

GIPE-PUNE-064699



ROYAL COMMISSION
ON
LABOUR IN INDIA.

EVIDENCE.

Vol. I.—Part 1.

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY
(including SIND).

WRITTEN EVIDENCE.

LONDON:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:
Admiral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 120, George Street, Edinburgh;
York Street, Manchester; 1, St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff;
15, Donegall Square West, Belfast;
or through any Bookseller.

1931.

Price 15s. 6d. net.

NOTE TO PART I.

In this part is reproduced the bulk of the evidence submitted to the Commission in the form of written memoranda in reply to the list of subjects circulated in August 1929. In preparing this volume the Commission have sought to retain all matter likely to be of permanent interest to students of the subject, and not available elsewhere. Material supplied to the Commission which has already been printed and published elsewhere has in general not been reproduced. Where memoranda have been abridged all considerable omissions have been indicated in the text.

TERMS OF REFERENCE.

“ To inquire into and report on the existing conditions of labour in industrial undertakings and plantations in British India, on the health, efficiency and standard of living of the workers, and on the relations between employers and employed, and to make recommendations.”

NOTE.—“ Industrial undertaking ” for the purpose of the Commission is interpreted as in Article I of the Washington Hours Convention, which is as follows :—

“ For the purpose of this Convention, the term ‘ industrial undertaking ’ includes particularly :—

“ (a) Mines, quarries, and other works for the extraction of minerals from the earth.

“ (b) Industries in which articles are manufactured, altered, cleaned, repaired, ornamented, finished, adapted for sale, broken up or demolished, or in which materials are transformed ; including shipbuilding and the generation, transformation and transmission of electricity or motive power of any kind.

“ (c) Construction, reconstruction, maintenance, repair, alteration, or demolition of any building, railway, tramway, harbour, dock, pier, canal, inland waterway, road, tunnel, bridge, viaduct, sewer, drain, well, telegraphic or telephonic installation, electrical undertaking, gaswork, waterwork or other work of construction, as well as the preparation for or laying the foundations of any such work or structure.”

“ (d) Transport of passengers or goods by road, rail, sea, or inland waterway, including the handling of goods at docks, quays, wharves or warehouses, excluding transport by hand.”

* * * * *

ity in each country shall define the line of division which commerce and agriculture.

LIST OF SUBJECTS.

I. Recruitment.

- (1) *Origin of Labour.*
 - (i) Extent of migration.
 - (ii) Causes of particular streams of migration.
 - (iii) Changes in recent years.
- (2) *Contact with villages.*
 - (i) Extent and frequency of return.
 - (ii) Extent of permanent labour force.
- (3) *Methods of recruitment.*
 - (i) Existing methods.
 - (ii) Possible improvement.
 - (iii) Public employment agencies.
 - (a) Desirability of establishing.
 - (b) Possibility of practical schemes.
- (4) *Extent and effects of disturbance of family life.*
- (5) *Recruitment of seamen.*
 - (i) Existing practice.
 - (ii) Effect of changes introduced in Calcutta.
 - (iii) Suggestions for improvement.
- (6) *Recruitment for Assam.*
 - (i) Need of retention of control.
 - (ii) Administration of present system.
 - (iii) Composition and working of Assam Labour Board.
 - (iv) Defects of existing Act and system.
 - (v) Possible substitutes.
- (7) *Unemployment.*
 - (i) Extent and character.
 - (ii) Extent to which caused by—
 - (a) Retrenchment or dismissals.
 - (b) Voluntary retirement.
 - (c) Other causes.
 - (iii) Possible methods of alleviating and remedying distress.
 - (iv) Unemployment Insurance.
 - (v) Application of International Conventions relating to un-employment.
- (8) *Labour "turnover."**
 - (i) Average duration of employment.
 - (ii) Extent of casual employment.
 - (iii) Absenteeism.
 - (a) Extent, character and causes.
 - (b) Seasonal or otherwise.
 - (c) Time and wages lost.
- (9) *Apprentices Act, 1850.*
Value of.

* This word should be read as indicating generally the changes in composition of the labour staff of an undertaking.

