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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
INDIAN BRANCH

Report for May, 1940.

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

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National Labour Legislation.

Government of India.-

Draft Amendment to Coal Mines Safety
(Stowing) Rules, 1939.

Attention is directed to certain minor draft amendments to the Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Rules, 1939, notified at pages 201 - 203 of the Gazette of India Extraordinary, dated 27-5-1940. Objections and suggestions have to be submitted by 27-6-1940 on or after which date the draft is to be taken into consideration. The proposed amendments relate principally to the purposes for which assistance may be granted from the Coal Stowing Fund, the form of assistance given, the quantum of assistance and the conditions attaching to the grant of assistance.

(Notification No. M-1276 dated 27-5-1940:
The Gazette of India Extraordinary, dated
27-5-1940, pages 201 - 203).

Bengal.-

The Bengal Workmen's Protection (Amendment)
Act, 1940.

Reference was made at page 2 of our December 1939 report to the introduction and adoption of the Bengal Workmen's Protection (Amendment) Bill, 1939, by the Legislative Council, Bengal. The Act received the assent of the Governor on 22-4-1940, and is published at page 10 of Part III of the Calcutta Gazette, dated 25-4-1940.

Sind.-

Sind Shop Assistants and Establishments Bill,
1940: Measure drafted by Labour Minister.

The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Syed, Minister for Labour, Sind, has drafted a Shop Assistants and Establishments Bill to be introduced in the forthcoming session of the Sind Legislative Assembly.

The principal features of the Bill are a 7 to 10 hours' working day for employees in shops, restaurants and public places of entertainment and one-day holiday with pay in the week. Any person working in excess of the hours fixed will be entitled to overtime payment at the rate of 1 1/4 times the ordinary rate of his wages. Young persons between the ages of 12 and 17 will not be allowed to work between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m. Any employer who contravenes the provisions of the Act will, on conviction, be punished with fine which may extend to Rs. 25 for the first offence, and to Rs. 250 for every subsequent offence. Inspectors will be appointed by local authorities to see that the provisions of the Bill are duly carried out.

The Bill, in the first instance, is proposed to be applied to Karachi City and Cantonment, and Drigh Road, and later its application will be extended to other parts of the province.

(The Bombay Chronicle, dated 23-5-1940).

United Provinces.-

Extension of Factories Act, U.P.

The Government of the United Provinces has by Notification No. 1389/XVIII-516-38 dated 22-5-1940 extended, with certain minor exceptions, the application of the Factories Act to certain classes of workshops that on any one day of the twelve months preceding this notification employed 10 or more workers and where work is carried on with the aid of power. The classes of workshops to which the Act has been extended include printing presses, motor garages and repairing houses, engineering workshops, glass bangle and brass and metal works.

(Page 425. The United Provinces Gazette, dated 25-5-1940).

United Provinces.-

U.P. Factories Rules 98 - 113 Promulgated.

Attention is directed to Rules 98-113 of the United Provinces Factories Rules (published at pages 287-291 of Part I-A of the U.P. Government Gazette dated 25-5-1940) which the Governor has made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 43 of the Factories Act, 1934. The rules relate (a) to the ~~positions~~ ^{positions} of certain persons (heads and assistants of technical department, engineers, factory doctors, compounders, etc), as persons holding positions of supervision or management, and (b) provide for the exemption under certain conditions of certain categories of adult workers (maintenance staff, those engaged in urgent repairs, and certain continuous process workers) in certain kinds of factories (electrical generating stations, ice factories, chemical works, glass works, vegetable oil mills, tanneries, dairies, rice, opium and tea factories, etc,) from the provisions of Sections 34 (weekly hours), 35 (weekly holiday), 36 (daily hours), 37 (interval for rest) and 38 (spread-over) of the Factories Act.

(Notification No. 828/XVIII - 218(L) dated 21-5-1940. U.P. Gazette Part I-A, dated 25-5-1940, pages 287-291).

Baroda State.

Baroda Payment of Wages Act, 1940:

Brought into force from 11-4-1940.

Reference was made at page 7 of the March 1940 report of this Office to the adoption by the Baroda State of the Baroda Payment of Wages Act, 1940. The Act was brought into force in the State from 11-4-1940.

(The Times of India, dated 20-4-1940).

Conditions of Work.

Hours of Work.

Working of the Hours of Employment Regulations on Indian Railways, 1938-39.*

Scope of Application: Railways covered.- The Hours of Employment Regulations are now in force on all the four State-managed Railways and three important company-managed Railways, namely, the Bombay, Baroda and Central India, Madras and Southern Mahratta and Bengal and North-Western Railways.

Number of Staff covered.- The total number of non-gazetted employees on all the class I Railways in India on the 31st March 1938 was 652,256 and of these 497,906 are employed on the Railways referred to above; in other words, 76 per cent. of the non-gazetted staff employed on class I Railways are now protected by the legislation. The number of staff employed on all class II and III Railways, viz., 35,956 is so small compared to the total non-gazetted staff employed on all the Railways that their exclusion from the Hours of Employment Regulations does not make any material difference. Moreover, the principles of the Act have in many cases been applied to the staff of those Railways on which the Hours of Employment Regulations have not yet been introduced and there is reason to believe that their employees enjoy to a great extent the benefits that the law affords to the employees of the Railways on which the Regulations are in force.

Classified according to railways, the staff covered is distributed as follows: North-Western Railway - 100,154; East India Railway - 126,226; Eastern Bengal Railway - 53,219; Great Indian Peninsula Railway - 79,490; Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway - 46,890; Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway - 63,528; Bengal and North-Western Railway - 28,399; total = 497,906.

Inspection.- The following table shows the actual number of establishments inspected by Labour Inspectors with the branches of Railway Service to which they belong:-

* Government of India, Department of Labour - Annual Report on the working of the Hours of Employment Regulations on the North Western, East India, Eastern Bengal, Great Indian Peninsula, Bombay, Baroda and Central India, Madras and Southern Mahratta and Bengal and North Western Railways during the year 1938-39 by Khan Bahadur K.M. Hassan, Supervisor of Railway Labour. Delhi: Manager of Publications. 1940. Price annas 4 or 5d. pp. 10.

	Transpor- tation.	Way and Works.	Power and Carriage.	Miscella- neous.	Total.
N. W. Railway. ...	571	192	81	154	998
E. I. Railway. ...	742	156	115	169	1,192
E. R. Railway. ...	390	77	79	88	634
G.I.P. Railway. ...	451	105	110	119	785
B.B.& C.I. Rly. ...	629	102	152	194	1,077
M. & S. W. Rly. ...	352	70	66	50	538
B. & N. W. Rly. ...	302	37	73	16	428
Total. ...	3,437	749	676	790	5,652

The average number of establishments inspected per Labour Inspector works out at 353 as against 544 in the year 1937-38. There are several causes which are responsible for the drop in the figures, the more important being the withdrawal of the duty card passes since 1st January 1939 which restricted the movement of Inspectors and inspection under the Payment of Wages Act. Up to November 1937 Inspectors of Railway Labour were utilised only in connection with the Hours of Employment Regulations, but from December 1937 they were also entrusted with inspection in connection with the Payment of Wages Act. This meant not only inspecting stations and other establishments in connection with both the Acts but also devoting at least one week exclusively every month for the inspection of the Paymasters' Offices. As the revised procedure was operative only for about three months during the last year, the effect on the figures of that year was not so great as has been on the figures of the year under review, during which it was observed throughout the year. Workshop staff employed in large workshops on railways which have been declared by Provincial Governments as 'Factories' come within the scope of the Factories Act. Detailed figures are not available as to the exact number of such factory workers but this is immaterial for the Factories Act also complies with the provisions of the Washington and Geneva Conventions. All other Railway servants come within the direct scope of the Hours of Employment Regulations, except in so far as those Regulations exempt a few categories.

Remarks on Application of Regulations.- With regard to the application of the Regulations to the various railways, the report makes the following observation: All the seven Railways on which the Regulations are now in force generally maintained a satisfactory standard in their application and took prompt measures to rectify the irregularities that were brought to their notice. The most important matter in which there is likely to be a difference of opinion between the Supervisor of Railway Labour and the Railway administrations is the classification of staff. In their natural desire to keep the expenditure low, Railway administrations are sometimes inclined to take a less liberal view and classify the staff as "Essentially Intermittent" when they should be "Continuous" or exclude them altogether from the scope of the Regulations when this should not be the case. Accordingly a large number of cases in which it was considered that the duties of the staff warranted a change in their classification was brought to the notice of the Railway administrations and in the majority of them the

suggestions were adopted; the only Railway, often found difficult to convince, was the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. Other irregularities in connection with the application of the Regulations such as the non-existence of posters and defective rosters were also noticed in greater or smaller degree on all the Railways. These were brought to the notice of the Railway Administrations concerned and necessary action was taken by them.

Hours of Employment.- The categories of staff which are mainly responsible for the breaches of the Regulations are the goods staff and the Transportation staff, particularly the inferior staff who are utilised for loading and unloading of 'smalls' at roadside stations outside their rostered hours. The complaint is not confined to any particular railway but is general. There are indications that the position is improving and both the Railway Administrations and the staff realise their responsibility in the matter. The attention of the Railway Administrations concerned is again invited to them. It is realised that the problem is not so easy of solution, but something will have to be done to stop the infringement of the Regulations that is constantly taking place on this account.

Periods of Rest.- According to the report fewer cases of the infringement of the Regulations under this head were detected by the Inspectors of Railway Labour, which indicates that the improvement which was reported last year has been maintained. It is realised that it is not possible to give all the staff a calendar day's rest but it is hoped that efforts will continue till all the staff whom it is possible to give the calendar day's rest have been given the same.

Classification of Staff.- Every endeavour is being made to improve the classification of staff and Railway Administrations are regularly addressed in this connection.

Overtime Work.- The report points out that there is distinct improvement under this head over the conditions that existed previously, few cases having been reported during the period under review in which the records of the overtime worked by the staff were not properly maintained. Generally speaking all Railway Administrations are now maintaining separate registers for this purpose and the Inspectors of Railway Labour can easily check whether the payments due have been made or not. The passing of the Payment of Wages Act under which it is obligatory on the part of Railway administrations to pay overtime within ten days of the wage-period has gone a long way to expedite payments which previously used to be delayed for one reason or another.

