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General.

Public attention during the earlier part of the period under review was centred on the murder at Lahore of Mr. Saunders, the European Superintendent of Police, whose name was mentioned in connection with an assault on Lala Bajpat Rai, exactly one month after the latter's death. This together with the continuance of terrorism in Bombay and the organisation of hostile demonstrations at the centres visited by the Simon Commission indicates the seriousness of the political situation. The Viceroy, whose original tour programme extended till the third week of January returned to the capital on the 6th January and convened a meeting of the Executive Council, which, according to some press reports, decided upon the re-introduction of the Public Safety Bill in the next session of the Assembly. The nationalist papers infer that the Viceroy's early return was not unconnected with Gandhi's resolution on political advance, to which reference is made in the section of the report dealing with the activities of the Indian National Congress.

Among the distinguished foreign visitors to India this cold weather are General Gouraud, the Military Governor of Paris, Signorina Mussolini, the Italian premier's daughter, and Mr. Geoffrey Dawson, the editor of "the Times".

The Afghan trouble seems now to be slackening a little, as a result of Amir Amanullah withdrawing all his schemes for westernising the country.

The only international organisation which met in India during the period was the Federation of the World Student Christian Movement. The Federation had a very successful conference at Mysore during the first week of December and attracted much publicity.

Special attention is invited to the summary of evidence rendered before the Simon Commission by Mr. MacWatters, Secretary to the Department of Industries and Labour, and by Mr. R.R.Simpson, Chief Inspector of Mines.

Indian labour abroad is dealt with in a series of cuttings classified under that name.

P. S.

Since the compilation of the Report, news has been received on the 15th instants, that Amir Amanullah of Afghanistan has abdicated in favour of his elder brother, Prince Inayatullah.

Congress Week Activities.

The 1928 session of the Indian National Congress, -- the premier political body in India -- held at Calcutta under the presidentship of Pandit Motilal Nehru was a very momentous one. The Congress session lasted from the 29th December to 1st January, but the whole Christmas fortnight was marked by intense and concentrated political activity. A litter of conferences furnished the prelude to the Congress itself. Calcutta, the venue of this year's Congress, thus became for a fortnight the hub of the political life and activities of the country. Among the more important of the bodies that met in Calcutta prior to the session of the Congress were the All Parties Convention, which was specially convened to pronounce an authoritative verdict on the Nehru Committee Report, the All India Muslim League, the Central Khilafat Committee, the All India Workers and Peasants Conference, the All India Socialist Conference and the All India Social Reform Conference. The Indian Liberal Party held its annual conference, the National Liberal Federation, this year at Allahabad and the Indian Christian Conference was held at Madras.

A knowledge of the political back-ground is necessary to understand the positions of the various political and communal groups and their reactions to the main points at issue. Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation movement and the successful application of the principle in the Bardoli Satyagraha campaign (no-tax campaign) had revealed for the first time ^{in a} tangible form the possibilities latent in the application of such a method on a national scale. The exclusion of Indians from the Statutory Commission, completely ignoring Indian wishes in this respect, had united almost

all Indian parties in opposition to that Commission and created a desire for the framing of a constitution for India by purely Indian agencies. The 1927 session of the Congress held at Madras had ~~empowered~~ ^{entrusted} the task of framing a constitution to an All Parties Constitution Committee under the chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru. The Committee framed a draft constitution for India, the main points in which are India's willingness to accept dominion status provided it is given early enough and certain new provisions for settling the communal question, e.g., abolition of separate electorates, with special provision for minority representation in the Punjab and Bengal. The draft constitution made by the Nehru Committee was subsequently ratified by the All Parties Conference which met at Lucknow.

Subsequently, acute divergences of opinion arose on two of its most important recommendations. Muslim ~~communalists~~ communalists under the leadership of Sir Mohamed Shafi and Mr. Mohammed Ali expressed dissatisfaction with the removal of communal electorates and demanded one-third representation for Muslims in the Central legislature and other measures for the protection of their communal rights. The concessions to Muslim communalism made in the Nehru Report excited opposition from other minority communities like the sikhs, and Indian Christians, who while against all forms of communal representation, pressed for concessional treatment if the Muslims were to be shown such leniency.

Even more important was the ~~x~~ ^a cleavage of opinion on India's political goal, which as defined by the Nehru Report was to be Dominion Status. The left wing of Indian politicians led by Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, declared uncompromisingly for independence. This party formed a new organisation

called the Independence League and conducted a whirlwind campaign in the country to popularise the independence ideal. It was in this atmosphere of storm and stress that the 1928 Congress met at Calcutta.

It was thought under the circumstances that the best method ~~■~~ to reconcile conflicting opinion was to hold an All Parties Convention at Calcutta under the auspices of the Congress, before the Congress should address itself to the task. Accordingly, in response to the invitation of the Congress, representatives of almost all communities and schools of political thought gathered at Calcutta. Congressmen, Independence Leaguers, the Indian Liberal Party, the Hindu Mahasabha, the All India Muslim League, representatives of the Sikhs, the Indian Christians and the Parsis, and the Indian communist party were amongst the more important groups that participated in the Convention.

The All Parties Convention had its work cut out for it in the difficult task of reconciling widely divergent views on both the Dominion Status versus Independence and communal questions. Ultimately, after prolonged deliberations during many sittings, the All Parties Convention passed by a large majority Mr. Sen Gupta's resolution that Dominion Status was to be accepted as the immediate political goal of India, though stout opposition to this was offered by the Independence Leaguers. On the communal issue, however, no such agreement could be reached. The All India Muslim League which had sent a delegation of 23 members to the Convention under the leadership of Mr. Jinnah, demanded on behalf of the Indian Muslims, one-third representation for Muslims in the central legislature, but agreed, by way of concession, to the scrapping of communal representation, ^{with Provision} and

acceptance of joint electorates in its stead. These terms which represented the maximum of Muslim concessions on the communal issue, did not meet with the acceptance of other parties in the Convention. The Sikhs, an important minority community of the Punjab, who were prepared to vote against all forms of communal representation, changed their attitude in view of Muslim insistence on special protection and demanded that the Sikh community should also be given communal protection, if Mohamedans were accorded any such preferential treatment. The Indian Christians, who rank next in importance to the Sikhs among minority communities, formulated similar demands to those of the Sikhs. The Hindu elements in the Convention headed by Mr. Jayakar, a prominent lawyer of Bombay, took up the attitude that the communal adjustments of the Nehru Report represented the last word in Hindu concessions in the matter and that they could not further imperil the safety of their community by accommodation of the All India Muslim League's demands as enunciated by Mr. Jinnah. The Convention was thus reduced to a state of stale-mate and even the earnest individual efforts of influential leaders to circumvent the deadlock ended in failure.

