas of India were discussed in the report for 1936. The suggestion was made that the subject demanded long-term planning and that all interested parties, including provincial Governments, local authorities and employers of industrial labour should participate in the preparation and execution of an agreed policy of improvement. It was also pointed out that the village, the small town and the city presented different problems and the lines on which suitable action might be taken in each case were also indicated. In addition, such information as was available from Directors of Public Health regarding provincial housing schemes was also incorporated. An attempt has been made in this year's report to supplement the facts given last year.

Industrial Hygiene.- In most provinces, officers of the public health departments have now been appointed as additional inspectors of factories. In certain provinces, this additional function has been given only to Assistant Directors of Public Health, but in other

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cases both district and municipal health officers have also been invested with the powers of inspectors of factories. Their inspections are mainly directed towards ascertaining the adequacy or otherwise of the provisions for lighting, ventilation, water supply and sanitation in the factories and towards the satisfactory maintenance of such provisions. In order to secure uniformity of administrative action, the health officers' recommendations are communicated to the circle factory inspector or to the Chief Inspector of Factories. These officers then take appropriate action with the managements concerned to secure rectification of reported defects. +

Education.

Progress of Adult Education in Bombay. +

Reference was made at pages 31 to 32 of our March 1939 report to the adult literacy campaign in Bombay City and suburbs started by the Government of Bombay. The Government of Bombay constituted an Adult Education Committee for Bombay City and suburbs, independent of the Provincial Board for Adult Education, in pursuance of the request made by the Literacy Campaign Committee which organised and conducted literacy classes in Bombay and suburbs during May 1939. The Hon'ble Mr. B.G. Kher, Minister for Education, Government of Bombay, is the President of this Body and Mr. V.D. Ghate, Educational Inspector, Bombay Division and Special Literacy Officer, is the Secretary.

Five Sub-Committees appointed.- The Committee appointed five sub-committees for different purposes. A Planning Sub-Committee was appointed to prepare a plan for the organisation of literacy work in Bombay on a permanent basis. A Propaganda Sub-Committee was formed to carry on propaganda, to suggest ways and means for the recreation and entertainment of the adults under instruction, to make arrangements for the regular attendance of adults and to make provision for day-classes for workers on night shifts. The Book Sub-Committee was entrusted with the task of carrying on research into the methods of adult education with special reference to conditions in Bombay, to determine the duration of the literacy course of instruction to the adults, and to propose a course of studies and to select suitable books, charts, reading sheets for use in the literacy classes in the different languages. The Women's Sub-Committee was appointed to organise and direct women's classes. Yet another sub-committee was appointed for securing co-operation of large employers of labour in the literacy movement as well as to collect funds for the work.

Progress of the Classes.- The Committee continued the good work started by the Literacy Campaign Committee in the month of May. Some of the ill-attended classes were amalgamated and 360 classes were conducted from June 1939. Of these 120 were Hindustani, 159 Marathi, 30 Gujarati, 19 Telegu, 18 Kannada and 14 Urdu. There were in all 29 classes for women. Each class consisted of at least 20 adult students, but there were exceptions in the case of classes for women and for members of the minor language groups.

Tests of Literacy.- The Adult Education Committee decided to conduct a literacy test in reading and writing on the completion of the four months' course. The Book Sub-Committee has selected 10 simple questions, answers to which are to be written by the adults under instruction. Those who are able to write correct answers to at least four questions will pass the writing test. It was also decided by the Sub-Committee that those adults who will be able to read simple lessons from a primary second standard book or any

other equivalent book should be considered to have passed the reading test. These recommendations have been accepted by the Adult Education Committee. Those who pass the literacy test will be given certificates of literacy under the signature of the Hon'ble the Prime Minister. New literacy classes will be opened in November 1939 and conducted for four months.

Finances of Campaign.- The cost of maintaining all the literacy classes for three months — from June to August 1939 — was fully borne by the Bombay Government, which sanctioned Rs. 17,985 and Rs. 4,300 for recurring and non-recurring expenditure respectively. It is stated that in future, however, if literacy work is to be organised on a permanent basis and conducted on a fairly wide scale, other sources will have to be tapped. The Adult Education Committee for Bombay has resolved to conduct 500 classes during 1940-41 and they hope to bring not less than 20,000 adult men and women under instruction in the two sessions of that year. The estimated expenditure on maintaining 500 classes for eight months, carrying on propaganda and providing 50 libraries for the "continuation" work of the literate adults will approximately be Rs. 70,000 recurring and Rs. 16,000 non-recurring and it is hoped to meet the cost of this literacy work with the co-operation of the Government, ^{the} Bombay Corporation, charitably-minded persons and associations, social and educational organisations and major employers of labour in particular.