(The report on the working of the Hours of Employment Regulations during 1937-38 was reviewed at pages 25 - 28 of the report of this Office for May 1939).

Ordinance Enforcing Closure of Shops on Sundays:

Bengal Millowners' Association's Opposition.

According to an Associated Press message from Calcutta, consulted as to the desirability of promulgating an ordinance for the purpose of enforcing the closing of shops on Sundays pending the disposal of the Bengal Shops and Establishments Bill introduced in the Bengal Legislature in 1939 (vide page 9 of this Office's April 1940 report), the Bengal Millowners' Association has opposed the principle. In a communication addressed to the Government of Bengal in the first week of May, the Association states that it is "opposed to the principle of promulgating ordinances for administrative purposes as they consider it contrary to democratic principles. The Bengal Shops and Establishments Bill of 1939 should be allowed to take its own course as the matter does not warrant any tampering with the normal course of legislation".

(The Hindustan Time, dated
9-5-1940).

Inspection.

Enlargement of Sind Factory Inspectorate:

Strict Enforcement of Factory Act.

In order to place the factories in the province on a better footing and provide healthy conditions for their workmen, the Government of Sind has recently appointed 25 factory inspectors who will see that the Factory Act is rigidly enforced in Sind. Besides these inspectors, 25 medical officers have been appointed to act as certifying surgeons for factories.

(The Statesman, dated 15-5-1940).

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General.

Factory Administration in India, 1937.

The statistics included in the note on the working of the Factories Act, 1934, for the year 1938 exclude Burma, as was the case last year. No amendment was made in the act during the year.

Number of Factories.- The total number of registered factories during the year was 10,782, being 919 more than last year and the largest recorded so far. The number actually working which included 1,228 factories notified under Section 5 (1) of the Act, was 9,743 of which 6,086 were perennial and 3,657 seasonal. 90.4 per cent. registered factories worked during the year as against 90.5 per cent. in the preceding year. The number of new factories registered was 1,421 and the number struck off the registers 502.

Statistics of Operatives.- The average number of operatives employed during the year increased from 1,675,969 in 1937 to 1,737,758 in 1938, the highest recorded so far. The most marked increases were in Bombay (45,896) Madras (7,705), the Punjab (2,795), Bihar (2,558), Assam (2,152), Sind (2,024) and the United Provinces (1,601). The number of workers employed in the cotton textile industry increased from 474,134 in 1937 to 512,228. Jute mills employed 295,162 in 1938, against 305,785 in 1937; the decrease is attributed to the effect towards the end of the year of the restrictions of the Bengal Jute Ordinance on those concerns having a double shift system.

Employment of Women and Children.- The number of women employed in factories increased from 237,122 in 1937 to 240,932 in 1938 but the number of children employed decreased from 10,932 to 10,742. The percentage of children to the total factory population decreased from .64 in 1937 to .52 in 1938; but that of women ~~it~~ was 13.8, the same as in 1937. The apparent increase in female labour was due partly to the wider extension of the act during the year and partly to the increased facilities offered by the artificial silk industry for the employment of women in Bombay. In the Central Provinces and Bihar, the increase was attributed to the improved conditions in the textile industry and in the Punjab to increased employment in the cotton cleaning and reeling departments of the textile mills.

Hours of Work.- Percentage of factories in which the normal weekly hours are:-

	Not above 42.	Between 42 and 48.	Above 48.
Perennial -			
For men.	5	24	71
For women.	12	19	69

Statistics of Factories subject to the Factories Act, 1934 (XXV of 1934) for the year ending December 31st, 1938, together with a Note on the working of the Factories Act during the year. Published by order of the Government of India. Manager of Publications, Delhi. 1940. Price Re. 1-8-0. or 2s.3d. pp. 39.

	Not above 48.	Between 48 and 54.	Above 54.
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Seasonal -

For men.	25	11	64
For women.	34	9	57

Prosecutions and Convictions.- The Bengal report mentions the difficulty of regulating the labour employed through contractors. In the United Provinces and Bengal, overlapping shifts in some establishments continued and detection of irregularities in respect of periods of employment was almost impossible. Both these questions were receiving the attention of the Bengal Government. Reports of illegal employment were received in respect of jute and cotton mills in Bengal in which machinery hours were not restricted to the workers' legal day and week and in respect of rice mills situated in the upcountry districts in the same Province. In the Central Provinces and Berar, in some cases the owners of the cotton ginning and pressing factories by insisting on an impossible outturn from their gins forced the managements to work beyond the specified hours. In Sind, some of the seasonal factories were found to be working during prohibited hours as well as on weekly holidays. In the United Provinces, 12 prosecutions were instituted for breaches of sections 35 and 42. Convictions were obtained in 5 cases and the remaining were pending. In Bombay, the Inspector of Factories has been successful in obtaining regular working hours and weekly holidays in a large number of small concerns and it is being realised by those concerned that the application of the limited provisions of the Act has not been detrimental to them. The number of convictions obtained under the Act was 1,270 as against 1,182 in 1937. The chief increases were in Madras (222), Bombay (27) and Orissa (25).

Wages.- There was no marked variation in the rates of wages of skilled and unskilled labour in the majority of the Provinces.

Safety.- The number of recorded accidents increased from 28,323 in 1937 to 33,494 in 1938. Fatal accidents decreased from 215 to 210 but serious and minor accidents increased from 5,343 and 22,765 to 6,064 and 27,220 respectively. The incidence of all accidents per 100,000 operatives rose from 1,559 to 1,927 during the year under review. The safeguarding of the machinery and plant continued to receive close attention in all Provinces. In Bengal, further progress is reported to have been made in the improvement of fencing of jute machinery and the standard laid down in the 1931 agreement is proving inadequate. Cotton mill machinery and plant received attention and attempts have been made to eliminate the fire hazard in kapok mills. In Bombay, the fencing in a large number of small concerns has improved. Either automatic or fixed guards have been provided in metal stamping and pressing machinery to secure safety in the operations. A great proportion of machinery imported for the artificial silk industry was found defective from the safety point of view and remedial measures were taken. In the Central Provinces and Berar and Bengal, special attention was paid to accidents due to the breaking of overhead belts. In the Punjab, in addition to the distribution of safety posters, safety locking devices were suggested to the makers of machines. Demonstrations were also given in the safe handling of machines of new designs or those known to be dangerous. In Sind, the type of fencing provided in smaller factories leaves much to be desired and a great deal of time was taken up in explaining to the persons concerned the parts of machinery that required fencing, the kind of fencing to be used and the correct position of such fencing. In Madras, the Punjab,

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Sind and the United Provinces, the importance of wearing tight-fitting clothing by the workers was impressed on the factory managers.

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Inspection.- The number of factories inspected during the year was 8,709 or 89.3 per cent. of working factories. The percentage of perennial and seasonal factories inspected to the total number of such factories was 91.6 and 85.5 respectively as against 91.5 and 84.2 in the preceding year. No factory remained uninspected in Ajmer-Merwara and Delhi.

(Factory administration in India during 1937 was reviewed at pages 17 to 19 of our June 1939 report).

Improved Working Conditions of U.P. Factory
Workers: Views of U.P. Chamber of Commerce.

In regard to the amendment to Rule 93 of the U.P. Factories Rules, 1935, relating to shelter during periods of rest in case of workers, the U.P. Chamber of Commerce are glad to note that the Government may exempt factories from the operation of this rule where adequate facilities for meal and rest exist for the workers.

The Committee, however, are strongly opposed to the statutory provision of 6 square feet space for each worker, as it would require a very large area which it would be difficult for factory owners to procure. Besides, it would need a large capital outlay which would be locked up without any return. This in turn will handicap the erection of new factories. If the Government insist on provision for a fixed space per worker, the committee suggest 4 square feet which would amply meet the requirements of the workers.

(The Leader, dated 22-5-1940).

Disputes in Travancore Coir Mats and Matting Industry:
Report of Board of Conciliation.

A brief review of the report of the Board of Conciliation appointed by the Government of Travancore to go into the labour dispute in the Travancore Coir mats and matting industry was given at pages 10 and 11 of the March 1940 report of this Office. Below is given a fuller summary of the report recently submitted by the Board to the Government of Travancore. (A copy of the report was forwarded to Geneva with this Office's minute D.1/447/40 dated 16-5-1940.)

Points of Dispute.- The principal grievances of the workers as given in a memorandum submitted by the Travancore Labour Association were:

Reduction of wages.- (i) That for the last fifteen years, reduction of wages has been steadily going on. (ii) That the employers refuse to raise wages to level adequate to meet the primary requirements of the workers.

4. 11
Payment of Wages.- (i) That payment of wages in kind prevails in the industry mostly in the mofussil factories. (ii) That in many factories, wages are not paid at regular intervals.

Indirect Reduction of Wages.- (i) That the system of contract work exists generally in the industry, resulting in the reduction of wages. (ii) That the town factories execute orders by getting the work done cheaply in the mofussil factories, thereby generally reducing wages.

Fines.- That heavy and unjust fines are imposed by employers, meopans and other subordinates.

Exactions.- That various exactions are made from the workers by some employers, meopans and other subordinates.

Dangerous or injurious processes of work.- That some processes of work are either dangerous or injurious and that in many factories no protection is afforded against them.

Unsatisfactory Health Conditions.- That in most factories good drinking water is not available, no latrines are provided, the labourers have to work under heated zinc sheet roofs, there is no proper ventilation, and the buildings and looms contravene the provisions of the Factories Act.

Labour Representation on the Legislature.- That labour is not adequately represented on the legislature.

Remedies proposed.- (i) That the scope and meaning of the term 'factory' as defined in the Factories Act should be extended. (ii) That wages should be fixed on a daily or monthly wage basis, instead of on the present piece-work basis. (iii) That wages should be standardised, i.e., the same type of work should be paid the same rate of wages throughout the industry. (iv) That wage boards consisting of the representatives of employers and employees should be created. (v) That a Payment of Wages Act should be passed. (vi) That maternity benefits should be provided for women employees. (vii) That provision should be made for the education of working class children in the industry. (viii) That unemployment insurance should be provided for. (ix) That a standing committee should be created to enquire into trade disputes. (x) That a Labour Department or the post of a Labour Commissioner should be created. (xi) That employers should recognise the Coir Factory Workers' Union.