The Convention thus registered only a partial success. While it succeeded in defining a common political goal for India it failed to arrive at a suitable settlement of the communal issue. The task was then taken up by the Congress, which began its session on the 29th December. The presidential speech of Pandit Motilal Nehru was an impassioned plea for unity ^{or} both ~~on~~ the political and ^{the} communal issues. He warmly advocated acceptance of the All Parties Constitution Committee Report. But the president's appeal notwithstanding, the sessions of the Congress also were

marked by long and acrimonious discussions. It might be mentioned here in passing that the National Liberal Federation which met at Allahabad and the Indian Christian Conference which met at Madras during the Congress week had both endorsed the Nehru Report with minor reservations. The advocates of ~~independence~~ independence again joined issues with the supporters of dominion status, but Mr. Gandhi's personality dominated the situation and secured the ultimate acceptance of the Nehru Report. The other matters that came up for discussion in the Congress were of the stock variety and were dwarfed by the all-important issue of Dominion Status versus Swaraj.

The following is a summary of the more important resolutions passed by the Congress:-

Mr. Gandhi moved and Dr. Ansari seconded "that this Congress welcomes the All Parties Committee Report (Nehru Report) as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems; and whilst adhering to the resolution relating to complete independence passed at the Madras Congress, approves the constitution drawn up by the Nehru Committee as a great step in political advance, especially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country:

Subject to the exigencies of the political situation, this Congress will adopt the constitution if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before the 31st December 1929; but in the event of its non-acceptance, by that date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organise a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.

Consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on of propaganda in the name of the Congress, for the goal of complete national independence".

Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, leader of the irreconcilables of the Independent party, moved the following by way of amendment to Mr. Gandhi's resolution:-

"(1) The Congress adheres to the decision of the Madras Congress declaring Complete Independence to be the goal of the Indian people and is of opinion that there can be no true freedom till the British connection is severed.

(2) This Congress accepts the recommendations of the Nehru Committee as agreed to by the Lucknow All Parties' Conference for the settlement of communal differences.

(3) This Congress congratulates the Nehru Committee on their patriotic labours and while it does not accept Dominion Status as the basis of the recommended constitution, is of opinion that the other recommendations contained in the report constitute a step towards political advance, and, without committing itself to every detail, generally approves of them".

Mr. Satyamurti, of Madras supported the amendment.

Dr. Besant, (Mrs. Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society and an ex-president of the Congress) opposed both Mr. Gandhi's resolution and Mr. Subash Chandra Bose's amendment and put in a strong plea for Dominion Status. She spoke warmly in favour of the British connection and pointed out the dangers of isolation consequent on independence

Mr. Nimbkar, one of the Bombay group of Communists, moved an amendment condemning the Nehru Report on the ground that it allows the bourgeoisie to compromise with British Imperialism, which involves the safeguarding of vested

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interests and landowning, feudal, and capitalist classes, and a sacrifice of the interests of the masses, that by recognising the titles of the Indian princes, the Nehru Report proposes to perpetuate an undemocratic system of government, that the Report safeguards and acquiesces ~~in~~ in the exploitation of the human and material resources of India by foreign capital, that it guarantees and allows all titles to private and personal property acquired by questionable means, which perpetuates the exploitation of the masses, that it guarantees the payment of all foreign state debts, that it proposes to place the armed forces of the country under the control of a committee which will at first consist partly of British officers thus depriving the Indian people of their sovereign rights and that it proposes to give the executive powers and powers of veto to the Governor General and the Governors nominated by the King, thus depriving the Indian people of their sovereign rights. He, therefore, moved that the Congress should declare that its aim is the attainment of complete national independence, entirely free from British Imperialism.

The above resolution is important, in so far as it registers the high water-mark of the demands of Indian communists, the most extreme political party in the country. The communist demands, however, met with next ^{to} no support in the Congress.

The Congress after five hours of prolonged deliberation rejected all amendments and passed Mr. Gandhi's resolution by a large majority. Mr. Subash Chandra Bose's amendment, repudiating Dominion Status and laying down Independence as India's national goal was lost by 973 votes against 1350.

Other important resolutions passed by the Congress were:-

(1) "This Congress reiterates the War-Danger resolution passed by the Madras Congress and wishes to declare that the present Government of India in no way represents the people of India and their policy has been traditionally guided by the consideration of holding India under subjection and not of protecting her frontiers. The People of India have no quarrel with the other nations of the world and they will not permit themselves to be exploited by England to further her imperialist aims".

(2) "This Congress is of opinion that the policy of boycott of British goods should be vigorously pursued, viewing the question not on sentimental grounds but as a pure business proposition". (Carried).

(3) "This Congress directs the working Committee (of the Indian National Congress) to correspond with the leaders and representatives of other Asiatic nations and take steps to summon the first session of the Pan Asiatic Federation in 1930 in India."

(4) "This Congress sends its warmest greetings and its hearty congratulations to the people of China on their having attained full and complete freedom".

(5) "This Congress sends its warmest greetings to the peoples of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Iraq and its assurances for their emancipation from the grip of Western Imperialism".

(6) "This Congress welcomes the second World Congress of the League against Imperialism to be held next year and authorises the Working Committee to appoint a delegate on behalf of the Congress."

(7) "The seventh resolution sponsored by Mr. Gandhi defined the future programme of action of the Congress. The main planks of Congress policy as defined by Mr. Gandhi and passed by the Congress were :-

(1) To carry an intensive campaign inside and outside the legislatures to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks,

(2) Vigorous boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production of handspun and hand-woven khaddar,

(3) specific grievances wherever discovered and where people are ready, shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was done recently at Bardoli,

(4) The disabilities of ~~women~~ women are to be removed and they are to be invited and encouraged to take their due share in nation building,

(5) Measures shall be taken to rid the country of social abuses,

(6) It will be the duty of all congressmen who are Hindus to remove "untouchability" and help the so-called "untouchables".

(8) The 8th resolution condemned the Trade Disputes Bill and the Public Safety Bill and criticised the arrest at Tharia of Mr. Johnston, the fraternal delegate from the League against Imperialism and asserted that those measures were clearly intended to crush the Indian labour movement.

(9) The next resolution recorded the Congress' determination to continue the boycott of the Simon Commission and advised the people of places that are to be visited by the Simon Commission to organise hartals and mass demonstrations and to disobey all orders of Government prohibiting such activities.

References to I.L.O.

The Pioneer of the 22nd December 1928 reprints the substance of two articles which appeared in the "Spectator" and "The Nation" criticising the attitude of the British Government to wards the Washington Hours Convention.

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The Press Communiqué issued by the Delhi Branch of the I.L.O. about its organisation and functions has been published in all the leading papers. The communiqué emphasised the desire of the I.L.O. to get into closer touch with the employers' and workers' organisations in India and with other bodies interested in the study of social and economic problems. Special attention was drawn to the fact that the I.L.O. has now become a world centre of economic research and information and it was pointed out that Indian economic interests will have much to gain if they avail themselves of the I.L.O.'s co-operation in their efforts to improve economic conditions in the country. As example of the I.L.O.'s interest in Asiatic labour problems reference was made to the enquiries on Asiatic labour, coloured labour, industrial conditions in the Indian States, etc., which the I.L.O. has now in hand.

(The Hindustan Times, 16-12-1928
The Pioneer, The Times of India,
The Statesman and the Hindu of 19-12-28,
etc.)

... ..