II. Staff Organisation.

- (10) *Details of organisation, administrative and departmental.*
- (11) *Selection of managing staff.*
- (12) *Recruitment and training of supervising staff, superior and subordinate.*
 - (i) Methods in force.
 - (ii) Facilities for training and promotion of workmen.
- (13) *Relations between staff and rank and file.*
 - (i) Relations generally.
 - (ii) Value and defects of system of employing jobbers.
 - (iii) Works Committees : their constitution, extent and achievements.
 - (iv) Works Councils and Industrial Councils.
- (14) *Timekeeping, piecework, contract and attendance registers.*
 - (i) How and by whom kept and checked.
 - (ii) How and by whom wages actually paid to workers.
- (15) *Contractors as intermediaries.*
 - (i) Extent and character of work given on contract.
 - (ii) Extent of sub-contracting.
 - (iii) Control exercised over working conditions.
 - (iv) Effects.

III. Housing.

- (16) *Extent to which housing is provided.*
 - (i) By employers.
 - (ii) By Government or other public agency.
 - (iii) By private landlords.
 - (iv) By workers themselves.
- (17) *Facilities for acquisition of land for workers' houses.*
- (18) *Nature of accommodation provided in each class.*
 - (i) In relation to workers' demands.
 - (ii) In relation to best type from health point of view.
 - (iii) Provision made for lighting, conservancy and water supply.
- (19) *Utilisation by workers of accommodation available.*
- (20) *Rent-rates in various classes.*
- (21) *Special problems arising in connection with various classes of housing.*
 - e.g. Subletting ;
 - Occupation of employers' houses by tenants in other employ ;
 - Eviction.
- (22) *Moral effect on worker of industrial housing conditions. Improvements tried and suggested.*

IV. Health.

- (23) *General health conditions of workers.*
 - (i) Figures of mortality.
 - (ii) Birth rate and infant mortality.
 - Methods of registration.

- (iii) Working conditions—
 - (a) at work places ;
 - (b) at home.
- (iv) Dietary.
- (v) Physique.
- (vi) Effects of disturbance of sex ratio in industrial cities.
- (vii) Relation between housing and mortality.
- (24) *Extent of medical facilities provided.*
 - (i) By employers.
 - (ii) By Government.
 - (iii) By other agencies.
 - (iv) Provision for women doctors, trained midwives or dais.
- (25) *Extent to which medical facilities are utilised.*
 - (i) Generally.
 - (ii) By women.
- (26) *Sanitary arrangements, (a) at work places, (b) at home.*
 - (i) Latrines.
 - (ii) Drinking water.
 - (iii) Bathing and washing.
- (27) *Extent and nature of official supervision.*
 - (i) Work of Boards of Health in special areas.
 - (ii) Inspection of plantations.
 - (iii) In mill and other industrial areas.
- (28) *Suitability of existing Factories and Mines Acts and Rules*
 - (i) Control of temperature in factories.
 - (ii) Control of humidification in cotton mills.
 - (a) Nature of action taken by Local Governments.
 - (b) Results.
- (29) *Disease.*
 - (i) Prevalence of industrial diseases.
 - (ii) Prevalence of cholera, malaria, hookworm and other tropical diseases.
- (30) *Sickness insurance.*
 - (i) Suitability of International Labour Convention.
 - (ii) Possibility of introducing other systems.
 - (iii) How to meet difficulties arising from non-acceptability of Western medicine, paucity of medical men, migration of labour, finance.
- (31) *Maternity benefits.*
 - (i) Extent and working of existing schemes (including allowances given before and after childbirth).
 - (ii) History of central and provincial Bills.
 - (iii) Possibility of legislation.