Economic Background.- The Coir matting industry was introduced in Travancore so far back as 1860. The first market for coir manufactures was the U.S.A., but the business gradually extended to the U.K., Australia and New Zealand as well as to British India. There has been a phenomenal increase in the production and export of mattings during the post-war period, from 1.115 million yards in 1919-20 to 9.578 million yards in 1936-37, i.e., by about 860 per cent. The increase under exports of mats is not so striking as in the case of mattings, but is, nevertheless, very marked, having risen from 110,527 cwts. in 1921-22 to 258,106 cwts. in 1936-37 or about 233 per cent. At present there are 290 coir factories in the State, with 4,335 matting looms and 7,350 mat looms. The labour supply has far out-run the demand, and even in the busiest season, it is not possible to provide full time work for all the 28 days of the month for all the labourers who daily ask for it. It is

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estimated that about 27,000 workers are engaged in the industry.

Recommendations.- The following are the principal recommendations of the Board of Conciliation:

Recruitment and Employment:

Control of Labour Supply.- It is high time to impose some kind of control on the indiscriminate flow of labour into the industry. All the labourers who are in the industry at present or were in it till recently should be required to hold licenses issued on a nominal fee. No unlicensed worker should be allowed to work in the factories and no more licenses should be issued for the next five years, unless there is a demand for increased labour supply from a duly constituted organisation of factory owners.

Regularity of Employment.- It is better to give regular employment, as far as possible, to a definite number of workers, rather than partial employment to a large number. Each factory should maintain a register of permanent workers and a waiting list of substitute workers. The latter should be given preference whenever vacancies occur or additional labour is required. In any scheme of control of labour supply, it would be necessary to secure the co-operation of the Labour Unions.

Contract System.- Items of work carried through the engagement of contractors should be reduced to the lowest possible extent.

Wherever contract work is found to be unavoidable, the following conditions should be laid down:- (a) The Management should assume the responsibility for securing fair and reasonable conditions of work for contract labour; (b) Until the Trade Boards Act comes into force, the management should fix a minimum wage for the workers; (c) The management should exercise adequate supervision of the payment of wages; (d) There should be a right of appeal to the management by all contractors' employees on all subjects, including wrongful dismissal.

Wages.- The introduction of a time wage does not seem to us to be practicable before the whole industry is organized on better and sounder lines. As immediate action is necessary in regard to standardization of wage rates, the Board recommends the appointment, as early as possible, of a special committee, to deal with the matter, the committee consisting of an equal number of representatives of employers and workers, with an independent Chairman.

The system of payment of wages in kind should be abolished by statute.

The regular payment of wages in cash at periods not longer than a fortnight should be made obligatory by law.

Fines.- The enquiry did not disclose any wide prevalence of the practice of levying heavy or unjust fines on the workers. Deductions from wages made on account of damage to or loss of goods should be distinguished from fines. Provision should be made regulating the imposition of fines and making other deductions from wages.

Illegal Exactions.- Various kinds of unjust and illegal exactions are made from the workers by the moopans and other subordinates who are entrusted with the supervision of labour in the factories. It is the duty of the factory owners to put down with a strong hand all unjust exactions.

Other Recommendations.- The Board also makes a number of

recommendations for ensuring the health and welfare of the workers. It is specifically recommended that the present indifferent attitude of the employers towards welfare schemes should be changed into one of practical sympathy, and that the Coir Factory Workers' Union should initiate useful schemes for the welfare of the workers.

The Board recognises the need for control of the industry as, in the absence of regulation of competition, the entire industry might be ruined, and recommends that the Committee that was set up at the meeting of the manufacturers held on the 12th April 1959, should proceed with its work and produce a revised scheme acceptable to the majority of the interests concerned.

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Economic Conditions.

Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for various Centres in India during February, 1940.

The cost of living index number for working classes in various centres of India registered the following changes during February 1940 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 February 1940 declined by 2 points to 112. The average for 1939 was 106 as compared with 105 for 1938.

Ahmedabad.- The index numbers (base: year ending July 1927) of the cost of living in Ahmedabad during February 1940 decreased by 2 points to 79. The average for 1939 was 73 as against 71 for the preceding year.

Sholapur.- The index number (base: year ending January 1928) of the cost of living in Sholapur during February 1940 fell by 1 point to 79. The average for 1939 was 74 as compared with 72 for the preceding year.

Nagpur.- The index number (base: year ending January 1927) of the cost of living in Nagpur in February 1940 declined by 4 points to 67. The average for 1939 was 63 against 61 for 1938.

Jubbulpore.- The index number (base: January 1927) of the cost of living in Jubbulpore in February 1940 declined by 3 points to 62. The average for 1939 was 59 as against 57 for 1938.

Madras.- The index number (base: year ending June 1936) of the cost of living in Madras during February 1940 decreased by 3 points to 104. The average for 1939 was 100; average for the preceding year was not available.

(Extracted from the February 1940
issue of the Monthly Survey of
Business Conditions in India).

Export Advisory Council set up by Government of India.

The Government of India has in the second week of May set up an Export Advisory Council. The Council will be an advisory body and its functions will be to (a) to act as a channel of communication between the Government of India and the exporting interests of the country so as to facilitate the discussion of difficulties arising out of the War and the legislation and regulations consequent thereon; (b) to make recommendations regarding the best means of expanding the aggregate exports of staple commodities and, in so far as the customary markets for such commodities are partly or wholly closed as a consequence of the War, to suggest the appropriate ways and means for promoting a demand for these commodities in alternative markets; (c) to make recommendations regarding the methods of expanding the exports of the products of Indian manufacturing industry, and to promote interest among Indian manufacturers in the expansion of their sales overseas; (d) to make recommendations as

to the assistance which can be given by the Government of India to unofficial trade delegations which may be despatched by organised trades or industries to study conditions in overseas markets. The Council will meet at least four times a year.

Composition of the Council.- The Commerce Member of the Government of India will be the chairman of the Council and Sir H.P. Mody will be the vice-chairman. In addition there will be 20 members, 9 representing the associations of interests concerned with export trade like the Bombay and Ahmedabad Millowners' Association etc, 4 representing the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, 2 members to be appointed by the Government of India as representative of the principal international exporting houses, and 5 members to be nominated by the Government of India as representative of interests not otherwise adequately represented on the Council.

(Resolution No. 81-C. (1)/40, dated 11-5-1940 of the Commerce Department of the Government of India, published at pages 677-678 of the Gazette of India. Part I, dated 11-5-1940).

Standardisation of Weights: Bengal
Government to appoint Committee.

The Government of Bengal, it is understood, will shortly appoint a committee to examine the present position in Bengal, in regard to standardisation of weights and to make necessary recommendations.

The anomalies in regard to the variations in measures were pointed out to the Government by the Bengal Jute Enquiry Committee of 1934 and the Bengal Paddy and Rice Enquiry Committee of 1939. The Government of India enacted a comprehensive measure in 1939 to establish standards of weights throughout British India. It now rests with the Provincial Governments to make necessary legislation in respect of standards of measures.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, dated 19-5-1940).

Bengal Land Revenue Commission's Report:
Abolition of Permanent Settlement Recommended.

The Bengal Land Revenue Commission, with Sir Francis Flood as chairman, appointed by the Government of Bengal in 1938 submitted its report during May 1940. The most important of the recommendations are that the zamindari system should be abolished; that, as far as possible, direct relations should be established between the Government and the cultivator; and that certain measures, administrative and economic, should be promptly taken to improve the condition of the ryots and increase their general prosperity. The main recommendations are noticed below:

Landlordism to go: Cultivators to be Direct Tenants.- The majority of the Commission have reached the conclusion that, whatever may have been the justification for the Permanent Settlement in 1793, it is no longer suitable to the conditions of the present time; and that the zamindari system has developed so many defects that it has ceased to serve any national interests. The present system should be replaced by one which would bring the actual cultivators into the position of tenants holding directly under the Government by acquiring the interests of all classes of rent receivers.

Rate of Compensation.- The Commission is not unanimous in its findings as to the principle on which compensation should be paid, but it is agreed that compensation must be equitable, as required by Section 299 of the Government of India Act. The rate, which the majority of the members favour, is ten times the net price of the proprietors and tenure-holders. Compensation at this rate, it is estimated will entail an expenditure by Government of about Rs. 780 millions. Compensation should be paid in cash, if possible; otherwise, in bonds redeemable in 60 years.

Mines and Fisheries.- Acquisition of royalties from mines is also recommended. Whether or not its recommendations are accepted, it is suggested by the majority that Government should consider the desirability of legislation declaring that all minerals, including those not yet discovered or worked, will vest in the State. Fisheries should also be acquired.

Agricultural Income-Tax.- The imposition of an agricultural income-tax is recommended as a transitional measure until a scheme of State acquisition is given effect to, in preference to an agricultural or other cess. The tax should be applied solely for the improvement of agriculture.

Large Estates not desirable.- The accumulation of large quantities of land in one hand is considered undesirable except for scientific farming.

Dissenting Notes.- A number of dissenting Notes are also attached to the report.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, dated 17-5-1940).

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3rd session of National Planning Committee, 1 to
14-5-1940, Bombay; Labour Sub-Committee's Recommendations.

The 3rd session of the National Planning Committee (The 1st session was held in December 1938 - vide pages 30-31 of December 1938 report; the second session was held at Bombay from 4 to 17-6-1939 - vide pages 25 to 28 of June 1939 report) was held at Bombay from 1-5-1940 to 14-5-1940 under the Chairmanship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to consider the reports of the various sub-committees which the Committee had appointed, and adopted a number of resolutions.

Chairman's Note. - Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in a Note submitted to the session on 1-5-1940, reviewed war developments, referred to the resignations of the Congress Ministries and the political changes resulting therefrom, and stressed that despite these untoward happenings national planning was essential for India.