(Summarised from a Press Note
No. P — 376 dated 30-8-1939,
issued by the Public Relations
Officer, Bombay). +

The B. & O. Primary Education (Amendment) Bill,
1939: Bihar Efforts to introduce Compulsory Primary
Education. +

A Government Bill has been introduced in the Bihar Legislative Assembly on 18-9-1939 to amend the Bihar and Orissa Primary Education Act, 1919.

According to the statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill, the Government have in view the question of introducing compulsory primary education throughout the Province, beginning with the urban areas, and with this end in view provision has been made in the current year's budget for helping the municipalities, etc., situated at the headquarters of districts in introducing compulsory primary education. It is proposed as the next step to introduce the scheme, as funds permit, also to other urban areas at the headquarters of sub-divisions. While the majority of the town areas at district and sub-divisional headquarters have been constituted as municipalities where the municipal commissioners have the powers of the "local authority" to introduce compulsory primary education under the Bihar and

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Orissa Primary Education Act, 1919, there are other town areas which have not the powers of the "local authority" to introduce compulsory education under the Primary Education Act, 1919. The amendments proposed in the Bill will enable the notified area committees and the Patna Administration Committee to introduce compulsory primary education within their respective jurisdictions.

(The Bihar Gazette, Part V,
dated 20-9-1939, pages 312
to 315). r

Agriculture.The Burma Land Purchase Bill, 1939. +

The Government of Burma proposes introducing in the Burmese Legislature a Land Purchase Bill which will empower the Government to purchase land for allotment in small holdings to agriculturists. The statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill points out that in Burma land is gradually being gathered into large estates with an increasing proportion of absentee and non-agriculturist landlords. Statistics show that in the year 1936 only 52.4 per cent. of the total occupied area was held by agriculturists. On political and social considerations absentee landlordism has been considered undesirable. The time has come to introduce legislation to effect a radical change in the relationship of the soil with the person who cultivates it and to establish the principle of individual and independent property in the soil.

The Bill accordingly provides for State acquisition of agricultural land by purchase from non-agriculturists/ landlords on payment of reasonable price and compensation, with a view to allotment in small holdings to cultivators who own no land or do not have sufficient land to maintain themselves and their families in reasonable comfort. It also provides for the consideration of any objection to acquisition and for the establishment of independent tribunals to hear and decide all cases of dispute and dissatisfaction regarding price or compensation and apportionment of the same.

(Burma Gazette, Part III, dated
19-8-1939, pages 178-181). +

Working of the Debt Redemption Scheme in Bhavnagar State. +

A comprehensive debt redemption scheme has been in operation in Bhavnagar State during the last few years. The State Government has reviewed in its Administration Report for 1937-38 published recently, the effects of the working of the scheme; a brief summary of these effects is given below:

Extent of Relief.- Cultivators' debts amounting to Rs. 8,638,874 were compounded for Rs. 2,059,473, and the latter amount was advanced by the State to the cultivators for redemption of debts. A general survey of the villages was made to find out how far the position created by the wholesale redemption of agricultural indebtedness was maintained in subsequent years and to what extent, if any, there had been a relapse into the old conditions of indebtedness. It was found that, out of 29,973 holders, only 1,885 or about 6 per cent. had incurred fresh debts totalling Rs. 240,613. The fresh debt of Rs. 240,613, however, represented only 3 per cent. of the total old debt of Rs. 8,638,874 liquidated. It was, however, found that the fresh debts were in respect of current miscellaneous purchases, which were repaid during the harvesting period.

Other Effects.- The preliminary survey revealed that, out of the total number of 540 villages in the State, as many as 337 villages or about 62 per cent. continued to be totally debt-free. The salutary effect of the redemption of past debts is noticeable in the recovery of land revenue. The State dues nominally enjoy priority of claim. With a debt-free peasantry, there has been a marked improvement in land revenue recoveries, which have been both easier and greater than in the past. The civil courts always provide a barometer to test the agricultural indebtedness. So far very few suits have been filed against keduts (Agriculturists).

Maritime Affairs.