A London Reuters telegram of 6th December 1928 referring to Col. Woodcock's question in the House of Commons whether £ 4000/- was spent by the Imperial Government to embellish the new building of the I.L.O. was published in all the papers.

*for has done
us a good
turn - quite
unintentionally*

... ..

The more important dailies published a communique of the New Delhi Office issued in reply to a resolution submitted to the annual general meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon regarding the inadequate time allowed to Indian industrial associations for an expression of opinion on questions taken up for discussion at the International Labour Conference. The communique explains the procedure adopted by the International Labour Conference and summarises the agenda for the two conferences of 1929.

(The Hindustan Times of 24-12-1928 and other papers).

... ..

The Hindustan Times of 12th December 1928 has an editorial paragraph on the desirability of Indian non-officials leading the Indian delegations to the Geneva Conferences.

... ..

Another editorial note in the same paper (17-12-1928) refers to the establishment of the Indian branch of the I.L.O. as a recognition at Geneva of the claims of Indian labour. It adds that the opening of a branch office of the I.L.O. in India is a source of great gratification to all Indians.

... ..

The Indian Labour Review of December 1928 publishes fairly long editorial paragraphs about the I.L.O. branch in India. It recommends all industrial organisations in India to get into speedy touch with the New Delhi branch of the I.L.O. (A copy of the Indian Labour Review is not sent herewith, as it is taken in at Geneva. The references are to pages 52-54 and 95-96 of the Indian Labour Review for December 1928)

... ..

The Hindustan Times Lajpat Rai annual (December 1928) has a long article by the Director of the New Delhi branch on Lala Lajpatrai's work at Geneva. The occasion is taken incidentally to explain from Lala Lajpatrai's own quotations the function of the International Labour Organisation.

... ..

All the more important papers publish the speeches delivered at the annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce insisting that only Indians should be chosen to represent India at the Geneva Conferences. These cuttings are classified under "Industrial Organisations".

... ..

Relations between Central and Provincial
Governments in labour legislation.

The Hon. Mr. A. C. MacWatters, Secretary to the Department of Industries and Labour in the Government of India, examined by the Simon Joint Free Conference on November 27, 1928, stated that certain subjects which were not suggested by the name of the Department, such as Posts and Telegraphs, Stores Purchases, and the Public Works Department were also administered by his department. In the matter of the Irrigation Department, which was a provincial reserved subject, the Government of India exercised some direction and control through the Department of Industries and Labour. Explaining the relations between the central and provincial governments with regard to industries and labour legislation, he said that certain branches of this kind of legislation, as, for example, those dealing with electricity, settlement of disputes and industrial insurance, were within the domain of the provincial governments, whereas in certain other branches it was the Central Legislature which enacted such legislation. The Government of India Act provided a list of subjects which were to be legislated for by provincial legislatures and another list of subjects over which the Central Legislature retained control. But in either case the provincial or the Central Government had to obtain the previous sanction of the Governor-General before it could take into consideration such legislation. The Governor-General, again, has the authority to declare the development of industries a central subject, though it figures in the list as a provincial transferred subject, if he thinks it expedient in the interests of the public. It was under this authority that the iron and steel industry

and the manufacture of steel rails and railway wagons were taken over by the Central government. Mr. MacWatters pointed out as an instance of an attempt by ^{The Central} provincial governments to legislate on ~~central~~ ^{provincial} subjects, the action of the Bombay Government in trying to introduce a Trade Disputes Bill in that presidency. Permission in this case was refused as the central legislature was contemplating an all-India measure. A case in which such permission was granted was where the provincial governments were allowed to legislate with regard to the construction of factories. The Burma Government has already passed a law on this matter. Reviewing labour legislation, Mr. MacWatters cited the various Acts and said that the Government of India are considering a proposal to eliminate women and children from underground work in the mines in a number of years. India's record with regard to the Washington Hours Convention was a good one. Factory inspection was carried on under the provincial administrations and reports are sent to the Central Government. Mr. MacWatters did not consider it an unsatisfactory arrangement that the Acts of the Central Government were enforced by the provincial governments. With regard to India's relations with the International Labour Organisation, he replied to a question put by Lord Burnham, that India would not be content to remain in the category of backward industrial countries. The High Commissioner for India has a permanent place on the Governing Body of the I.L.O. India could not make an advance on the question of hours of labour unless the present conditions of labour were materially improved. Among the provincial governments, Bombay has a Labour Office, Madras has a Labour Commissioner and Bengal also has an officer to study labour conditions. The Government of India takes

responsibility for seeing that the law is carried out with regard to any Convention to which they have agreed; and usually such laws are executed to the Government's satisfaction. Proceeding, he stated that there were nine factory inspectors who worked under a chief inspector of factories. In cases of serious accidents, special boards, with magistrates as chairmen, were appointed to investigate the causes of the accidents. Public opinion as represented by members of the legislature is awakening to the necessity for ameliorating labour conditions. He admitted that the Central Government had opposed a measure for prohibiting employment of women for a certain period before and after maternity. Major Attlee and Mr. Hartshorn took a keen interest in examining Mr. MacWatters and elicited that, in some parts of the country, wages were unduly withheld, and that the central government were in correspondence with provincial governments to see whether Central legislation was desirable. The Government of India are directly responsible only for British India and have no power to enforce the principles of the International Labour Conventions in Indian States. This limitation has been accepted at Geneva. Mr. MacWatters agreed that one nominated labour member in the Indian Legislative Assembly was not sufficient. There was no labour representative in the Madras and United Provinces Legislative Councils, though Madras had special representation for the depressed classes. Consultation with the trade unions, whenever necessary, is carried on through the provincial governments, and he agreed with Major Attlee that it was rather a drawback that the Central Government is in touch with labour conditions only through the provincial governments; but the Hon. Member and the Secretary in charge

of the Central Department of Industries and Labour visit the chief industrial areas once or twice a year, particularly Bombay and Calcutta. Factory labour was hardly distinguishable from the great mass of agricultural classes, though to some extent it is becoming permanently settled in the cities. Mr. MacWatters considered that it will not be desirable that the provinces should have different laws for their factories' boilers, but that there were other subjects like sickness insurance and wages, where provincial legislation might be more suited to local conditions. In the matter of legislation about industrial housing, it is very unlikely that the Central Legislature should pass any useful measure of a general character. It should not therefore refuse sanction for provincial legislation. Sir Arthur Froom pointed out that the Merchant Shipping Act of India is far more advanced than that of most European countries. Continuing, Mr. MacWatters expressed himself in favour of creating a Ministry of Communications which will include railways, roads, and posts and telegraphs, so that commerce and industry can once again make a proper combination. This was a matter of redistribution of portfolios and of internal organisation of the Government of India. The Advisory Committee of the Department of Industries and Labour has members having intimate knowledge of labour conditions. It met once at Dhanbad, the mining centre, but, for a meeting called at Bombay, the witness found it impossible to get the members together. The industrial conferences formerly convoked by the Government of India consisted purely of Government Directors of Industries and the Ministers in charge. To encourage the development of Industries, the Government were carrying on and co-ordinating research, and having periodical industrial

surveys. The provincial governments had passed the State Aid to Industries Act, but they have not been always successful so far. The development of industries would help to solve the question of unemployment among educated Indians. At Geneva the Government promised to consider the question of minimum wages, but there has been no serious ventilation of views on the subject in India until quite recently. For 7,515 factories in 1927, there were only 46 factory inspectors. It is a matter within the control of the provincial governments and the Central Government have only to exercise general superintendence and direction. In reply to a question from Mr. Hartshorn whether the department prepared statistics about output, number of employees, cost of production, and profit and loss on industry as a whole, Mr. MacWatters replied that it had nothing so complete but that it did get some returns. This concluded the examination of the witness.