Defining the social objectives of national planning, he said:

"We are aiming at a free and democratic State, which has full political and economic freedom. In this State the fundamental rights of the individual and the group—political, economic, social and cultural—will be guaranteed, and the corresponding duties and obligations laid down.... The State will not permit the exploitation of the community by individuals or groups to the disadvantage of the former and to the injury of the nation as a whole.... Planning will deal with production, distribution, consumption, investment, trade, income, social services, and the many other forms of national activity which act and react on each other.... The N.P.C. has suggested that national wealth should be increased between two and three times within the next ten years, and this should be so planned as to raise the general standard at least in a like measure.... The principle of State ownership or control of Key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport, has also been accepted. The principle was laid down first by the Congress at Karachi in 1931.... In the event of a private industry being taken over by the State, fair compensation would be paid." (Bombay Chronicle, 3-5-1940).

Reports of Sub-Committees. - Out of the 29 sub-committees appointed, the following sub-committees submitted their final reports: Engineering Industries and Transport Industries, Population, Housing, Labour, Horticulture and Railway Training.

The following sub-committees submitted interim reports: Manufacturing Industries, Chemicals, Transport, Public Finance, Currency and Banking, Land Policy and Animal Husbandry.

Reports from the following committees were expected shortly: Rural Marketing and Finance; Industrial Finance, Power and Fuel, and Women's Role.

The remaining sub-committees, including that on Technical Education, had not yet signified when they would be able to submit their reports. (Bombay Chronicle, 3-5-1940).

Labour Recommendations. - After discussion of the Labour Sub-Committee's report, the National Planning Committee adopted the

following recommendations:

Regulation of Unregulated Industries.- Regulation as regards living and working conditions of the employees, including hours of work, employment of children, provisions for safety and sanitation, social insurance and such other matters should apply, subject to such variation as may be necessary owing to the nature of the occupation, to industries and occupations to which so far no such regulation has been applied.

Minimum Labour Standards with due regard to Consumers' Interests and Capacity of Industry.- It is of paramount importance that certain essential human standards be maintained. In giving effect to any regulations for the improvement of living and working conditions, due regard will be paid to interests of the consumer and the capacity of each industry to support this obligation. In the event of an industry not being able to comply with these conditions, the State may protect, subsidise or take it over, if it is the interest of the community to do so.

48-Hour Day with No Reduction of Pay.- Working hours should be limited to 48 hours per week and 9 hours per day. This should not lead to any reduction of earnings. It is recommended that a committee should investigate into all the questions arising out of the application of a 48 hour week on an all-India basis, including conditions of work. The provision relating to hours of work shall apply to all employees in—

(a) factories and workshops, employing five or more persons and using mechanical power, or to factories and workshops employing ten or more persons even though not using mechanical power; (b) mines and quarries; and (c) public transport services using mechanical power.

Weekly Limit for Plantations, Public Utility Works, etc.- The principle of limiting the total weekly hours of work should be applied to other industrial and commercial occupations, including plantations, building works, public utility services, with due regard to the nature and varying conditions of the occupation.

15 to be Minimum Age of Employment - The minimum age of employment of children should be progressively raised to 15, in correlation with the educational system.

Special Health and Safety Committee.- In view of the specially technical nature of the problems of health and safety, a special committee should be appointed to make detailed investigations and recommendations for improving provisions for the health, safety, and conditions governing night work, in all regulated undertakings.

Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery for Provinces.- A wage fixing machinery should be established early in all provinces in order to secure for the workers a living wage, fix minimum wages, consider other questions relating to wages, and obtain for them a decent standard of life, health and comfort. There should also be a Central Board in order to co-ordinate the activities of the Provincial Boards.

Housing K - a National Obligation.- The question of Housing should be considered as a national obligation of the State and should, therefore, be more fully considered in connection with the housing sub-committee's recommendations. It is desirable therefore for the State, including Local Bodies, to make provisions for housing, as well as for co-operative schemes. During the period of transition, and in order to improve housing conditions as rapidly as possible, employers should be required to erect suitable housing houses for workers, provided that full provision is made for freedom of movement and association, and against victimization by way of ejection during industrial disputes. Where necessary, facilities for transport should be provided.

Holidays with Pay.- All industrial employees should be given at least 10 continuous working days (exclusive of public holidays) as paid holidays after 12 months service.

Adequate Workmen's Compensation.- The present rates paid by way of compensation should be examined and made adequate.

Maternity Benefits from Special Public Fund.- Maternity benefit legislation should be undertaken on the general lines laid down by the Geneva Convention of 1919, in regard to the period before and after child-birth, payment being made out of a special public fund.

Social Insurance.- A system of compulsory and contributory social insurance for industrial workers should be established directly under the control of the State to cover the risks of sickness and invalidity other than those covered by the Workmen's Compensation Act. Schemes for providing alternative employment to those involuntarily unemployed, Old Age Pensions and Survivors' Pensions, and also Social Insurance to cover risks of sickness and invalidity for all, should be established directly under the State. These schemes should be extended by stages, with due regard to the relative urgency of their needs, facility of application, and to the ability of the community to provide for them.

Trade Unionism.- Legislation should be passed to recognise Trade Unionism as an essential and integral part of the economic system.

Machinery for Industrial Disputes.- With regard to the recommendation that the machinery for the settlement of disputes should be provided by Government in the form of a Conciliation Board and an Industrial Court, a prolonged discussion took place on the desirability of otherwise of compulsory arbitration in labour disputes.

Mr. N.M. Joshi argued that the system of arbitration in which the decisions of the arbitrators are binding on both parties must be rejected.

Mr. Gulzarilal Kanda, an ex-Parliamentary Secretary of the recent Congress Ministry, Bombay, and Secretary, Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, was, however, of opinion that under existing circumstances compulsory arbitration was desirable and should be encouraged. Labour was weak and to invite conflict with a more powerful adversary was to invite disaster. Arbitration strengthened the workers and it was for this reason that employers were usually opposed to it.

Labour Legislation.- It is desirable to have uniformity and co-ordination in labour legislation all over India. There should, therefore, be full co-ordination between the Centre and the Provinces, and the Provinces and States 'inter se', and appropriate machinery for this purpose should be devised, such as Tripartite Industrial Councils representing the Government, the employers and labour. This principle of uniformity and co-ordination should be borne in mind when prescribing the respective spheres of Central and Provincial legislation

affecting labour. Both in the interest of industry and the community, it is desirable to associate the workers progressively in the control of the industrial system.

Labour Inspectorate.- The Labour Inspectorate should be strengthened in the various provinces and should include women. Co-operation between Inspectorates of various provinces should be established by periodical conferences.

Labour Statistics.- Legislation should be passed for the full collection of all necessary labour and other statistics.

Literacy.- A nation-wide campaign of adult literacy and education should be started by making it obligatory on every illiterate adult to attend a literacy centre for a fixed period. The necessary finances required for launching the scheme should be provided by the State.

Technical Education.- Provision should be made for technical education of the workers by establishing Day and Night Schools for the purpose, so that the worker might become more efficient in his own industry and might also learn an alternative occupation. After the State has made suitable provision, a certain period should be fixed after which only literates will be employed.

Domestic Servants.- The case of those engaged in domestic service requires special attention and legislation in regard to hours of work, wages, holidays, social insurance and the like.

Equal Pay for Women Workers.- The Committee also resolved that the right of women workers to get equal pay for equal work be recognised. (The Bombay Chronicle, 10 and 11-5-1940).

Population Problems.

The following resolutions were adopted by the N.P.C. on the report of the Population Sub-Committee, presented by Dr. Radha Kamal Mukherji:-

Need for Regulating Population Increase: Standard of Living.- We agree with the view that the size of the Indian population is a basic issue in national economic planning in so far as its unrestricted increase out of proportion to means of subsistence affects adversely the standard of living and tends to defeat many social and ameliorative measures.

The problem has been fundamentally caused by the lack of all-round, co-ordinated economic development. While measures for the improvement of the quality of the population and limiting excessive population ~~pressure~~ pressure are necessary, the basic solution of the present disparity between population and standard of living lies in the economic progress of the country on a comprehensive and planned basis.

Utilisation of Waste Lands to make up for 12 per cent. ^{deficit} in Food-stuffs.- With a deficit in food supply estimated at about 12 per cent. of the requirements of the population, and chronic under-nutrition and unbalanced dietary of the masses, India should utilise her waste lands and improve her yield per acre as much as possible.

We recommend that in relatively sparsely populated areas, land reclamation should be promoted through Rural Settlement Department;

and planned inter-Provincial migration from over-crowded regions should be encouraged establishing zones of agricultural colonisation in newly reclaimed areas as well as for industrial purposes. The State should own such agricultural areas to avoid the creation of new vested interests.

Combating Under-Nutrition: Food and Crop Planning.- We consider that the prevalent under-nutrition and malnutrition should be tackled by systematic crop planning, stressing the production of heavy-yielding, energy-producing and also protective food-stuffs. We recommend, in this connection, the establishment of a Central Nutrition Board with regional boards for developing a national nutritional policy in co-ordination with the Departments of Agriculture and Public Health. There should also be nutrition research institutes functioning under these Boards.

*The Present food resources should be more effectively utilised and supplemented, particularly by vegetable or animal proteins so as to give a more adequate and balanced diet, and an attempt should be made to improve food habits and methods of food preparation of the people so that they may obtain more nutritive values from the foods consumed.

Family Planning and Birth Control Clinics.- In the interests of national economy, family happiness and national planning, family planning and a limitation of children are essential and the State should adopt a policy to encourage these. It is desirable to lay stress on self-control as well as to spread knowledge of cheap and safe methods of birth control. Birth control clinics should be established and other necessary measures taken in this behalf and to prevent the use or advertisement of harmful methods.

Raising of Marriage-Age.- We consider that the gradual raising of the marriage age and discouragement of polygamy are desirable in the interests of limitation of the size of the family.

Eugenics: Intermarriages and Sterilisation.- The removal of barriers to inter-marriage is desirable for eugenic and other social reasons. An eugenic programme should include the sterilisation of persons suffering from transmissible diseases of a serious nature, such as insanity or epilepsy.

Institutions for Defectives.- For the blind, deaf, mute, infirm, feeble-minded and other socially inadequate persons, we recommend that there should be more adequate and more appropriate institutional care and vocational training through hospitals, special schools, colonies and homes, in order that they may prove useful and be not an excessive burden to society.