Demand of Indian Seamen for Compensation for War
Accidents: Government sanctions Compensation Clause in
Articles of Agreement. +

With the outbreak of ~~the~~ European War, Indian seamen in Bombay began agitating for compensation for injuries resulting from ^{the} war, and the National Seamen's Union of India, Bombay, held a meeting on 3-9-1939 at Bombay, Rao Bahadur ^{Asquith} ~~Aslive~~ presiding, at which a resolution to the effect "that the Government of India be requested to extend the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act to all such seamen of the mercantile Navy, as will be required to sign on the troopships, if needed" was adopted. (The Bombay Chronicle, 5-9-1939).

As a result of this agitation, presumably, the Government issued on 6-9-1939 a Press Note stating that it is understood that in the present conditions the British Government has, with a view to assuring Indian seamen who take up service on ships on the United Kingdom register, permitted the insertion in the United Kingdom of a clause in the crew's articles entitling them, in the event of death or injury due to war perils at sea, to compensation in accordance with the provisions on the subject which will be made by His Majesty's Government. It is further understood that a similar clause is being allowed to be inserted in the case of lascar agreements opened at Indian ports for ships on the United Kingdom register sailing from India.

See also p. 1. of this report: Workmen's Compensation (2nd Amendment) Act.

(The Statesman, 7-9-1939). +

Increased Wages for Indian Seamen:
Decision of Steamship Companies. +

An increase in the salaries of seamen was promised on 15-9-1939 on behalf of the shipping companies in Bombay to the spokesmen of the National Seamen's Union of India, Bombay. The spokesmen of seamen, Mr. Mirza Akhtar Hasan, M.L.A., and Mr. M.E. Serang, carried on negotiations with the shipping companies during the last few days for an increase of 50 per cent. in the ~~six~~ salaries of all seamen. They also presented their case before the Hon'ble Mr. K.M. Munshi, Home Minister of Bombay.

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As a result of consultations held among the shipping companies it was announced by Capt. T. Fitchet, Marine Superintendent, Ellerman, City and Hall Lines, and Mr. S.J. Pandya, Manager, Sciendia Steam Navigation Company, that an increase of 25 per cent. would be given to seamen of overseas ships for the present. Later, the case would be further reviewed when an increase is sanctioned for the seamen of the Royal Indian Navy. In respect of seamen of coastal ships, the increase would be, stated the representatives of the shipping companies, 20 per cent. A promise was also made that in case of loss of life or injury, while on duty, compensation would be given on the lines which might be fixed for the men of the Royal Indian Navy.

The representatives of the seamen agreed to the terms and advised the members of the Union to sign the articles of the shipping companies for service.

(The Times of India,
18-9-1939). +

Mr. P.N. Sapru's Resolution regarding Enquiry
into conditions of Indian Seamen: With-
drawn on Government's Assurance.

On 26-9-1939 Mr. P.N. Sapru moved a resolution in the Council of State recommending the institution of an inquiry in order to bring about improvements in the conditions of life and work of Indian seamen.

In moving the resolution, Mr. Sapru referred to the results of previous inquiries into the conditions of Indian seamen who, he said, taking together employed as well as unemployed, numbered today 235,000. Their urgent needs were (a) an increase in wages which at present were lower even than those of Chinese, another Asiatic race, (b) a larger sailors' home in Bombay to accommodate 1,000 men and another home at Calcutta, and (c) facilities for safeguarding their health, particularly the establishment of venereal clinics, and (d) the establishment of a Joint Maritime Board.

Sir Alan Lloyd, Additional Secretary, Commerce Department, said that the Government were in fullest sympathy with the motives underlying the resolution and were anxious to see the conditions of Indian seamen improved. The matter had been fully inquired into by committees from time to time and the stage had now been reached when the Government had all the material in order to decide what action should

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be taken. It was therefore hardly possible for him to accept the resolution which asked for a fresh inquiry. Referring to some of the points mentioned by Mr. Sapru, Sir Alan explained that the question of a joint maritime board had been considered and would again be considered when the time was appropriate, but the chief difficulty was the absence of a healthy trade union movement among Indian seamen.

Mr. Sapru, replying to Sir Alan's objections, thought that a joint maritime board could come before and could act as a stimulant to the growth of a trade union movement. In view, however, of the sympathy expressed by Sir Alan Lloyd with the object of the resolution, he considered his purpose served, and therefore withdrew the resolution.

(The Statesman, 27-9-1939).+

Migration.