(The Hindustan Times of 29-11-'28 and
all papers).

Industrial Disputes.

The situation in Bombay has, if anything, taken a turn for the worse after the events referred to in my last report. Sporadic ineffective strikes are constantly occurring and the discontent among the workers does not show any signs of appeasement. A complicating factor in the situation is the rivalry between factions in the labour group. On the 12th December, Mr. Nimbkar, one of the extremist labour leaders, was violently dealt with by a crowd of workers and had to take refuge in the police station. On the 13th December a serious collision occurred between a mob of mill strikers several thousands strong and a police picket on guard duty in the mill area, which resulted in 4 persons being killed and about 50 injured. An emergency meeting of the Committee of the Bombay Millowners' Association was called to consider the situation and it was resolved to appoint a deputation to wait on the Governor exhorting the Government to take drastic steps to re-establish peace and order in the mill area. When this news got abroad, the workers attempted to mob the vice-chairman of the Bombay Millowners' Association. An Associated Press telegram of the 17th December reported that about 20000 men were idle on that date. As a reply to the millowners' deputation, the Girni Kamgar Union with an estimated membership of 75000, is reported as having organised a Labour Defence Corps of 1600 members to protect their interests. On the 31st December a weaving master of the Pearl Mills was assaulted to death by the infuriated mill hands. On the 2nd January, an employee of the Burma Petroleum Company of Sewree, (a suburb of Bombay), 1100 workers of which have been on strike from the 7th December as a protest against

the retrenchment measures adopted by the Company, was assaulted and killed as a black-leg by the strikers. On the 3rd January Mr. S.A.Dange, another communist labour leader, was set upon by a band of angry workers. Other acts of lawlessness were also of frequent occurrence. The strike in the Burma Petroleum Company at Sewree is still continuing and picketing is being resorted to.

... ..

At Calcutta, the employees of the Fort Gloucester Jute Mills at Bauria have been on strike now for five months and 6500 strikers in the Clive Jute Mill have now joined them. On the 10th January a clash took place between 10,000 strikers including 500 women and the authorities of the jute mills, ~~but~~ and the situation is now ~~not~~ under control.

... ..

Statistics of industrial disputes in British India for the quarter ending 1928 have now been published by the Government of India. The 35 disputes during the period involved 266,199 men and the number of working days lost is estimated at 15,306,378. 19 of the disputes arose out of demands for higher wages, and 8 were over questions of personnel. Only five of these disputes were successful and 7 partially successful, while 17 ended in failure and 6 were still in progress. Classified by industries, there were 13 disputes in cotton and woollen mills involving 174,793 men and the number of days lost was 12,379,621. 46,146 men were involved in the three railway disputes which caused 572,786 working days. The two disputes in engineering workshops involved 26,400 men and 1,690,400 working days.

... ..

Labour conditions in the Mines.

Important evidence about conditions of work in Indian mines and particularly about the employment of women in mines was tendered before the Joint Free Conference of the Statutory Commission on December 17th at Patna. According to Mr. Simpson, ^{R.R. Chief Inspector of Mines} there were 270,000 workers employed in the mining industry in British India, excluding Indian States, out of which 155,000 were employed in the Bihar mines. There were 87,000 men and 32,000 women underground workers. In 1922 the Legislative Assembly empowered the Government to take the necessary steps to eliminate women from the mining industry at the rate of ten per cent per year, but Mr. Simpson admitted that Governments' efforts to implement its undertaking had not proceeded beyond the stage of talk. In 1924 when the Mines Act was passed, Government again gave a definite undertaking to bring about the elimination, but owing to practical difficulties as to what form the process of elimination will take, and some opposition from mine owners consequent on the recent depression in the coal trade no action was taken. As an additional reason, Mr. Simpson stated, that the women themselves objected to their being eliminated as the miners worked in family groups and elimination would mean decrease in the total earnings of the family. Mr. Simpson was of opinion that no further legislation was necessary to frame rules for preventing the employment of women and children and that it was a moot point whether Government could restrict their employment in surface work in collieries. The law prohibiting employment of children under 13 years of age was very well observed. Replying to Lord Burnham, Mr. Simpson further stated that the efforts at elimination have been made because of an

undertaking given by ^{the} Government of India at Geneva in 1921 at the International Labour Conference and not because of any movement in the central legislature.

Giving evidence about the conditions of work, Mr. Simpson said that the hours of work were limited to 54 per week underground and 60 on surface. These rules were enforced as far as possible and some class of workers enjoyed a shorter week. The average pay for a male worker was 15 annas per day, while that of a woman was 7 annas. Witness affirmed that there was no discontent among the labourers, as the wages paid in the mining industry was more than what they earned as agricultural labourers. Regarding the question of the health and sanitation of the workers, Mr. Simpson said that recently a Mines Board of Health had been created, which has greatly improved health conditions in mining areas. As against 2000 deaths from cholera in 1919, during the six years of the Board's existence there had only been 1479 such deaths. The board consisted of nominated officials and elected representatives of both mineowners and workmen and its expenses were met by a levy of Rs. 1-4-0 per 100 tons of coal despatched. Speaking about accidents and casualties among miners, witness said that as against 523 cases of grievous hurt in 1926 there were 680 such cases in 1927. In 1927, 247 persons were killed in mining accidents out of which 30 were women. The law required owners to provide medical aid for the labourers, and in the mining areas there were many hospitals maintained by the owners. A very efficient ambulance corps was maintained in the mining area and the efficiency level was kept up by a rule requiring that one out of every 100 workers should be a qualified "first-aid" man. There were nine inspectors

of mines including the Chief Inspector. In cases of violations of the regulations it was a matter of great administrative convenience that District Magistrates were empowered to initiate proceedings. They had prosecuted a few mineowners for violations of the laws.

(Statesman, 19-12-1928).

... ..

Improvement of social conditions
in Jamshedpur.

The Board of Directors of ^{the} Tata ^{Iron and} Steel Company have decided to adopt the following programme for the next three years in connexion with housing, lighting and water supply in the town. The expenditure now sanctioned will greatly increase the amenities of the town.

The programme sanctioned provides for :- (1) Increased expenditure on the construction of quarters: (2) improvement of the general water supply and house connexion: (3) the completion of the sewerage system and the lighting of the chief main roads, and (4) provision of children's playgrounds, sporting grounds and free cinemas:

The following sums will be spent on the above mentioned objects next year:- Quarters Rs. 7,00,000:
Water Rs. 2,00,000: Sewerage Rs. 1,00,000: lighting
Rs. 2,00,000 - Total Rs. 12,00,000. It is proposed to spend a similar sum each year for the next three years.