Planned Charity.- When planned society comes fully into being occasions for individual, unorganised or sporadic charity will have no place. Misfortunes for which such charity is at present provided will be far rarer then, and such as occur will be guarded against by the collective obligation of the State. Even during the transition period, individual alms-giving must give place to organised relief and institutional care.

Social Inequalities to go.- All social standing which came in the way of equality between man and man, and man and woman, must be abolished. Untouchability and all such-like disabilities must be completely ended.

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Vital Statistics and Demographic Surveys.- The maintenance of vital statistics, and the carrying out of periodic demographic surveys on comprehensive lines, are necessary, and appropriate machinery should be devised for this purpose. (The Bombay Chronicle, dated 12-5-1940).

Housing Problems.

The National Planning Committee adopted the following resolutions on the report submitted by the Housing Sub-Committee.

Central and Provincial Housing Boards.- We recommend the creation of statutory authorities, namely: (1) Central Housing and Planning Board, and (2) Provincial Housing and Planning Boards. The former will be concerned with general principles, policy, programme, finance, technique, standardisation and research on broad lines. The latter will guide and control all schemes, but not their details. Necessary legislation will be undertaken, which will provide for the initiation and execution of the programme. Women should be given adequate representation on these Boards.

State aid for Rural Housing.- Rural housing should be undertaken in co-ordination with rural reconstruction and should generally be based on ownership, and not tenancy, of the house and site, the latter on a basis of long lease if ownership is not possible. The programme of such rural housing should be carried out with such aid from the State as may be necessary. The State will make requisite arrangements for financing the housing programme, if necessary, by loan. (The Bombay Chronicle, dated 16-5-1940).

Next Meeting on 2-6-1940.- A full session of the National Planning Committee will meet on 2-6-1940 to consider the reports of those sub-committees which have not yet submitted their reports.

(The Hindustan Times, 16-5-1940).

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Employment, Unemployment and Vocational Training.

Bhopal Scheme for Educated Unemployed:

Settling Youths on Land.

The Government of Bhopal State has recently adopted an experimental plan for settling middle-class educated unemployed on the land. The following are the details of the scheme:-

The experiment, which is the result of the recent inquiry into the problem of unemployment, involves the settling of about 15 men, varying in ages from 20 to 35, in one of the newly irrigated areas in the city, near the largest tank irrigation work in Bhopal. These 15 men have been given about 15 acres of land apiece free, in addition to a few acres of common land for pasturage. Each man will also be given a pair of bullocks, a couple of cows and the necessary seed for their initial agricultural operations. The State will also build model houses for the settlers. During the first year a minimum subsistence allowance will also be given to each man.

The scheme, calculated to cost the Government about Rs. 900 per head, will be extended if the experiment proves successful. The amount spent on each individual, will be in the form of a loan, recoverable in easy instalments at the expiry of a few years.

(The Statesman, dated 1-5-1940).

Sind Government Scheme of Land for Unemployed Youths:

Price to be paid in Thirty Instalments.

A scheme has been prepared by the Government of Sind to settle educated unemployed youths on land. It envisages provision of 100 acres of land on easy terms to young men undertaking cultivation on scientific modern lines. A tract of 25,000 acres of land will be set apart for this purpose, out of 100,000 acres of new waste tracts that will be brought under the plough next year. The beneficiaries will be allowed the concession to pay back the value of the land in 30 annual instalments.

(The Bombay Chronicle, dated
11-5-1940).

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Colonisation Scheme for Educated Unemployed:

Mysore Government's Scheme.

According to the Bangalore correspondent of the Associated Press of India, the Mysore Government has, with a view to relieving unemployment among educated young men, sanctioned a scheme formulated by the committee appointed for the purpose, according to which 10 colonists selected by the committee will be given 15 acres of land each on lease for six years in the Irwin canal area. The Government will advance each colonist Rs. 1,500 for capital expenditure, house, cattle-shed, bullocks & ploughs, and Rs. 500 annually for meeting the expenses. If the colonists succeed the land will be conferred to them at the end of six years at an upset price to be recovered in 10 annual instalments from the date of sale.

(The Leader, dated 27-5-1940)

Grant to Educated Unemployed: Punjab Government's

Scheme to stimulate Industries.

The Punjab Government has set apart a sum of Rs. 20,000 which it proposes to spend during 1940-41 in the form of grants to help young Punjabis in industrial careers. Grants are to be made to those who have received training in a particular industry to enable them to start that industry or any business or trade connected therewith. Those already in business or trade will also be eligible for these grants for the purpose of enabling them to expand their activities. Preference is to be given to groups of individuals or co-operative organisations. Ordinary individual grants will not exceed Rs. 1,500, but exceptions may be made in special cases. The grants will be non-refundable and non-recurring, but will ordinarily be subject to the condition that the grantee shall spend from his own resources an amount equal to at least the grant by the Government. The scheme aims at relieving unemployment in the province.

(The Hindustan Times, dated
13-5-1940).

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Migration.

Proposed Ceylon Minimum Wages Ordinance:

Action delayed pending Government of India's Views.

The Minimum Wages Ordinance which the Government of Ceylon is planning to issue with a view to ^{fixing} basic minimum wages for workers, both Ceylonese and Indian, in factories and agricultural industries of the Island, is being temporarily held up at the desire of the Government of India which has requested for further time for expression of its views on the proposed measure. The main provisions of the Ordinance are given below:

Basic Minimum Wage.- The principle of the proposed Ordinance is to provide a basic minimum wage for daily-paid labour in all factory and agricultural industries which, on the recommendation of the District Wages Boards to be constituted, will be brought within the scope of the Ordinance. It will apply to all labour in Ceylon, including immigrant estate labour in respect of whom minimum wage legislation is already in operation.

Wages Boards.- The Ordinance seeks to set up wages boards for different areas with representation on them for both employers and the workers. These boards will inquire into the conditions of the industries within their areas and recommend rates of minimum wages for the employees concerned.

The Executive Committee of Labour, Industry and Commerce, Ceylon, is awaiting the Indian Government's views before taking steps to introduce the Ordinance in the State Council.

(The Hindu, dated 3-5-1940).

Discrimination against Indian Skilled Emigrants to Ceylon:

Protest by President of Indian Mercantile Chamber of Commerce, Ceylon.

Mr. H. M. Desai, President, Indian Mercantile Chamber of Commerce, Ceylon, speaking at the annual general meeting of the Chamber held at Colombo in the last week of April 1940 reviewed at some length the various aspects of the problem of emigration of Indian labour to Ceylon and emphasised the point of view that India was not an ^{convenient} elastic reservoir ready to supply cheap human labour when needed and take it back when not wanted. The following is a brief summary of the main points raised by him in this respect.

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The Government of India, disappointed with Ceylon's obduracy, took action and in an official communiqué dated August 1 1939, announced their decision to prohibit the departing of unskilled labour by sea to Ceylon in view of the decision of the Government of Ceylon to terminate the employment of a large number of Indians and their declared policy to discontinue many more such Indians.

It is, of late, frequently argued that Ceylon never intended to stop the flow of the assisted labour employed on estates and that as the ban hits the planting community which was never at variance with Indian interests it is aimed at the wrong target. It is also said that the ban is "barbaric", as it is responsible for breaking the families of Indian labourers. These are, no doubt, apparently forceful arguments likely to evoke easy mass sympathy; still, let not one important fact be consigned to oblivion by those who make these charges. India cannot allow Ceylon or any other colony to follow a policy of "pick and choose", dictating to the Government of India that such and such labour she will have and such other she will restrict or discriminate against.

Ceylon cannot have it both ways use Indian labour on the estates and at the same time blame India for sending it. Viewed from this angle, India is justified in resisting all attempts in colonies to differentiate between estate and non-estate labour or one class of Indians from the other. India has to secure fair treatment for all her nationals in colonies - whether they be urban or rural workers, traders or professionals, clerks or salesmen, as one indivisible entity, and discrimination against one is discrimination against the other.

Finally, Mr. Desai laid down the following conditions for the Government of India to lift the present ban on emigration of unskilled labour to Ceylon.

(1) Security of service and status to all classes of Indian labour permitted to migrate to Ceylon; (2) Grant of village franchise; (3) Grant of increased wages to a level commensurate with their contribution to the national dividend; (4) Opportunities to Indians for being settled in the island since it would be sheer injustice to throw them back on India on reaching old age; (5) Equal rights of citizenship to those Indians, who have abiding interests in the island, along with a satisfactory settlement of the question of franchise; and (6) Freedom from harassment by criminal proceedings in any matter arising out of their contract of employment and tenancy of the estate lines.

(The Hindustan Times, dated 1-5-1940).

Indian Workers in Mauritius: Government of India deputed

Mr. S. Ridley, I.C.S., to report on Conditions.

The Government of India, with the consent of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, has deputed Mr. S. Ridley, I.C.S., Secretary to the Agent-General in South Africa, to visit Mauritius. No officer of the Government of India has been deputed for this purpose during the last ten years, and Mr. Ridley's visit is designed to put the Government in direct touch with developments in the Colony in so far as they affect Indians. Mr. Ridley will arrive in Mauritius on May 28 and leave on July 2, 1940

(The Hindustan Times, dated 28-5-1940).

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Agriculture.

The Bengal Agricultural Debtors (Amendment) Act, 1940.

The Bengal Agricultural Debtors (Amendment) Act, 1940, a measure designed to afford some degree of relief to the agricultural debtors received the assent of the Governor on 26-4-1940. The Act is published at pages 13 to 21 of Part III, Calcutta Gazette, dated 2-5-1940.

(The Calcutta Gazette, dated 2-5-1940,
Part III, pages 13 - 21).

Debt Relief Legislation in Hyderabad State:

Conciliation Boards set up.

According to a press Note issued by the Government of Hyderabad State, an inquiry recently instituted into the extent of agricultural indebtedness in the State had led to the conclusion that, though the volume of agricultural debt is large, the agriculturist is solvent and should be able to pay off his debt if suitable relief measures are adopted.