Working Conditions in Ceylon: Report of the
Controller of Labour, 1938.* †

The Administration Report of the Controller of Labour, Ceylon, for 1938, is, as usual, divided into two parts: the first contains a general review of working conditions in Ceylon and the second deals with conditions of life and work of Indian immigrant labour. The salient features of the report are summarised below:

Labour Legislation in Ceylon.- (1) Shops Regulation Ordinance.- Ordinance No. 66 of 1938 was enacted during the year to provide for the regulation of the employment of persons in shops and for the control of the hours of business in shops. This Ordinance is to be brought into operation shortly.

(2) Matches (Regulation) Ordinance and Motor Vehicles Ordinance.- Two Ordinances placed on the Statute Book during 1938, viz., Manufacture of Matches (Regulation) Ordinance, No. 9 of 1938, and the Ordinance to amend and consolidate the law relating to the Motor Cars, No. 45 of 1938, makes provision for framing regulations for the control of wages, conditions of labour of persons employed in the manufacture of matches, splints, vencers, or boxes, etc., and hours of work and minimum rates of wages to be paid by owners of hiring cars, &c., respectively.

(3) Employment of Children.- A Bill is now before the State Council dealing with juvenile delinquents and Part IV of the Bill relates to the employment of children and young persons and includes provision for the absolute or partial prohibition of the employment of children at certain trades and occupations and for the regulation of their hours of work, meal intervals, holidays and their participation at ~~places~~ ⁱⁿ places of entertainments and performances, &c.

(4) Old-Age Pensions.- Introduction of legislation to make provision for old-age pension is reported to be under consideration of the Government.

(5) Separation of Families on Estates.- Introduction of legislation to prevent separation of families on estates was under consideration with several other subjects relating to estate labour and a comprehensive amending Ordinance to Labour Ordinances, Nos. 13 of 1889, 1 of 1923, and 27 of 1927, was

* Part I — Civil (C): Administration Report of the Controller of Labour for 1938 by F.C. Gimson, Esq., C.C.S. Colombo: Ceylon Government Press, ~~Sri Lanka~~ August 1939. Price 65 cents. pp 65.

Ceylon and I.L. Conventions: (1) Social Insurance Conventions.-
 Draft Conventions Nos. 35 to 40 concerning ~~with~~ old-age, invalidity and widows' and orphans' insurance which had been ratified by the British Government were brought to the notice of the Ceylon Government with a view to exploring the possibility of applying them in Ceylon with or without modifications. The Executive Committee deferred the consideration of the question of applying these Conventions in Ceylon until it had considered a scheme for unemployment insurance. Old-age, Invalidity, and widows' and orphans' insurance is, however, being examined now.

(2) Convention regarding Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery.- This Convention was partially applied in Ceylon by Ordinance No. 27 of 1927 so far as Indian labourers working on estates were concerned. Steps have been taken to prepare legislation for the creation of wage fixing machinery for workers not covered by Ordinance No. 27 of 1927.

(3) Convention regarding Protection against Dockers (Revised).- Legislation under this Convention is being taken, not as a separate measure but under the proposed Factories Ordinance.

(4) Recruiting and Placing of Migrant Workers.- The suggestion of appointing a Joint Committee made in the Blue Report on Recruiting, Placing and Conditions of Labour (Equality of Treatment) of Migrant Workers, 1938, was accepted by the Government and the securing of the appointment of a Joint Committee so that periodic meetings could be arranged to permit of a full interchange of views on the position of the Indian labour in Ceylon was under consideration at the end of the year.

Workmen's Compensation Statistics.- The number of accidents reported during the year was 5,548 of which 99 related to fatal accidents. In the preceding year the total number of accidents reported was 4,581 of which 86 were fatal accidents. During 1938, Rs. 174,481.03 was paid on account of claims in respect of 4,788 cases.

Industrial Diseases.- A case arose during the year where a workman employed in the Harbour Engineer's Department was found to be suffering from silicosis with suspected secondary tuberculosis which was specifically attributable to the nature of his duties. As this disease is not included in the occupational diseases in Schedule III, the workman could not get any compensation. The question of amending the law is under consideration.

Insurance against Accidents.- 58 licences to undertake insurance against liability to workmen, which may be incurred by employers under the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance, were current during the year and no new licences were issued. It was noted that an increasing number of employers have been insuring against their liability under the Ordinance and that it is generally recognised that the only satisfactory method of financing the benefits to injured workmen is through the insuring of the employers' liability.