V. Welfare (other than Health and Housing, but including Education).

- (32) *Extent of welfare work.*
 - (i) By employers.
 - (ii) By other agencies.
- (33) *Employment of Welfare Officers and workers.*
- (34) *Nature of other Welfare activities, (a) by employers (b) by other agencies.*
 - (i) Provision for refreshments, shelters and crèches.
 - (ii) Provision for physical culture, recreation and amusements.
 - (iii) Other activities.
- (35) *Results achieved.*
- (36) *Provision of educational facilities by employers—*
 - (i) For adult workers.
 - (ii) For half-time workers.
 - (iii) For workers' children.
 - (iv) Extent to which used.
- (37) *Desirability and possibility of provision for old age and premature retirement.*
- (38) *Co-operation.*
- (39) *Possibility and desirability of a Statutory Miners' Welfare Fund.*

VI. Education.

- (40) *Facilities for general education in industrial areas.*
 - (i) Of children not in employment.
 - (ii) Of children employed in factories.
 - (iii) Of adults.
- (41) *Facilities for industrial and vocational training.*
- (42) *Effect of education on standard of living and industrial efficiency of workers.*

VII. Safety.

- (43) *Existing regulations in factories, mines, railways and docks.*
- (44) *Incidence of accidents in factories, mines, railways and docks.*
- (45) *Causes.*
- (46) *Accident prevention (including " Safety First " propoganda).*
- (47) *Accidents in non-regulated establishments.*
- (48) *First-aid and medical relief.*
- (49) *Stringency of inspection and enforcement of regulations.*
 - (i) In industry generally.
 - (ii) In seasonal industries.
- (50) *Effect upon safety of hours, health, light and working conditions generally.*

VIII. Workmen's Compensation.

- (51) *Workmen's Compensation Act.*
 - (i) Extent of use.
 - (ii) Comparison with extent of possible claims.

- (iii) Effects on industry.
- (iv) Availability and use of insurance facilities and value from workers' point of view.
- (v) Desirability of compulsory insurance by employers.
- (52) *Desirability of extending Act to other occupations.*
Possibility of providing against insolvency of employers who might be so covered.
- (53) *Suitability of provisions relating to—*
 - (i) Scales of compensation.
 - (ii) Conditions governing grant of compensation.
 - (iii) Industrial diseases.
 - (iv) Machinery of administration.
 - (v) Other matters.
- (54) *Desirability of legislation on lines of Employers' Liability Act, 1880.*

IX. Hours.

A. Factories.

- (55) *Hours worked per week and per day.*
 - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
 - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
 - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.
- (56) *Days worked per week.*
- (57) *Effect of 60 hours restriction—*
 - (i) On workers.
 - (ii) On industry.
- (58) *Effect of daily limit.*
- (59) *Possibility of reduction in maximum.*
- (60) *Intervals.*
 - (i) Existing practice—
 - (a) In relation to fatigue.
 - (b) In relation to workers' meal times.
 - (ii) Suitability of the law.
 - (iii) Suitability of hours during which factory is working
 - (iv) Number of holidays given.
- (61) *Day of rest.*
 - (i) Existing practice.
 - (ii) Suitability of the law.
- (62) *Exempting provisions and the use made of them.*

B. Mines.

- (63) *Hours worked per day and per week.*
 - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
 - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
 - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.

- (64) *Days worked per week.*
 - (65) *Effect of restriction of hours.*
 - (i) On workers.
 - (ii) On industry.
 - (66) *Possibility of reducing maxima.*
 - (67) *Suitability of the law relating to shifts.*
 - (68) *Possibility of introducing an effective daily limitation.*
 - (69) *Intervals.*
 - (i) In relation to fatigue.
 - (ii) In relation to workers' meal times.
 - (iii) Number of holidays given.
 - (70) *Day of rest.*
 - (71) *Adequacy of existing provisions.*
 - (72) *Exempting provisions and use made of them.*
- C. Railways.**
- (73) *Hours worked per week and per day.*
 - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
 - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
 - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.
 - (74) *Days worked per week.*
 - (75) *Extent of application of International Labour Conventions relating to—*
 - (i) Hours.
 - (ii) Rest days.
 - (76) *Intervals.*
 - (i) In relation to fatigue.
 - (ii) In relation to workers' meal times.
 - (iii) Number of holidays given.
 - (77) *Possibility of regulation.*
- D. Other Establishments.**
- (a) Plantations.
 - (b) Docks.
 - (c) Other industrial establishments.
- (78) *Hours worked per week and per day.*
 - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
 - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
 - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.
 - (79) *Days worked per week.*
 - (80) *Desirability of regulation.*