Agriculturists Solvent.- The main conclusions reached after a thorough inquiry into conditions in three typical villages in each of the 104 diwan taluqs of the State, are that the total agricultural debt very roughly estimated for the entire agricultural population in the State comes to about Rs. 645 millions, that the average rate of interest prevailing is 18 per cent and that land is passing rapidly out of the possession of agriculturists into that of moneylenders; it is also reported that though the volume of agricultural debt is large, the agriculturist is solvent and he should be able to pay off this debt from the surplus produce of land, if suitable relief measures are adopted, as the value of agricultural land is said to be twenty six times the land revenue assessment.

Relief Measures.- The principal measures for the relief of agriculturists proposed are: restriction of alienation of land, conciliation of debt by agreement, land mortgage banks for redemption of debt, co-operative marketing, regularisation of money-lending by statute, the enforcement throughout the Dominions of standardised weights and measures, establishment of village panchayats and consolidation of holdings.

Debt Conciliation Boards.- The new measures recommended for immediate adoption are the establishment of Debt Conciliation Boards in districts, the introduction of a law for the registration, licensing of moneylenders and the starting of a Land Mortgage Bank. Under the Debt Conciliation Regulation, conciliation of debt, in other words reduction of accumulated past interest, will be voluntary and by mutual agreement between the debtor and the creditor, helped by the Panchayat consisting of moneylenders and agriculturists and presided over by a Gazetted

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Government Officer. Applicants will be exempt from payment of court fees and will not be permitted to be represented by pleaders. The main work of the Debt Conciliation Boards will be to bring about agreements between debtors and creditors for repayment of debt in 8 to 20 annual instalments from the assessed surplus produce of the land.

Regulation of Money-lending and Lowered Rates of Interest.- The maximum rates of interest will be 9 per cent. in the case of secured and 12 per cent. in the case of unsecured loans, notwithstanding any agreement between the moneylender and the borrower to the contrary. The levy of compound interest, as well as charging of expenses incurred by moneylenders in respect of loans is forbidden.

(The Hindustan Times, dated
13-5-1940).

Standing Central Economic Committee:

Proposal of Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.

It is understood that the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research has under consideration proposals for constituting a Standing Central Economic Committee. This will be entrusted with the task of finding markets for agricultural produce and lowering of cost of production. The proposals will be placed before the Governing Body of the Council when it meets in June, 1940, which will also consider Dr. Radhakamal Mukherjee's scheme of research in agricultural economics.

(The Hindustan Times, dated
7-5-1940).

Tobacco Cultivation - A new Agricultural Industry

for U.P.: Co-operative Cultivation planned by U.P. Government.

In order to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the British Government's decision to stop buying tobacco from America and in order to make India self-sufficient, the U.P. Government have under consideration a scheme for the development of tobacco in Bundelkhand.

Work for 500 Labourers.- Four years experience in growing Virginian tobacco by the Government Farm at Bharari, U.P., has shown that the scheme has been a success in Bundelkhand which is comparatively free from severe frost and thus offers favourable conditions for growing the crop. Another reason why this area has been selected for tobacco development is that it has no good money crop like sugar and that the

cultivation of tobacco can fit into the agricultural season and can be under taken at a time when the ryots are otherwise occupied. About 500 agricultural workers may be engaged in cultivation in the first year and this number will multiply rapidly in the succeeding years.

Co-operative Basis of Plan.- Lack of success on the part of private enterprise in this sphere has been due to unsatisfactory curing and to the lack of a market. Steps are being taken to remedy these defects. It is proposed that co-operative societies should organise tobacco cultivation on about 300 acres of land and that about 100 acres should be grown at the Agricultural Department Farm at Bharari. The whole of the crop will be cured by the Department and sold in the open market. The Indian Leaf Tobacco Co., Ltd. is reported to have agreed to assist the scheme with advice both in cultivation and in curing and to buy the crop at market rates. It is estimated that 250,000 lbs. of cured leaf can be had from 385 acres. The two tobacco cultivation centres will be Bharari and Chirgaon. The crop is expected to yield handsome profit to growers. The financial aspect of the scheme is being examined by the Government in order to make provision for necessary funds for the purpose.

(The Statesman, dated 22-5-1940).

Professional Workers, Salaried Employees and Public Servants.

First Salaried Employees' Conference, Bombay, 4-5-1940.

Minimum Demands formulated.

The first Conference of the salaried Employees of Bombay convened under the auspices of the Bombay Clerks' Union was held at Bombay on 4-5-1940 under the presidency of Mr. Jannades N. Mehta. M.L.A. (Bombay). Mr. V.V. Giri, ex-Minister for Labour, Madras, inaugurated the Conference.

Presidential Address.- Mr. Mehta in his presidential address estimated the number of clerks employed in Bombay City in the offices of the Government, the Municipality, the railways, Port Trust, Banks, insurance and commercial companies, shipping concerns and trading firms at 50,000, and with their dependants at 200,000. He regretted the lack of organisation among this large class of employees, advised them to start powerful Unions of their own for purposes of collective bargaining, and warned them against the tendency to regard themselves as a class apart from the working classes. He stressed that in respect of wages, hours of work, stability of employment, leave facilities, unemployment insurance, etc, the clerical employees were seriously handicapped and that this state of affairs demanded immediate redress.

Messrs. V.V. Giri, N.M. Joshi, and Mr. S. H. Jhabvala (chairman, Reception Committee), also addressed the Conference and urged clerical employees to organise themselves in a strong trade union.

Resolutions Adopted.- The following is a summary of the more important resolutions adopted at the Conference:

(1) Demand for War Allowance.- This Conference calls upon the Government to require all employers both private and public, to grant a war allowance of 20 per cent. of their salaries to all the members of the clerical staff in their employ, with retrospective effect from December 1939.

(2) Minimum Demands.- The following minimum demands were formulated and government was requested to implement them by necessary administrative and legislative action:

(1) A minimum wage of Rs. 60 per month, rising by time scale to Rs. 150 by annual increments of Rs. 10, with the right to rise to any higher posts on the basis of seniority and merit.

(2) One month's privilege leave, 15 days' casual leave, and sick leave on medical certificate, over and above all gazetted holidays.

(3) Over-time allowance for extra service rendered.

(4) Hours of work should be limited to seven hours a day, including one hour recess.

(5) There should be security of service and no employee should be dismissed or discharged except for offences involving moral turpitude or gross breach of discipline.

(6) A provident Fund at the rate of 8 1/3 per cent. of the salary per month, with equal contribution from the employees.

(7) Gratuity to every employee on proportionate service, at the rate of half a month's pay for as many months as there are years of service.

Unemployment Insurance.- A committee consisting of Messrs. Jarnadas Mehta, N.W. Joshi, S.C. Joshi, Khedgikar and Jhabvala, was formed to draw up a scheme of unemployment insurance and press it upon the provincial legislatures.

(Summarised from documents forwarded to this Office by the Secretary, Bombay Clerks' Union, and the Bombay Chronicle, dated 6-5-1940).

Review of Labour Conditions in Northern India during 1939-40:
3rd Annual Report of the Employers' Association of Northern India.

According to the annual report for 1939-40 of the Employers' Association of Northern India, Cawnpore, the total labour force employed by the member concerns in Cawnpore of the Association (12 cotton mills, 1 woollen mill, 2 leather works, 1 sugar works, 2 jute mills, 2 ginning waste and cotton factories, 4 hosiery factories, 2 brush factories and 14 other concerns) was 47,402 as against 45,716 last year, against an estimated total of labour employed by the mills and factories of Cawnpore of 52,000. The Labour force employed by member concerns outside Cawnpore is 5,059, against 2,550 for last year.

Disposal of Labour Complaints.- During 1939-40, a total of 954 complaints were received and handled by the Association, as against 867 in 1938-39. Of the 954 complaints, 534 were received through the Government Labour Office and 420 were received direct by the Association. Of the total complaints received, 682 were received from the Cawnpore Masdoor Sabha, 5 from other Unions, and 129 from workers direct.

During the period under report, the Government Labour Commissioner heard 111 cases; of these 75 were decided in favour of the Association, 23 against it and in 14 findings had a neutral character.

LABOUR BUREAU.- DURING 1939-40, the Labour Bureau of the Association registered 12,227 applications (as against 11,908 in the previous year) for employment, and was able to place 4,705 workers as weavers, spinners, carders, reelers, coolies, leather workers, etc. Of the 12,227 applicants, 4,010 were literate and 8,217 illiterate.

Labour situation.- There was no general strike during 1939-40, but INDIVIDUAL STRIKES in member concerns involved 66,761 workers, entailed a total loss of 499,285 working days, and of Rs.470,111 in the shape of wages. The report points out that although, the Communist leaders of the Cawnpore Masdoor Sabha failed to bring about a General Strike, their subversive activities in no way diminished and they have managed to keep up a state of unrest and indiscipline in mills through a small section of their adherents.

Labour Legislation.- The original U.P. Trade Disputes Bill put forward by the local Government was dropped and in its place another Bill was drafted by Government. During the year under review, Rules under the U.P. Maternity Benefits Act have been gasetted. Apart from minor alterations in the U.P. Factories Rules, 1935, no further legislation or Rules have been issued by Government.

War Dear Food Allowance.- The report also refers to the War Dear Food Allowance sanctioned during the year in by the Association in consultation with the Government.

(A copy each of (1) Third Annual Report of the Employers' Association of Northern India, Cawnpore, for the year 1939-40, and (2) Proceedings and Speeches - Third Annual General Meeting, 15-5-1940 was sent with this Office's minute F.6/472/40 dated 25-5-1940.)

*Third Annual Report of the Employers' Association of Northern India, Cawnpore, for the year 1939-40, presented to the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday, 15th May, 1940. The Star Press, Cawnpore. 1940. pp.11.

Social Conditions.

Conditions of the Aboriginal Tribes in C.P.:
Government appoints Special Enquiry Officer.

The Government of the Central Provinces and Berar has placed Mr. W. V. Grigson, I.C.S. on a special duty for one year from 1-5-1940 as the Aboriginal Tribes Enquiry Officer to inquire into the conditions of the aboriginal tribes in the Central Provinces and Berar. Mr. Grigson has, among other matters, been asked to report on (a) any economic, educational, physical, political or other disability from which the tribes may be suffering, (b) the measures, that are necessary to protect the aboriginal workers in mines and industrial establishments from the effects of contact with urban conditions, (c) the extent of bond-service amongst aboriginal farm-labourers; and (d) the continued exaction of road and beegar (forms of forced labour) and of manal of various kinds.