Trade Unions.- The total number of unions registered under the Ordinance during the year was 4. The total number of unions registered since the Ordinance came into operation is 42. Of these the certificates of registration issued to 6 unions were cancelled in 1937, and one in 1938, and one union was dissolved in 1937, so that the number of registered unions which were functioning at the end of 1938 was 34. Of the 34 trade unions functioning at the end of the year, 11 were exclusively of employers and the remaining 23 of employees.

Trade Disputes.- The total number of strikes or disputes ~~on in~~ trade or industry during the year was 5, the same number as in the previous year. No strikes or lock-outs were reported from Government Departments employing large forces of labour. Personal and contractual relations between Superintendents of Estates continued to be good, though the year is to be remembered ~~as~~ that on a tea estate the labourers refused to turn out ~~for~~ work on the plea that some alterations should be made in their conditions of employment. It is interesting that estate employees should have at least realised the value of the strike weapon in a trade dispute. Prompt action by the Department secured an early return to work.

Recruitment and Registration of Domestic Servants.- The police undertake the registration of servants at Colombo, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, ~~Hatton and Trincomalee~~, the latter office being opened only on 1-12-1938. 827 applications for registration were received and 2,510 new engagements were recorded. Previous convictions in 27 cases were traced and 8 applicants were / refused registration.

The recommendations of the Committee on Orphanages and Servants' Agencies ~~made~~ made in February 1925, have yet to become law. The recommendations are to the effect that the recruitment of children and young women by Servants' Agencies should be prohibited and that the recruitment and supply of males over 14 and young women over 20 years of age should only be conducted by approved persons and companies with approved managers trained for the purpose. At present there are 15 agencies in the Island, and the recruitment of young persons, ~~is~~ ostensibly for domestic service but actually for immoral purposes, is reported to be not uncommon.

Safety in Mines and Factories.- According to the reports received from the various Revenue Officers for 1938, there were, at the beginning of the year, 1,683 factories in the Island. 103 factories were registered during the year and 80 were closed down. Among the 1,546 factories inspected during the year only 3 were reported to be unsafe. These defects were duly remedied by the occupiers concerned. There were 19 serious accidents reported to Revenue Officers one of which proved fatal. 5 persons / were prosecuted during the year under the Ordinance for having failed to send Inspection certificates; 4 of them were convicted.

Mines are supervised by the Inspector of Mines. At the beginning of 1938 there were 440 registered mines. 301 new mines were registered during the year and 207 were closed. 173 mines were inspected and all were found to be safe. 20 serious accidents were reported

which resulted in 21 persons being killed and 17 being injured.

Unemployment.- At the end of 1937 there were over 900 registered unemployed given work on relief schemes but this number has increased to 1,200 during the year. The increase was mainly due to the fact that the Government decided that the unemployed men who were discontinued from relief works from time to time for such reasons as continued absence without leave should be re-engaged.

Employment Exchange.- The Government established in May 1938 an Employment Exchange. It was defined that a person primarily eligible to register at the Exchange should be one, though able-bodied and willing to work: (a) is unable to get any employment at all, or (b) can get irregular employment but not sufficient for his maintenance, or (c) is employed in a post much below his qualifications or experience and desires to find work of a kind for which by training and experience he is specially fitted. The scope of the services of the Exchange, it is pointed out, will cover all classes of employment, skilled and unskilled, educated and uneducated, in fact every kind of occupation which affords an opportunity for employment. From September to end of December 1938 16,480 workers under the five categories: (1) professional and technical (195), (2) clerical (1,816), (3) skilled (5,965), (4) semi-skilled (3,502), and (5) unskilled (5,002) were registered.

Employment of Sinhalese Workers.- For the last few years, the Government of Ceylon has been considering the encouragement of Ceylonese labour in the estates of the Island. Towards this end recruiting agencies have been established in three centres and propaganda conducted in villages to seek employment in estates. On 1-9-1937 the number of Sinhalese labourers in estates was 21,248; on 1-2-1938 the figure increased to 22,727 and on 1-7-1938 to 27,882. It is reported that most of the new recruits have not taken kindly to estate life.

Indian Immigrant Labour.