The maternity benefit promised by the Company will be brought into force with effect from January 1, 1929. The benefit will be the payment of six weeks wages to women who have been confined. The rules under which this benefit can be claimed are being published.

This programme can only be carried out, states Mr. C. A. Alexander, General Manager of the Company, if the Company earns sufficient money. Any recurrence of the kind of trouble through which Jamshedpur has been passing during recent months will make it impossible for the company to carry out its programme.

(Statesman, 29-12-1928.)

Industrial Organisations.Employers' Organisations.The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce.

The second annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce ~~commenced its sittings~~ ^{was held} at Calcutta on the 28th ^{and 29th} December 1928. The President, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, in inviting His Excellency the Viceroy to open the proceedings, referred briefly to the history and objects of the movement represented by the Federation, and explained its attitude to the British Government and to British commercial interests in India. He discussed the various difficulties which Indians engaged in trade and commerce had to overcome, and pointed out the directions in which Indian interests required better safeguards.

The Viceroy, in his speech, stated that though India's present trade outlook was favourable, yet depression prevailed in the rice, coal and cotton trades. Low prices, coupled with defective marketing methods, were held responsible for the depression. He then ~~dwelt~~ ^{dwelt} on the ~~available~~ ^{valuable} work done in promoting Indian trade by Sir Atul Chatterji and Mr. Lindsay, and on the proposals now before the Government for the appointment of Indian Trade Commissioners at Hamburg, Milan and New York, as also at other centres recommended by the Indian Commercial Mission to the Near East and Africa. Apropos to the recent labour unrest in the country, His Excellency remarked that it was difficult to lay sufficient emphasis upon the appalling waste of resources, the set-back to general prosperity, the sufferings and privations of the innocent, the dangerous passions of class hatred and mob violence, which were the inevitable outcome of the conflicts between employers and employed.

He estimated that, during the first nine months of 1928, at least 30 million working days had been lost owing to trade disputes, and that the wages lost amounted to about 45 million rupees, without taking into account the vastly greater losses of the employers of labour, which, in the Bombay Mills strike alone, has been computed at 150 million rupees. He, therefore pleaded for the co-operation of employers in considering what measures may be taken to prevent the recurrence of such a situation. Referring to the Trade Disputes Bill, he said that enquiry into settlement of trade disputes by impartial tribunals must be supplemented by action on the part both of employers and workers on the same lines as those in the British trades and industries, where resort to Government machinery for settlement is regarded as the last line of defence. After reviewing Indian industrial legislation in the past few years, he remarked that great advance has been made in recent years in western countries and new ideas and new methods are being constantly canvassed, so that India may still benefit from western experience. Referring to the Coastal Reservation Bill, he said that he could not bring himself to believe that the Indian mercantile marine will be created merely by legislative action to transfer the profits of the coastal trade from British to Indian shareholders. There was no precedent in the British Empire, or in any other country or empire, for legislation which would reserve the coastal trade. He therefore recommended co-operation and not discrimination as the best means of achieving the objects of Indian industrial community.

Among the resolutions passed at the Conference were the following :-

"The Federation urges upon the Government of India the necessity for re-modelling the Indian Customs Tariff and recommends that a Committee of experts, including representatives of Indian commercial bodies, be appointed to go into the question at an early date."

"The Federation strongly supports the Bill to reserve the Coastal Traffic ~~of~~ India ~~and~~ to Indian vessels, urges the Government of India to encourage the participation of Indian vessels in the overseas trade of the country, and to take early steps to develop the ship building industry in India, and while welcoming the establishment of the Indian mercantile marine training ship "Dufferin" in Bombay, urges that another training ship be stationed for the Bay of Bengal."

"The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce is emphatically of opinion that India should be represented at all International Labour Conferences by Indians only, and always by a full quota of delegates and advisers, and strongly condemns the policy of appointing non-Indians to be her representatives, and urges that the delegation of a country to the Labour Conferences should be national in character." (Moved by Mr. G.D.Birla, M.L.A., and seconded by Mr. R.K.Shanmukham Chetty, M.L.A.).

Another resolution recommended Seth Kasturibhai Lalbhai of Ahmedabad as a delegate and Messrs. R.K.Shanmukham Chetty, (Madras), P. Mukerji, (Punjab), B.Das, (Bihar) and Khan Bahadur A. Chandu, (Burma), as advisers to represent Indian employers at the 12th session of the International Labour Conference, and Mr. Jadunath Ray as delegate and Messrs. H.A. Master Fakirjea Cowasjee, K.C.Neogy, and Sherif Hassan, at the 13th session.

Mr. D.P. Khaitan moved, with reference to the economic Conference of the League of Nations, that the Government of India should send full delegations to all International Conferences, the delegations to be composed of Indians only. The other resolutions dealt with the Indian salt and oil industries, the appointment of a Central Jute Committee on the lines of the Indian Central Cotton Committee, and the appointment of an Indian Banking Enquiry Committee. The Federation also passed resolutions establishing ~~the~~ ^{an} Indian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce, with Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas as president and Mr. D.P.

D.P. Khaitan as Vice-President.

Mr. G. D. Birla, M.L.A., has been elected President of the Federation for the forthcoming year.

(Times of India, 31-12-28 and 1-1-29 and all other papers).

Workers' Organisations

The All-India Railwaymen's Federation.

The fifth session of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation was held at Jharia on the 17th and 18th December 1928, with Rai Sahib Chandrica Prasad in the chair. In his presidential address, the Rai Sahib referred to the growing unrest among the railwaymen resulting in the recent strikes on the North Western Railway, the Bengal and North Western Railway, the Bengal Nagpur Railway, the East Indian Railway and the South Indian Railway and the Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway. The refusal of the Government of India to order an enquiry into the long-standing grievances of the men and the policy of retrenchment among the lower staff were, according to him, the reasons for this unrest. The principal grievance of the railwaymen was ~~the~~ victimisation, and it was because the power of the railway officials to victimise union workers was unlimited that railway workers have not been able to ~~g~~ freely exercise their right of association. He pleaded for uniform systems of rules relating to the conditions of service in both State-worked and company-worked railways. In particular he referred to the racial discrimination between Indians and Europeans which was a marked feature in some railways. The Railwaymen's Federation stood for the principle of equal pay for equal work, and did not recognise that any race or community had any right to claim any special right or concession. He condemned the Trade Disputes Bill as a reactionary measure, and drew the attention of the Government of India to the fact that the Federation was not consulted about the requirements of the Washington and Geneva conventions on the subject of working hours on Indian railways.

Mr. V.V. Giri, the General Secretary, referred in his report to the increasing recognition the Federation has been gaining from all quarters, and outlined the work done by it during the year under review, especially in the strikes in the Bengal Nagpur Railway, East Indian Railway, South Indian Railway and Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway. He pointed out that, though the Federation has not any direct representation in the Indian Legislative Assembly, it has been its policy to hold the meetings of its general council at the times and places ~~at~~ ^{where} the Assembly is in session, so as to create an interest in the minds of the members of the Assembly in railway matters. He foresaw that future disputes in the Indian railways will centre round the questions of retrenchment, security of tenure, minimum wages, hours of work and racial discriminations. The resolutions adopted by the Federation condemned the apathy of the Government towards railway men's grievances, and the proposed Indian trade disputes Bill, and protested against the recent instructions issued by the Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway regarding recruitment of Anglo-Indians on more favourable terms than Indians.