(Government Communiqué, dated 23-5-1940. The C.P. and Berar Gazette, Extra-ordinary, page 177-178 dated 24-5-1940).

India's Population Problems: Resolutions adopted
by National Planning Committee.

The resolutions adopted by the National Planning Committee at its 3rd session held at Bombay from 1 to 14-5-1940 on the report submitted to it by its Population Sub-Committee are given in the item: "3rd Session of National Planning Committee" included in section: "Economic Conditions" of this report.

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Public Health.

Drug Committee appointed by Government of India.

In order to discuss the problem of drug supplies, drug substitutes and economy in the use of drugs, the Government of India, it is understood, have set up a committee, with the Director-General of the Indian Medical Service as chairman. An informal meeting of the committee will shortly be held in Simla. The committee will review, among other matters, the situation created by the considerable rise in prices of certain drugs, recently. It will also consider the chances of shortage of certain essential drugs, such as mercury.

(The Hindustan Times, dated 2-5-1940).

Health Conditions in Jharia Coal Mines, 1938-39*

Jharia Mines Settlement : Vital Statistics.- The area of the Jharia Mining Settlement is 787 square miles, with the corrected population of 541,559. (The area under Asansol Mines Board of Health, it may be noted, is 413 square miles and the corrected population 407,691.) The birth rate during 1938-39 decreased by 0.35 as compared with 1937 whereas the death rate rose by 0.84 due mainly to an increase in the number of deaths from malaria, dysentery, diarrhoea and cholera. The infant mortality increased by 25 per 1,000 infants born. Though no satisfactory reason can be assigned for the increase in infant mortality, it was probably due to economic conditions which were not as good as in the previous year. The rate of increase of population, i.e., the excess of the birth rate over the death rate was 10.87 in 1938 and 12.07 in 1937; the Bihar figure for 1937 was 11.15.

Average Daily Labour Force.- The Average Daily Labour force employed in 1938 was 78,968 as against 62,190 in 1937; of these, 48,010 males were underground workers, and 20,638 males and 10,089 females above-ground workers; 65 males and 166 females were quarry workers. Underground work of females has been prohibited since 1-7-1937 (vide this Office's Report for February 1937, pages 14-17).

Accidents.- 927 accidents were reported in 1938, as against 858 in 1937. Of the 927 accidents, 92 were fatal, 614 reported as recovered and 221 minor.

* Annual Report of the Jharia Mines Board of Health for the year 1938-39. Superintendent, Government Printing, Bihar, Patna. 1940. pp. 2 + 30.

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Water Supply.- In the course of the year, 8 collieries were connected to the Jharis Water Board mains, bringing the total number of connected collieries to 200, while notices were served by the Jharis Mines Board on 3 collieries, requiring them to link up.

Housing in Colliery Areas.- The five years' Housing Programme of the Board remained in force during the year.

Food Adulteration.- During 1938, proceedings were initiated in 72 cases under the Food and Drug Adulteration Act, and of these 50 resulted in conviction, 7 were dropped, 2 were disposed of after taking evidence under Section 512 of Criminal Procedure Code, 2 were acquitted and 11 were pending at the end of 1938.

Public Health Propaganda.- Lantern lectures on health subjects were no longer confined to Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, but were also delivered at other convenient places. A number of lantern lectures were held in important collieries for the benefit of labourers and their families. The leprosy relief work within the Jharis Mining Settlement was continued by the Dhanbad and District Leprosy Relief Fund under the supervision of the Board's Medical Officer of Health up till the middle of July 1938 when he ceased to be honorary secretary of the Fund. A new clinic was opened during the year under report and the total number of clinics at present is thus 5 all of which are reported to be doing satisfactory work.

Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme.- During the year under report, there were 11 maternity and child welfare centres managed by the Board.

(Health Conditions in the Jharis Coal Mines Area during 1937-38 were reviewed at pages 35-34 of the report of this Office for June 1939).

Health Conditions in Asansol Coal Mines - 1938-39*

The total area of the Asansol Mining Settlement is 413 square miles and the population according to the 1931 census is 382,680; out of this, 47,659 lived in municipal areas and 355,021 in other areas. The total number of registered births in 1938 was 11,626 as against 11,138 in 1937. The birth-rate was 30.3 per 1,000 compared to 29.09 in 1937. The registered deaths numbered 8,413 in 1938 against 7,076 in 1937. The death rate was 21.2 per 1,000 compared to 18.4 in 1937.

* Annual Administration Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health for the year 1938-39. pp. 53 + Tables. 1939.

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The health of the mining population continued to compare favourably with that of the general population. The death rate among the resident ~~mining~~ mining population fluctuated from 10.1 per 1,000 to 19.6 per 1,000 against a variation between 17.3 and 25.9 per 1,000 among the general population. The mortality rate among the miners was considerably below that of the Mining Settlement as a whole throughout the year.

Economic Conditions.- The increased demand for coal in 1937 after a period of lean years had the effect of accelerating output at the larger mines then working and stimulated the re-opening of mines which had shut down during the period of depression. In 1938 the supply exceeded the demand. This resulted in a progressive fall in the price of coal which was particularly noticeable towards the end of the year. The demand for coal remained about the same as in 1937, allowing for the artificial demand created in 1937 by 'forward orders' placed in view of the anticipated wagon shortage and the apprehended rise in price.

Mining Conditions.- The additional Rules and Regulations enforced by the Department of Mines for the safety of mines and miners had the effect of increasing the cost of production throughout the Coalfield. Some mines where sandstowing was practised had to shoulder an extra burden of expenditure on this account. The Bill placed before the Central Legislature during the year and subsequently passed aims at enforcing and encouraging stowing on a larger scale, financial assistance being given to owners from funds obtained from a cess on despatches. Stowing is expected to benefit the population resident in the neighbourhood of mines in two ways, viz.- (1) Surface subsidences which subsequently form favourite breeding places for mosquitoes will no longer occur after depillaring operations. (2) The likelihood of surface tanks and wells becoming dry will be reduced to a minimum.

Rescue Stations.- Hitherto there have been no centralised organisations in the Coalfields for rescue work after an accident in a coal mine. The Coal Mines Rescue Rules, which apply to Raniganj & Jharia Coalfields, are designed to remedy this deficiency by providing for the establishment of two Central Rescue Stations - one in each Coalfield. A permanent rescue corps will be maintained at each station, which will be equipped with the necessary apparatus for rescue work. The cost of the rescue station will be met from the proceeds of a small excise duty on coal and coke.

Wages.- ^{The} Better wages offered in 1937 prevailed during 1938. Two causes contributed principally to the rise in wages in 1937. The good harvest in the previous year i.e. in 1936, made miners less inclined to seek employment. Secondly, there was the rise in the price of coal in 1937 with an all-round increased demand. The consequent rise in wages amounted in some cases to about 40% over the 1936 rate. There was no tendency for the 1937 scale of wages to drop in 1938, although more labour was available.

Female Labour.- There has been a gradual and natural adjustment to the conditions resulting from the withdrawal of women from underground work. In the larger collieries and in those where construction work is in progress, women who accompany the miners find plentiful employment on the surface.

(The Annual Administration Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health for 1937-38 was reviewed at pages 46 - 47 of our report for May 1939).

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Housing Problems: Resolutions adopted
by National Planning Committee.

The resolutions adopted by the National Planning Committee at its 3rd session held at Bombay from 1 to 14-5-1940 on the report submitted to it by its Housing Sub-Committee are given in the item: "3rd Session of National Planning Committee" included in the section: "Economic Conditions" of this report.

Education.

Meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education.

6 and 7-5-1940, Simla.

A number of important questions touching educational policy in India came up for discussion at the meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education held at Simla on 6 and 7-5-1940, Sir G. S. Bajpai presiding.

Prominent among the matters considered were reports from provincial Governments showing further developments in regard to the administration of control of primary education, the question of establishing a centre for the study of social service and public administration, and the question of adopting a uniform scientific terminology for regional languages in India. The Committee also considered the reports of two committees, one on the Wardha scheme of education (vide pages 33-34 of this Office's January 1938 report) and the other on adult education. These two committees were set up with Mr. B. G. Kher and Dr. Syed Mahmud respectively as chairmen.

Basic Education:

Various Aspects considered.- The first committee under the chairmanship of Mr. B. G. Kher, formerly Premier and Education Minister of Bombay, dealt with certain aspects of the basic system of education which had not been previously considered. These aspects were the provision to be made for education before the basic system starts, that is, before the age of six, the arrangements which should be made for the transfer of children from basic schools to other types of schools, the provision of parallel courses of instruction for girls in the upper classes of basic schools and the ways and means to finance basic education.

Free Education not Practicable.- The main recommendations of the committee, which were endorsed by the Board, were that while the provision of free education both in nursery and in infant schools and classes was highly desirable, it was not practicable at this stage in view of the lack both of money and of trained women teachers to advocate its introduction on a voluntary basis. The Provincial Governments were, however, advised to provide model infant and nursery schools at suitable centres to increase the supply of properly trained teachers, who should be women, to encourage the enrolment in basic schools of children below the minimum age for compulsory attendance and to stimulate the provision on a voluntary basis of pre-basic schools.

Age-Range.- The committee reaffirmed the decision reached by the Board at their previous meeting that the age range for compulsory basic education should be from 6 to 14 years, but felt that this course should be divided into two stages, a junior stage of five years, and a senior stage of three years. It was agreed that facilities should be provided for children to be transferred from the basic schools to other types of schools both at the end of the junior stage and at the end of the senior stage.

Parallel Courses for Girls.- The Board accepted the view of the committee that suitable courses should be framed for girls in senior basic schools which should include such subjects as, cookery, laundry work, needle work, home craft, the care of children and first aid. To watch new educational developments in connection with basic education the Board decided that the best way was to enlarge their existing Vernacular Education Committee.