Part II of the Report deals with the conditions of life and work of Indian immigrant labour during 1938. A brief review of this section is given below:

Sir Edward Jackson's Report.- Sir Edward Jackson was appointed in 1934 to enquire into the extent of Indian immigration into and its effects on Ceylon and the need for future restriction or control on such immigration. His report was published in April 1938. Speaking of Indian immigrants, Sir Edward points out that three-fourths of the Indian population are to be found on tea and rubber estates and display a tendency to permanent settlement. The remaining one-fourth is composed of traders and other workers: these maintain a close connection with South India and are distinguished by the frequency and ease of movement between Ceylon and their native land. He discusses the different occupations in which Indians are employed and finds from the evidence adduced that where Ceylonese want work of a particular kind, the presence of the Indian does not act as a deterrent. The immigrant

worker comes to Ceylon for work ~~for~~ ^{the} which Ceylonese are not desirous of accepting and returns ~~for~~ when this employment ceases. Sir Edward Jackson emphatically advises against any restriction of immigration as the means of increasing the employment of Ceylonese in any sphere of labour as he regards the imposition of such restriction as injurious to the prosperity of the Island.

Sir Edward's first recommendation is that the staff of the Labour Department should be increased and accurate information of the conditions of labour and of the labour market in the various fields of employment collected. Secondly he recommends the establishment of a Labour Bureau under the auspices of the Colombo Municipality as it is necessary to avoid the impression in the minds of the workers placed by the Bureau that they are a special class of Government servants. His third suggestion relates to the Technical School where instruction in the new spheres of work should be given. His fourth suggestion is that training centres for domestic servants should be established.

The Board of Indian Immigrant Labour considered the report and made several recommendations to the Government which has them still under consideration.

Indian Migration Statistics.- The number of arrivals in 1938 was 157,996 (110,786 unassisted immigrants and 47,210 assisted estate labourers) as compared with 162,552 (111,125 unassisted immigrants and 51,427 assisted estate labourers) during the previous year. 158,338 Indians (43,819 estate labourers) left Ceylon for India in 1938. The number of Indians repatriated from Ceylon in 1938 was 3,004.

The mean population of Indian labourers on estates was 677,000 in 1938 as against 664,000 in the previous year. At the beginning of 1938 the population was 677,560 (211,495 men, 204,280 women, and 261,785 children). By the middle of the year it fell to 671,268 (208,712 men, 201,081 women, and 261,475 children) rising again at the end of the year to 682,299 (212,625 men, 204,457 women and 265,217 children). The total increase of the population during the year was, therefore, 4,739.

Wages.- At the beginning of the year 1938 the minimum wages applicable for ~~the~~ a working day of nine hours including time not exceeding 1 hour for the mid-day meal was as follows:

	<u>Men.</u>	<u>Women.</u>	<u>Children</u>
	a.p.	a.p.	a.p.
Up-country ...	7 10	6 3	4 8
Mid-country ..	6 11	5 7	4 0
Low-country ..	6 7	5 3	3 10

In response to a demand for the restoration of mid and low-country daily wages and in view of the discussion with the Government of India with regard to the issue of licensees it was decided that District Wages Boards should be summoned with a view to

20.7

examining the whole problem. Though the matter had been discussed informally during the year official boards were not summoned until the beginning of 1939. The decision to raise the wages to the 1931 level has since been ratified.

(The Administration Report of the Controller of Labour, Ceylon, for 1937 was reviewed at pages 38 to 43 of our October 1938 report). +

General.

Labour Policy of C.P. Government: Industries
Minister's Statement. +

On 3-9-1939 a deputation of the Labour Sub-Committee of the Nagpur Provincial Congress Committee waited ~~on~~ ^{at} the Minister for Industries, Central Provinces, to discuss the labour situation in the Province. The Secretary to Government in the Commerce and ~~the~~ ^{the} Industry Department, Director of Industries, and Labour Officer were also present.

Review of C.P. Government's Work for Amelioration of Labour: Increases in Wage Rates in Textile Industry.- The Minister gave a brief account of what the Central Provinces Government has done for labour since the Congress Party assumed office a little more than two years ~~ago~~ ^{ago}. As soon as it became apparent that the conditions in the textile industry were looking up, the Government, he said, appointed the Textile Labour Enquiry Committee to examine the Interim Report of the Bombay Labour Enquiry Committee and to recommend the extent to which the wages of textile labour in the Province could be increased, with due regard to the conditions in the Province. The labour demand was restoration of 75 per cent. of the previous wages/cuts, but the action taken by the Government and given effect to by the mill-owners, resulted in actual practice in the restoration of the cut ranging from 77 to 80 per cent. in the Empress Mills. Only one mill did not give effect to this recommendation on account of its particularly bad circumstances; but even in that mill the proprietors have gone a long way towards implementing the recommendation of the Government. It is hoped that with the return of normal conditions the balance of the cut will be restored in that mill also.