X. Special Questions relating to Women, Young Adults and Children.**A. Factories.**

- (81) *Effect of 1922 Act on employment.*
- (82) *Admission of infants to factories.*
- (83) *Suitability of regulations for women's work.*
- (84) *Suitability of regulations affecting children.*
 - (i) *Hours and intervals.*
 - (ii) *Minimum and maximum ages.*
- (85) *Double employment of children (i.e. in more than one establishment in same day).*
- (86) *Work and training of young adults.*
Facilities for apprenticeship.
- (87) *Extent of "blind alley" employment (i.e. extent to which children are dismissed on reaching full age).*
- (88) *Comparative merits of double and single shift systems as affecting health of women, young adults and children.*
- (89) *Work of women and children in factories not subject to Act.*
 - (i) *Use by local Governments of section 2 (3) (b).*
 - (ii) *Advisability of extended application.*

B. Mines.

- (90) *Effect of Act of 1923.*
Suitability of certification provisions.
- (91) *Exclusion of women.*
 - (i) *Suitability of regulations.*
 - (ii) *Probable effect on industry.*
 - (iii) *Economic effect on workers.*
 - (iv) *Speed of withdrawal.*

C. Other Establishments.

- (92) *Need for regulation.*

XI. Special Questions relating to Seamen and Workers in Inland Navigation.

- (93) *Hours of work.*
- (94) *Rations and accommodation, articles of agreement, &c.*
- (95) *Indian Merchant Shipping Act.*
 - (i) *Existing provisions.*
 - (ii) *Need of revision.*

XII. Wages.

- (96) *Prevailing rates of wages (time and piece) and average earnings.*
 - (i) *In industry.*
 - (ii) *In surrounding agricultural areas.*
 - (iii) *Difference between money wages and money value of all earnings.*

- (97) *Movements in recent years.*
- (i) Increases and decreases.
 - (ii) Reasons for variation.
 - (iii) Relation to prices and cost of living (pre-war and post-war).
 - (iv) Relation to profits.
- (98) *Amounts sent to villages.*
- (99) *Payment in kind and allied problems.*
- (100) *Extent and effect of payment through contractors, sub-contractors or headmen.*
- (101) *Method of fixing wages.*
- (i) By negotiated agreements.
 - (ii) Other means.
- (102) *Basis of payment for overtime and Sunday work.*
- (103) *Extent of standardisation.*
- (104) *Effect of wage-changes on labour supply.*
- (105) *Minimum wages.*
- Advisability and possibility of statutory establishment.
- (106) *Deductions.*
- (i) Extent of fining.
 - (ii) Other deductions.
 - (iii) Utilisation of fines.
 - (iv) Desirability of legislation.
- (107) *Periods of wage-payment (day, week or month).*
- (i) Periods for which wages paid.
 - (ii) Periods elapsing before payment.
 - (iii) Desirability of legislation—
 - (a) to regulate periods ;
 - (b) to prevent delay in payment.
 - (iv) Treatment of unclaimed wages.
- (108) *Indebtedness.*
- (i) In village.
 - (ii) In industrial area.
- (109) *Bonus and profit sharing schemes.*
- (i) Nature and effect of schemes which are or have been in operation.
 - (ii) Basis of schemes, whether production or profits.
- (110) *Annual or other leave.*
- (i) Extent to which taken by workers.
 - (ii) Extent to which countenanced and/or assisted by employers.
 - (iii) Extent of consequential loss to worker of back-lying wages.
- (111) *Desirability of Fair Wages Clause in public contracts.*
- KIII. Industrial Efficiency of Workers.**
- (112) *Comparative changes in efficiency of Indian workers in recent years.*

(113) *Comparative efficiency of Indian and foreign workers.*

(114) *Extent to which comparisons are affected by—*

- (i) Migration of workers.
- (ii) Use of machinery.
- (iii) Comparative efficiency of plant.
- (iv) Comparative efficiency of management.
- (v) Physique.
- (vi) Health.
- (vii) Education.
- (viii) Standards of living.
- (ix) Climate.