Agency for Marketing.- It was also agreed that it would be desirable to establish in each province an agency for disposing of marketable articles produced in schools.

Adult Education:

Financial Proposals.- The Adult Education Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Syed Mahmud, a former Education Minister of Bihar, submitted a report containing recommendations on the question of finance. The Board generally accepted the recommendation. In view of the prior claims of primary education to any financial assistance that might be forthcoming from the Central Government towards development of education in the provinces, they were unable to accept the recommendation of the committee that the Central Government should make a specific grant to the Provincial Government for carrying out approved schemes of adult education.

Centres for Study:

Two Committees Appointed.- The Board decided to refer to universities the question of further action they might take, both to assist social reconstruction in general and the literacy campaign in particular. Apart from these main issues, the Board decided to set up committees under the chairmanship of Sir Maurice Gwyer and Sir Akbar Hydari respectively to consider the question of establishing a centre for the study of social service and public administration and to consider the question of adopting a uniform scientific terminology for regional languages in India. The next meeting of the Board it was decided should be held some time in the cold weather of 1940-41.

(The Leader, dated 6-5-1940 and the Statesman, dated 10-5-1940).

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Social Policy in War Time.

Wages.

Railwaymen's Demand for Dearness Allowance:

Government of India likely to set up Tribunal.

Reference was made at page 27 of the report for April 1940 of this Office to the demand made by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation for a Board of Conciliation to settle the dispute that had arisen between the Federation and the Railway Board regarding the demand of railway workers for a dearness allowance. It is now understood that the Government of India will shortly set up a tribunal with a High Court Judge as its Chairman to enquire into the question of dearness allowance for railwaymen.

The discussion at the special meeting between the Federation and the Board held on 4 and 5 April 1940 revealed fundamental differences between the two sides. Further, any grant of dearness allowance to Railwaymen is bound to have wide repercussions, as the Government of India and even the Provincial Governments would then be bound to grant similar allowances to the whole body of their low-paid employees.

(The Bombay Chronicle, dated 16-5-1940),

Increase in Cost of Living owing to War Conditions in

Jharia Coalfield Area: Government of India

appoints Special Investigation Officer.

In view of the prevailing agitation in the Jharia coalfield for increased wages based on changes in the cost of living, the Government of India have had under consideration a proposal to conduct a special inquiry into the cost of living of labourers and the level of wages in the coalfields. After consultation with the Bihar Government and the industry, the Government of India have come to the conclusion that the results of the proposed investigation will be of value in dealing with labour disputes. They, have, accordingly, with the concurrence of the Provincial Government, decided to appoint a Special Officer for making the proposed investigation. The officer selected is Mr. A. Hughes, I.C.S. The inquiry will be mainly directed towards an examination of the changes in the cost of living due to war conditions.

(The Hindustan Times, dated 16-5-1940).

Dearness Allowance for Nagpur Textile Workers:

Recommendations of Mahalanobis Committee.

Reference was made at pages 39-40 of the report of this Office for April 1940 to the appointment of a Committee, with Professor P.G. Mahalanobis as Chairman, to go into the question of the grant of a dearness allowance Nagpur textile workers. The report of this Committee is published at pages 180 to 239 of the G.P. and Bihar Gazette Extraordinary dated 25-5-1940. It will be recalled that Mr. M.N. Clarke, who was appointed earlier to inquire into this dispute, in his report recommended that no dearness allowance be given to the workers, having regard to the present cost of living and existing conditions in the textile industry (vide pages 42-44 of the March 1940 report of this Office). The following is a brief summary of the Mahalanobis Committee's report:

Dearness Allowance to be granted from 1-1-1940:- The Committee, after a detailed examination, has come to the conclusion that Dearness allowance should be granted to the operatives in the cotton mills in Nagpur receiving Rs. 100 or less per month. Regarding the question of rate and formula for the adjustment of the allowance, the Committee is of the opinion that the allowance should be calculated on the basis of one pie (one-twelfth anna) per day per worker for each one per cent. rise in the three-monthly moving average of the cost of living index number, with August 1939 as base (=100). As regards the date, the Committee suggests that the allowance should be granted from January 1940. The average rise in the cost of living at Nagpur has been a little over six per cent. (with August 1939 as base =100) during the period September, 1939 to April 1940. In view of the working conditions since the commencement of the war and the financial position of the industry, the Committee recommends that a dearness allowance at a basic rate of six pies or half anna per day per worker will be appropriate.

In the Bombay dispute, continues the report, the allowance as fixed in the form of a flat rate payment in cash which would remain constant so long as the cost of living index stood between 105 and 125 during three consecutive months. In the case of the Ahmedabad dispute, on the other hand, the amount of compensation was linked to the monthly change in the index number of the cost of living. The Committee is of opinion that the latter plan is more scientific as it allows for automatic adjustment for changes in the cost of living. The Committee recommends that the dearness allowance recommended by it should be paid entirely in cash.

Cheap Grain Shops to be opened.- The Committee also recommends that grain shops on the same lines as in Bombay and Ahmedabad should be opened by mill owners as early as possible. This would ~~enable~~ provide additional relief to the extent of three to five per cent. without imposing any burden on the industry.

Fall in Wages and Standard of Living.- Dealing with the level of wages, the report says that since the commencement of the war there has been a definite fall in real wages which is partly due to the rise in the cost of living and partly to short working in mills. Real wages have decreased even for families with such a low rate of absenteeism as three per cent. A comparison of the standard of living in Nagpur, Bombay and Ahmedabad, after correcting differences in prices, shows that the level of consumption among Nagpur families in August 1939 was about 40 per cent. lower than in Bombay families and about 25 per cent. lower than in Ahmedabad families.

Action by C.P. Government.- The C.P. Government has asked the mill-owners and the textile workers to make by 6-6-1940 representations of their views on the recommendations of the Mahalanobis Committee.

(The C.P. and Puar Gazette Extraordinary dated 25-5-1940, and the Hitavada, Nagpur, 26-5-1940).

General.

Women's Department of A.I.C.C. starts work from 15-5-40.

From 15-5-1940 a Women's Department of the All-India Congress Committee has started functioning under the directorship of Mrs. Suchita Kripalani who was appointed to the post at the last meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress. The main function of the department will be of an exploratory and co-ordinating nature in which each province is expected to set up a body or authorise individuals to supply information to and carry out the instructions of the Central Controlling Department at Allahabad.

Mrs. Kripalani is issuing two sets of questionnaires to the Provincial Congress Committees. One set of these questions relates to the number and nature of the various women's organisations in the provinces with the names of active workers connected with each. In addition to the political aspects dealt with, one question deals with the social activities of women in connection with ashram and harijan work, labour and kisan movements, medical relief, volunteer corps, and youth leagues. The second questionnaire relates to the history of the women's movement in India.

(The National Call, dated 15-5-1940).

List of more important Publications received in
this Office during May, 1940.

Conditions of Labour.-

- 1. Statistics of Factories subject to the Factories Act, 1934 (XXV of 1934) for the year ending December 31st, 1938, together with a note on the working of the Factories Act during the year. Published by the Manager of Publications, Delhi. 1940. Price Rs. 1-8-0.
- 2. Annual Report on the working of the Hours of Employment Regulations in the North Western, East Indian, Eastern Bengal, Great Indian Peninsula, Bombay, Baroda and Central India, Madras and Southern Mahratta and Bengal and North Western Railways during the year 1938-39 by Khan Bahadur K. M. Hassan, Supervisor of Railway Labour. Published by the Manager of Publications, Delhi. 1940. Price As. -4- or 5d.

Economic Conditions.-

- 1. Department of Development (Industries) Orissa. Annual Reports for the years 1937-38 and 1938-39. Superintendent, Government Press, Orissa, Cuttack. 1940. Price As. - 6 - each.
- 2. Annual Reports of the Department of Industries and Commerce in Mysore for the year 1937-38 and 1938-39, with the Government Review thereon. Bangalore. Printed by the Superintendent at the Government Press, Bangalore.

Agriculture.-

- 1. Annual Report on the Management by Government of Private Estates in the Central Provinces for the year ending the 30th September, 1938. Nagpur: Government Printing, C.P. and Berar. 1940. Price Rs. 1-8-0.
- 2. Annual Report on the Agricultural Department of the North West Frontier Provinces for the years July 1935 - June 1937. Printed and published by the Manager, Government Stationery and Printing, N.W.F.P., Peshawar. 1940. Price Rs. 22-10-0 or £1.14.0.
- 3. Report on the working of the Department of Agriculture in the Central Provinces and Berar for the year ending the 31st March 1939. Nagpur: Government Printing, C.P. and Berar. 1940. Re. 1-8-0.

Navigation.-

Maritime Labour in India by Dinkar Desai, Servants of India Society, Sandhurst Road, Girgaum, Bombay. 1940. Price Rs. 2-4-0.

Co-operation.-

Report on the working of the Co-operative Societies in Ajmere- Merwara for the year ending 30th June 1939. New Delhi. Printed by the Manager, Government of India Press. 1940.

Organization, Congresses, etc.-

1. Proceedings of the First Conference of Labour Ministers (Held at New Delhi on the 22nd and 23rd January 1940). Bulletins of Indian Industries and Labour No. 70. January 1940. Published by order of the Government of India. The Manager of Publications, Delhi. 1940. Price Re. 1-4-0 or 2s.
2. Third Annual Report of the Employers' Association of Northern India, Cawnpore, for the year 1939-40, presented to the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday, 15th May, 1940. The Star Press, Cawnpore, 1940.
3. The Employers' Association of Northern India, Cawnpore, Proceedings and speeches. Third Annual General Meeting. Wednesday, 15th May, 1940.

Public Health.-

1. Annual Administration Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health for the year 1938-39. Saraswati Press, Asansol. 1939.
2. Annual Report of the Jharia Mines Board of Health for the year 1938-39. Superintendent, Government Printing, Bihar. Patna. 1940.

Miscellaneous.-

Annual Report of the Indian Central Cotton Committee, for the year ending 31st August 1939. Price Re. 2-0-0. The British India Press, Bombay. Summary of Proceedings of the Forty-First Meeting of the Indian Central Cotton Committee held on the 19th and 20th January, 1940. Price Re. 1-0-0.