Settlement of Strikes.- At Hinganghat, although the mills accepted the recommendations of the Government in regard to increase in wage-rates, the local trade union decided to go on strike in spite of the advice to the contrary given by the leaders of the Provincial Trade Union Congress at Nagpur. A bitter and prolonged struggle ensued, lasting for three months, at the end of which the workers had to go back to work on the same terms which were available when they had decided to go on strike. In the course of the strike some of their workers resorted to tactics which cannot be called ~~peaceful~~ ^{peaceful} or non-violent and which compelled Government to take action against them. The Minister had no doubt in his mind that stay-in-strikes and gate-blocking in the name of picketing were all wrong and that Government could not countenance them.

Apart from the textile industry, strikes have recently been common in the bidi industry, in the pottery works and amongst sweepers. With the slightest indication of an impending labour trouble, the Labour Officer is sent out to study the situation, to bring the two parties together and to promote an amicable settlement.

The Minister had reason to believe that the efforts of the Labour Officer were highly appreciated by both the employers and the workers and that he was generally successful in easing tension and in suggesting suitable compromises.

Enquiry into Conditions in Bidi Industry.- The Minister pointed out that he had been taking very keen interest in the bidi industry which stood second only to the textile industry in the Province. He is aware that there is considerable scope for improvement, but before any action can be taken by Government it is necessary that the conditions of the industry should be studied by a representative committee. Government is at present considering a proposal for the appointment of a bidi enquiry committee.

Demands of Workers.- Tracing further the history of the textile dispute in the Province, the Minister pointed out that he, together with the Prime Minister, received two deputations from the Nagpur Textile Union in the months of March and April 1939. The Union representatives were also invited to a conference at Pachmarhi on ~~the~~ 8-5-1939. As a result of these discussions, the labour leaders put forward ~~the~~ demands, namely: (1) recognition of the trade union; (2) fixation of minimum wage; and (3) holidays with pay. A long list of thirty other grievances was also given which was investigated by the Labour Officer within one month and an amicable settlement was arrived at in all except four matters in regard to which negotiations are still in progress.

Recognition of Nagpur Textile Union.- As regards the recognition of the Nagpur Textile Union, it is agreed on all hands that recognition will promote harmony between the employers and the workers and will enable many of the minor grievances to be removed without being taken over to the Labour Officer or to Government. Government has been making consistent efforts to create an atmosphere favourable to recognition of the union, it being convinced that in a matter like this there must be de facto recognition and not merely de jure recognition. At the same time the Government has been watching the efforts of other provinces in this direction with special interest and will take action as soon as the position crystallises and the way is clear for compulsion. It has been repeatedly demanded by the Textile Union that the question of the recognition of the Union should be referred to a Board of Conciliation or a Court of Enquiry under the Trade Disputes Act, as was done in Madras in a few cases. Government has obtained information from Madras and finds that although in four cases the Board of Conciliation or Court of Enquiry recommended recognition of the trade union, in not a single case has ^{any} union yet been recognised by the employers. Findings of a Board of Conciliation do not have a binding effect and are merely advisory in character. Similarly, recognition of the Mazdoor Sabha at Cawnpore, though advised by the Cawnpore Labour Enquiry Committee more than a year ago and commended to the employers by the Government, has not yet been accomplished. In the face of this experience, the Minister pointed that he was firmly convinced that, at least for the present, no useful purpose would be served by referring this matter to a Board of Conciliation or a Court of

Enquiry.

Minimum Wages and Holidays with Pay.- The questions of minimum wage and of holidays with pay are at present before the local Legislature.

Results of Discussion.- A general discussion followed the Minister's review and a number of suggestions were made by the members of the Labour Sub-Committee which, the Government state, will be examined and considered in the Commerce and Industry Department. One of the suggestions was the appointment of a liaison committee consisting of representatives of Government, employers, workers and Congress to promote harmony between capital and labour. A suggestion was also made that constructive welfare work should be undertaken amongst workers and that for this purpose a few men should be sent to Ahmedabad where this activity had been particularly successful. The Sub-Committee desired formal recognition at the hands of Government and asked to be supplied with correspondence which might take place between Government and the interests concerned so that it could keep itself in touch with current events and bring such influence as it has to bear on promotion of harmony and good relations between capital and labour.