Ten out of the thirteen ^{affiliated} unions were represented at the Federation.

Tinplate Workers' Union.

A conference of the Tinplate Workers' Union was held at Jamshedpur on the 7th January 1929 with Mr. M. Daud in the chair. It was resolved to register the Union under the Trade Union Act with Mr. Daud as the President.

By far the most important resolution adopted by the Conference was the one demanding (1) a general increase of 25 per cent. in wages; (2) Inauguration of the system of a provident fund, leave rules, holidays for religious festivals, acting allowances, overtime pay according to the Factory Act, bonus, Maternity Benefit and half an hour's interval for eight hours continuous work, all as obtaining in the Tata Iron and Steel Co.; (3) proper housing accommodation; (4) reduction of foreign supervision; (5) six days minimum wages per week; (6) similar rates of wages for similar work; (7) supply of shoes, aprons and water-proofs to workers, and (8) removal of corruption in the matter of appointments.

Another resolution urged that the Union be recognised by the Tinplate authorities.

The All-India Postmen's Conference.

The All-India Conference of postmen and members of the lower grade staff under the Indian Postal Department was held at Calcutta on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd January 1929, Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, M.L.A. presiding. Mr. N.C. Chunder, in his speech as the chairman of the Reception Committee, pointed out that before the war a postman in England ~~xxxx~~ started with a salary of 23 shillings a week, whereas it has now been raised to 53 shillings a week or Rs. 150 per mensem, while the starting salary of the Indian postman is only Rs. 25 per mensem at the present day. While the English postman has his salary doubled after 14 years service that of an Indian postman does not come up to that level even after 21 years. A revision in their salaries was made sometime ago, but as the president pointed out, and the Conference subsequently affirmed, that revision fell considerably short of the postmen's demands formulated in 1925, and has failed to give satisfaction. Again, not much progress appears to have been made in carrying into effect the Ryan Committee's recommendations in favour of efficient and qualified postmen being appointed to lower division clerkships under the postal department. In the resolutions passed by the Conference, expression was given to some of the postmen's grievances.

(The Servant of India, January 10, 1929).

Workers and Peasants' Conference

The Hindu of 22nd and 24th, the Hindustan Times of 23rd and 26th December 1928 and other papers give an account of the Workers' and Peasants' Conference held at Calcutta on the 21st and 22nd December 1928. In his presidential address Mr. Sohan Singh Josh of Amritsar condemned the trade union movement as being led by persons belonging to the petty bourgeoisie classes, and explained that the objects of the Workers' and Peasants' movement was to affiliate their organisations with the Trade Union Congress and convert it into a militant body. "They should not expect any benefit from the Geneva International, as it was a mere farce to throw dust into the eyes of the proletariat. They should secure if possible affiliation with the International of Moscow or with the Peasants' International Kristentera (?) because these Internationals were the real supporters of the political, economic and social emancipation of the proletariat, and have shown by their attitude that they have been unceasingly fighting against capitalism and imperialism. We should also keep in mind that the International Federation of Trade Unions (Amsterdam) is a capitalists' organisation. We should, therefore, decide once for all to have nothing to do with it".

The resolutions adopted at the Conference condemned the authors of the Nehru Report, the Independence League and the Capitalist Nationalists, and insisted on freeing the labour movement from bourgeois control. The necessity for continuing the class struggle, and bringing about an agrarian revolution was also emphasised.

The Conference was poorly attended, only 200 being reported as having been present at the first day's proceedings.

... ..

The Communist Movement.

The Times of India in its issues of the 2nd and 3rd January 1929 publishes an article on "Indian Trade Unions", pointing out the efforts made by communist organisations abroad to capture the Indian Trade Union Congress and generally influence the Indian working class movement. Special interest attaches to this article since this is the first attempt to give an idea of the proceedings of the Executive Council of the All India Trade Union Congress at Jharia and of the machinations of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat and the League against Imperialism. This article refers in detail to the projects of Joshi and Chamanlal in India and Suzuki and Yonekubo in Japan to summon an Asiatic Labour Conference and to the reasons why the communist delegates are opposed to it. Already, two of the more prominent delegates to the Jharia Congress have drawn public attention to the necessity of purging the All India Trade Union Congress of communist elements. (The Hindustan Times of 6th and 7th January 1929, Pioneer of 10-1-29 and Times of India of 7-1-29). That the activities of the communists in India are setting many furiously to think is clear from certain recent utterances. Speaking at the annual meeting of the European Association held at Calcutta on the 17th December last, His Excellency the Viceroy referred to the dangerous implications of the communist philosophy as applied to India. He said that, while there were several directions in which Indian social conditions needed urgent reform, revolution would be too high a price to be paid for bringing about such betterment. "No one with a stake, in the orderly progress of Indian life, can afford to be unconcerned with any such threats to the stability of established institutions, and this question has recently been engaging the serious attention of the

Government. Legislation however can treat only the symptoms and will not of itself remove the root cause of the disease, for Communism takes its origin in social conditions and will always find out the weak spot in which to flourish as noxious weeds will readily find the soil best suited to their growth. And as it will generally find its attack easiest on crowded industrial populations, it is here we have to make our first stand against it. Communism will not hesitate to manufacture grievances where they do not exist; but unless it can lay its finger on real injustice, it is not likely to succeed and much can be done in any country to counter such an attack by employers keeping in close personal touch with those they employ, and seeing that their wages and conditions of life are reasonable. If we are to fight Communism successfully, it will be by employers and the Government giving cause to the masses to believe that they ~~are~~ and not the Communists are the true friends of labour. We must make it plain that even the most philanthropic Communist that ever sought to loosen the whirlwind of revolution enjoys no monopoly of the desire to improve conditions, and that progressive employers can offer a more excellent way by which this may be accomplished. From this point of view, if from no other, it is the duty of all employers, whether public or private, to remember that the workman is a human being, both before he enters the factory and after he leaves it, and that only the industrial system which is careful always to recognise this human side of its business can expect to meet with confidence the challenge of these disruptive influences." (Hindu, 18-12-28, and other papers).

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad in his presidential address at the annual meeting of the National Liberal Federation referred to the existence of a party openly ~~proclaiming~~ proclaiming revolution and destruction of the present structure of society and ownership of property as its goal, and exhorted the Government and all right-thinking men to take all measures to stop its exploitation and misleading of the masses for revolutionary purposes before it is too late. (Pioneer, Allahabad, 2-1-1929). Pandit Motilal Nehru, in his presidential address to the Indian National Congress, struck a somewhat different note. After assuring Indian labour that the Congress has all along identified itself with its cause, he referred to the recent labour disputes in Bombay and elsewhere and said that the "authorities who have stepped in on behalf of the employers have not only raised the communist bogey as an answer to the hungry labourer, who fights for a living wage and for bare decencies of human living, ^{but have also} ~~and for to have~~ resort to ^{ad} ~~shooting~~ shooting ^{and} ~~in~~ violence in putting down strikers which must fill our hearts with shame and sorrow. The Congress can no longer afford to ignore these deplorable happenings, and the time has arrived ~~when~~ the Congress should actively intervene and take steps to secure the just demands of labour and take it upon itself to strengthen their organisations as a part of the work of national consolidation". (Pioneer, 2-1-1929).