(115) *Effect on production of—*

- (i) Changes in working hours.
- (ii) Changes in other working conditions.
- (iii) Expenditure on health and sanitation.
- (iv) Housing.
- (v) Alterations in methods of remuneration.
- (vi) Movements in wage levels.
- (vii) Legislative enactments.
- (viii) Dietary.
- (ix) Alcohol and drugs.
- (x) Industrial fatigue.

(116) *Possible methods of securing increased efficiency.*

XIV. Trade Combinations.

117) *Extent of organisation of—*

- (i) Employers.
- (ii) Employed.

(118) *Effect of organisations on—*

- (i) Industry.
- (ii) Conditions of workers generally.

(119) *Nature of Trade Union activities.*

- (i) Mutual aid benefit schemes : unemployment : sickness : old age : strike pay.
- (ii) Other activities.

(120) *Individual Trade Unions.*

- (i) History.
- (ii) Attitude of workers and extent of their control.
- (iii) Attitude of employers and relations with them.

(121) *Trade Unions Act, 1926.*

- (i) Extent to which utilised.
- (ii) Effects.
- (iii) Possible amendments.

(122) *Miscellaneous questions regarding Trade Unions.*

- (i) Methods of negotiation between employers and employed.
- (ii) Results of attempts at co-operation between employers and employed to increase efficiency of production.
- (iii) Position of employees in State industrial concerns in relation to general Trade Union movement.

XV. Industrial Disputes.

(123) *Extent of strikes and lock-outs.*

- (i) Causes.
- (ii) Duration and character.
- (iii) Nature and methods of settlement.
- (iv) Loss to industry and workers.

(124) *Conciliation and arbitration machinery.*

- (i) Results of previous investigations.
- (ii) Part played by official or non-official conciliators in settling disputes.
- (iii) Use (if any) made of Employers' and Workmen's Disputes Act, 1860.
- (iv) Joint standing machinery for regulation of relations between employers and workpeople.
- (v) Opportunity afforded to workpeople of making representations.
- (vi) Applicability to Indian conditions of Industrial Court, Trade Boards, Joint Industrial Councils.

(125) *Trades Disputes Act.*

(126) *Attitude of Government—*

- (i) Towards trade combinations.
- (ii) In connection with industrial disputes.

XVI. Law of Master and Servant.

(127) *Effect of repeal of Workmen's Breach of Contract Act.*

(128) *Types of contract commonly in use.*

(129) *Extent to which (i) Civil, (ii) Criminal law is available and used for enforcement.*

(130) *Madras Planters Labour Act, 1903.*

(131) *Coorg Labour Act.*

(132) *Employers' and Workmen's Disputes Act: Is it used?*

XVII. Administration.

(133) *Central and Provincial Legislatures.*

Action and attitude on labour questions.

(134) *International Labour Organisation.*

- (i) Ratification of Conventions and action taken.
- (ii) Its effect on legislation, &c.

(135) *Relations between Central and Local Governments.*

- (136) *Administrative authorities in various Governments.*
Work of special labour offices or officers.
- (137) *Effect of differences in law or administration in Indian State and British India.*
- (138) *Acquaintance of workpeople with factory legislation.*
- (139) *Factory inspection.*
- (i) Adequacy of staff.
 - (ii) Uniformity of administration in different Provinces.
 - (iii) Rigour and efficiency of administration.
 - (iv) Prosecutions and their result.
- (140) *Mines inspection.*
- (i) Adequacy of staff.
 - (ii) Rigour and efficiency of administration.
 - (iii) Prosecutions and their result.
- (141) *Railways (State and Company).*
Administration of questions affecting personnel.
- (142) *Plantations, docks and other industrial establishments.*
Extent and nature of inspection.

XVIII. Intelligence.

- (143) *Existing statistics.*
- (i) Extent and use.
 - (ii) Method of collection.
 - (iii) Degree of accuracy.
- (144) *Possibility of improvement in statistics.*
- (145) *Nature of special investigations conducted.*
- (i) Cost of living enquiries.
 - (ii) Results achieved.
- (146) *Future developments necessary.*