(The Indian Labour Journal,
Nagpur, 17-9-1939). +

National Planning Committee: Pandit Nehru urges
Committee to function fully during War Period. +

Enquiries having been made about the future of the National Planning Committee as a result of the war, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the President of the Committee, has issued a statement urging the Committee and its Sub-Committees to carry on their work in the usual course and to expedite it as far as possible. "National planning", he says, "is of vital importance to a nation at any time. In war time this subject becomes even more important. Our committee thus has even more important tasks before it now than when it was formed. India is on the eve of industrial development on a big scale and we must be prepared for this."

It is expected that the Committee will meet sometime in Bombay in the latter half of October, 1939, to review the situation and more particularly the new factors created by the war.

(The National Herald, 22-9-1939). +

411

List of ^{the} more important publications received in this Office during September 1939. ✓

Conditions of Labour.-

- (1) Annual Report on the Working of the Trade Disputes Act, 1929, for the year ending 31st December 1938. Bombay: Government Central Press. (Price 6 pies or 1d.)
- (2) Administration Report of the Controller of Labour ^{Ceylon,} for 1938 by F.C.Gimson, Esq., C.C.S., Part I, (Civil (0)). Colombo: Ceylon Government Press. 1939.
- (3) "Memorandum on Labour Legislation and Labour Reform" placed before the Labour Sub-Committee of the National Planning Committee at its meetings held on the 25th and 26th August, 1939.
- (4) Government of Madras, Development Department — G.O.No.2109, dated 25th August, 1939. Administration Report of the Labour Department, 1938-39.

Enforcement of Conventions.-

- (1) Annual Report on the Working of the Factories Act, 1934, for the year 1938. Shillong: Assam Government Press. 1939. (Price Rs.2 or 3s.1d.)
- (2) Annual Report on the working of the Factories Act (XXV of 1934) in Burma for the year 1938. Rangoon: Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, 1939. (Price Rs.2 or 3s.)

Industrial Organisation.-

- (1) Report of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Coimbatore, for 1937-38. Coimbatore: Literary Sun Press. 1939.
- (2) Spinning and Weaving Supplement to the Annual Report of the Millowners' Association, Bombay, for the year 1938. (Reprinted from the Monthly Statistics of Cotton Spinning and Weaving in Indian Mills (March 1939), compiled by the Director-General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Calcutta.)
- (3) Indian Jute Mills Association: Report of the Committee for the year ending 31st December, 1939. Calcutta: Printed at the Star Printing Works, 30, Shibnarain Das Lane. 1939.
- (4) The Employers' Federation of India, Patel House, Churchgate Street, Bombay: "Economic Consequences of Divergent Labour Standards". (Specially compiled for the Federation).

Economic Conditions.-

Proceedings of the Meeting of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, 17th, 18th and 19th July 1939. Vol. XVI, No.2. Delhi: Manager of Publications. 1939. (Price annas 9 or 10d.)

Employment and Unemployment.-

Report of the Punjab Unemployment Committee, 1937-38. Lahore: Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab. 1939 (Price Rs.3-6-0)

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42

Social Conditions.-

Report on the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes of the Partially Excluded Areas in the Province of Bombay by D. Symington, I.C.S. Bombay: Printed at the Government Central Press. 1939. (Price Annas 4 or 5d.)

Public Health.-

- (1) Report of the Rent Enquiry Committee, Volumes I, II and III. Bombay: Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery. 1939. (Price Annas 4 or 5d., Vol. I; Anna 1 or 1d., Vol. II; and Annas 2 or 3d., Vol. III).
- (2) Annual Report of the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India for 1937. Volume I. With Appendices. Published by the Manager of Publications, Delhi. 1939. (Price 1 anna or 1d.)

Education.-

Annual Report of the David Sassoon Industrial School, Matunga, 1938-39. Bombay: Government Central Press. 1939. (Price 1 anna or 1d.)

Miscellaneous.-

- (1) Administration Report of the Indian Stores Department for the year 1938-39. Delhi: Manager of Publications. 1939.
 - (2) Two Years of Congress Rule in Madras. Madras: Madras Legislature Congress Party, Congress House. 1939. (Price annas 6).
 - (3) "What are the Indian States?" ^{by the} Director, Research Bureau, All-India States' Peoples' Conference, Allahabad) with a Foreword by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.
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