... ..

A sensational episode of the Congress week was the march of 30000 labour demonstrators carrying communist flags and red banners into the ^{Indian National} Congress camp on Sunday the 30th December 1928, with the demand that the Congress hall should be given over to them for holding a meeting. The crowd was so unmanageable that after some parleying, the president

had to grant this strange request, with the result that the Congress was held up for two hours. The demands of the demonstrators as enunciated in their speeches and in the literature distributed on the occasion were (1) assistance for the strikers from the Congress in the Bauria mills at Calcutta; (2) a grant of Rs. 25,000 for labour organisations in each province; (3) Committees in every province for mass organisation, and (4) equal seats for labour leaders on the Congress Working Committee.

... ..

Other cuttings in this section include accounts of the 9th session of the Madras Non-Gazetted Officers' Conference (Hindu, 30-12-1928); of the Bengal Peasants' and Ryots' Conference (Hindu, 25-12-1928); and of the All India Socialist Youth Conference (Hindu, 28-12-1928); and also a leading article of the Hindu of 2-1-1929 on the Indian Press Conference.

... ..

Industrial Hygiene.

Among the cuttings on Industrial Hygiene is an article on "Malaria and Health - How to secure greater efficiency in the Mill Industry", by Sir Malcolm Watson, Principal of the Malaria Department of the Ross Institute, where he points out the losses incurred by industrial undertakings employing a high percentage of malaria-stricken coolies. With reference to conditions in the rubber industry of Malaya, he says that estates with a healthy labour population produced more and cheaper rubber than the unhealthy ~~unex~~ one. The f.o.b. cost per pound in cents for the group which had been healthy was 28.25, while for the group that had remained unhealthy it was 36.03. Further the average yield per acre in pounds for a healthy group was 431.01 and for an unhealthy group 400.30. Another difference which was apparent between healthy and unhealthy estates was that labour did not work less, but worked more, on a healthy estate than on an unhealthy estate, and that labour came more freely to the former group than to the latter. The argument of the employer that he would be made bankrupt if obliged to spend money to make his estate healthy, thus proved to be entirely unfounded. Bombay, according to him, was 20 years behind the Malay peninsula in its attitude towards malaria control.

(The Times of India, 8-12-1928).

The Pioneer of 28th December 1928 summarises "the Report of the Departmental Committee on Disinfection Costs with regard to East Indian Wool", published by H.M. Stationery Office, London.

Women and Children.All-India Women's Conference.

The third session of the All-India Women's Conference on Educational Reform was held at Patna from the 3rd to the 7th January 1929. The president, H.H. the Dowager Rani of Mandi deplored the present extent of illiteracy among the women as shown by the latest official statistics, according to which out of every 1000 women only 21 were literate. Only 13 per cent. of the total population of women were undergoing instruction in the schools, and in face of these figures the task of spreading literacy among Indian women was a very difficult one indeed. The question of women's educational progress was intimately bound up with their social position and early marriage and the purdah system will disappear only if education made headway among them. She pleaded for equality of opportunities to both sexes and its recognition in all directions in this country.

The Conference passed resolutions recommending the establishment of industrial homes for women, condemned the custom of allowing immature girls to become wives and mothers and supported Mr. Sarada's Child Marriage Bill, and Sir Hari Singh Gour's Age of Consent Bill, urged the extension of the franchise to women in Bihar and Orissa; and appealed to Government to appoint a committee including women ~~to~~ ~~inquire~~ to inquire into the sanitary, hygienic and economic conditions under which women worked, and laid strong emphasis on the prohibition of underground female labour in mines.

The All India Women's Social Conference held at Calcutta, on the 27th and 28th December 1928 dealt with the need for the abolition of the purdah, of the system of early marriage,

the dowry system and the need for widow remarriage and education.

(Statesman, 28-12-1928,
Pioneer, 31-12-1928).

The Committee of the Madras Vigilance Association has resolved to request the League of Nations, to include India within the scope of the enquiry which it is conducting through its committee of experts, into the international traffic in women and children in the Far East. The Madras Vigilance Association has also resolved to request the Government of India to invite the League's experts to undertake such an inquiry in India.

(Times of India, 8-12-1928).

Maritime Affairs.

Reference has already been made, in this office's special report of the 3rd January 1929 on the annual conference of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon, to the resolution adopted by the conference apropos of Mr. S.N.Haji's Bill. The Associated Chambers represent the bulk of European commercial interests in India and their action in protesting against the Bill has been further buttressed by a resolution passed by the executive council of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce in London early in December. A reuter's telegram giving the summary of this resolution has been reproduced in the Pioneer of 8th December 1928 and other papers. The Hindustan Times of the 16th December publishes a summary of Lord Inchcape's speech at the annual meeting of the P. & O. Steam Navigation Company condemning the Bill. Indian commercial interests, however, are united in their desire to have the Bill passed into law, as was clear from the resolution adopted at the annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, to which reference is made in another part of this report.

New PublicationsFactories in India in 1927.

A recent publication of the Government of India* gives interesting statistical details about the working of the Factories Act in 1927. The total number of factories rose from 7,251 in 1926 to 7,515 in 1927; and out of this latter figure, 160 were small establishments to which the provisions of the Factory Act were extended by Provincial Government notifications, ^{as against} 122 in 1926. No such small establishments have been notified by the Government of Burma, though there are about 300 such factories in the Province, as the inspection staff there is not large enough to deal with any additional work that may be thrown upon them; but it is stated that the problem is now under the consideration of the Government.

310 out of 7515 factories working in the year were owned by Government or Local Funds; and of the others, 417 were textile factories, 539 engineering concerns, 1,459 rice mills, 868 tea factories, 211 oil mills, 280 printing and book-binding establishments, 207 saw mills, and 2,244 cotton gins and jute presses. The Bombay Presidency had 1426 factories, followed by the Madras Presidency with 1301, Bengal with 1297, Burma with 940, and the Central Provinces with 704. Assam, which is the main home of the tea industry, had 591 factories, and the Punjab only 546. The other Provinces do not appear to have developed any considerable industrial activity.

* "Statistics of Factories subject to the Indian Factories Act (XII of 1911) for the year ending December 31st, 1927, together with a Note on the Working of the Factories Act during the year. Calcutta Govt. of India, Central Publication Branch, 1928." X

The total factory population has now risen ^{from} 1,518,391 in 1926 to 1,533,382 in 1927. In 1923, the figure was 1,409,173. The Government and Local Fund factories employed 144,573 persons, of whom 72,746 were in Railway workshops, 23,603 in ordnance factories, and 13,399 in Printing Presses. Of the other establishments, cotton (spinning and weaving and other) factories employed 342,315, Jute mills 332,119, general engineering works 33,622, Railway workshops 73,686, shipbuilding and engineering 24,292, iron and steel smelting and steel rolling mills 34,571, rice mills 71,693, tea 63,359, printing and book-binding 22,750, cotton ginning and baling 143,306 and jute presses 35,471. Bengal had the largest factory population of any province, (559,759), followed by the Bombay Presidency (381,865), the Madras Presidency (134,074) and Burma (101,355), the other provinces having each only less than 100,000 factory workers. Substantial increases on the past ~~year's~~ year's figures were recorded in both Bengal where, in spite of a further reduction of numbers employed in the Jute mills, there was increasing activity in iron and steel smelting works and allied engineering concerns, and in Madras where the number of factories increased from 1198 in 1926 to 1301 in 1927.

Of the total employed in factories, 1,222,662 were men, 253,158 women, 48,028 boys and 9,534 girls. In the case of boys and girls there was a slight fall from the figures of 1926; but the number of women went up from 249,669 in 1926 to 253,158 in 1927. The Cotton mills employed 64,121 and the Jute mills 54,219

women. There was a very substantial increase in the number of women in the Madras factories, principally in the coffee-curing works, coir rope works and in tea, cashew and ground nut factories. The decrease in the number of children is attributed to the restrictions imposed by the Factory Act and to the increasing efficiency of the arrangements for the certification of children.

27% of the factories maintain a 48 hour week for men, 14% more observed a working week of 54 hours or less, and 59% observed a longer working week. For women, the corresponding percentages are, 31, 13, and 56. The percentage of factories which limit the hours of work of children to 30 in the week increased from 30 in 1926 to 36 in 1927. The number of factories which were exempted from one or other of the sections of the Act showed a slight increase in the year (4791 in 1927 as against 4601 in 1926), but the local governments are examining the question of ^{ampl} exceptions at the desire of the central government. In a number of cases, where it has not been found practicable to withdraw the previous exemptions, suitable conditions are being imposed to secure as far as possible compensatory benefits for the employees.

Reported accidents of all kinds rose from 14,866 in 1926 to 15,711, though the number of fatal accidents fell from 270 to 242. Bombay and Bengal are principally responsible for this large increase, which is partly at any rate accounted for by a system of better reporting. The progressive increase of accidents in the iron and steel industry since 1923 is now the subject of special

investigation. The Madras and the United Provinces factory reports trace the accidents to the carelessness and ignorance of the operatives, whereas the Punjab and Burma reports attribute them to "a lamentable disregard on the part of some factory owners for the essential and oft-repeated precautions against accidents" and to "lack of supervision and indulgence in unsafe practices". Progress in the fencing of dangerous machinery is being maintained and managements encouraged to give attention to safety measures. The value of safety posters as an aid in the reduction of accidents is gaining increasing recognition particularly in the railway workshops, and it is interesting to find that the Millowners' Mutual Assurance Association in Bombay has agreed to bear the cost of the preparation of some of these posters for the textile industry.

There was no marked advance in welfare work during the year and the factory owners in some provinces have been unable to incur any considerable expenditure for this purpose owing to the present state of trade depression. Bombay however maintains the progress made in previous years, and six additional creakes were opened during the year in the Bombay mills for the infants of women workers. Some Ahmedabad mills have opened new hospitals and dispensaries and the treatment provided for the operatives is on a liberal scale.

Little progress is reported in the matter of housing, except in the Government of India's Security Printing Press at Nasik Road, where nearly 3000 persons are housed in comfort. In Bombay and Ahmedabad the millowners are rapidly recognising the need of efficient

ventilating and cooling arrangements to ~~xxxx~~ neutralise the trying climatic conditions.

The number of convictions in 1927 under the Factories Act was 1420, but there are continued complaints as to the inadequacy of fines imposed on factory managers convicted of offences under the Act. Some of the provincial reports rightly point out that inadequate fines instead of having a deterrent effect encourage the offenders to defy the law with profit to themselves and to pay willingly the light penalties imposed on them.

The percentage of factories inspected during the year rose from 88 in 1926 to 89, the total number of factories inspected being 6692 as against 6399 in 1926. As in previous years the largest number of uninspected factories were in Assam and Bengal, and it is stated that there are special difficulties connected with the application of the Act to the tea garden factories. In Behar and Orissa also, owing to the absence of an inspector on leave, the number of uninspected factories rose from 50 in 1926 to 140.

Ahmedabad Working class Budgets

The Bombay Labour Office has published the results of an inquiry into family budgets of the working classes in Ahmedabad in a report* which gives a valuable insight into the conditions of life of the cotton mill operatives and other manual labourers in the town. For the purposes of the report, three in every hundred families in Ahmedabad were visited, and in all 985 family budgets were collected, out of which 872 were accepted for final tabulation.

An analysis of the families according to income classes shows that the majority of them or 80.85 per cent. of the total have an income of between Rs. 20 and Rs. 60 per month. The income class in which the largest number of families is to be found is "Rs. 40 and below Rs. 50." Of the families considered, 78.67 per cent. were Hindu, 20.18 per cent. Mahomedan and 1.15 per cent. Christian.

The average number of persons per family in Ahmedabad is 4 of which 1.66 are earners and 2.21 dependants. Of the earners 1.25 are men, 0.37 women and 0.04 children. In nearly half the number of cases there was only one wage-earner and in nearly 40 per cent. of the families there were two. The highest number of earners recorded in one family was 5.

In the 872 families considered there were 1,443 workers, 1,090 of whom were men, 320 women and 33 children. It is seen that though in many cases the monthly earnings of individual workers are as low as less than Rs. 6, in the

* Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Family Budgets in Ahmedabad. Prepared by the Labour Office, Secretariat, Bombay. Published by order of the Governor in Council. Price - Annas 4 or 5d. Bombay. Printed at the Government Central Press. 1928. pp 48 + v.

majority or 61 per cent, of the cases the earnings vary from Rs. 15 to Rs. 33 per month. No woman wage-earner gets more than Rs. 33 per month, and no child worker gets Rs. 15 per month.

Out of the total of 1,443 wage-earners, 1,049 were employed in cotton mills. The earnings of cotton mill workers appear to be higher than of other workers in Ahmedabad. The income of the family is made up not only of the regular monthly earnings of the workers in the family but ~~it~~ also includes income from certain supplementary sources. Roughly speaking, the Ahmedabad working class family has a monthly income of about Rs. 44-8.

The percentage of distribution of expenditure on the various groups of articles included in the family budget shows that food accounted for 57.90 per cent. of the income, fuel and lighting for 7.04, clothing for 9.45, bedding and household necessaries for 1.16, house-rent for 11.74 and miscellaneous for 12.71.

The Ahmedabad worker is heavily indebted. The amount of debt varies from a few rupees to many times the monthly income. The money is borrowed at heavy rates of interest which in the majority of cases vary from 12 to 24 per cent. But higher rates of interest are not uncommon, and in fact in one case the rate of interest reported was as high as 225 per cent.

... ..