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INDUSTRIAL WELFARE IN INDIA.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS book is the result of a study of Indian Labour problems pursued for over six years. Its outline was settled nearly four years ago in consultation with Dr. John Matthai, Member, Tariff Board, who then held the Chair of Economics at the Madras University. Although the work was nearly complete in 1927, there was unavoidable delay in publishing it, which however made it possible to rewrite certain chapters and bring the matter up to date. But events are moving so fast that it may be possible that before long, some of the facts and conditions described in the book will go out of date.

The importance of a study of labour conditions in India has now been fairly well recognised; but books on the subject are not many. When the last pages of this book had very nearly been printed off, the Viceroy made the welcome announcement in the Legislative Assembly that a Royal Commission with Mr. Whitley as Chairman would soon be appointed to enquire into the conditions of labour in India. The terms of reference suggested and the name of the Chairman would make one hope that the enquiry would result in a thorough and authoritative study of labour conditions in India which have changed in many ways since the Factory Commission reported on them over 20 years ago. In the meanwhile it is believed that this book will be found to serve as an aid to the understanding of some of the conditions and problems which the Royal Commission has been called upon to survey.

The book is a critical study of the Industrial Welfare Work carried on in India by the three agencies of the workers' welfare—the State, the employer and organised labour. The first part deals with industrial legislation and examines the principles underlying such legislation and the possibility of further extending the sphere of state action in protecting various classes' of workers from the injurious effects of their employment. The second part describes the Welfare Work of the employers and emphasis is laid on the need for a new orientation in relationship between the employers and the workers. In the third part, the efforts of trade unions to secure an improvement in the conditions of work and living

of the workers are described, their structure, aim and policy discussed and their methods of action examined. A chapter on Industrial Peace draws attention to the injury to the workers' welfare which strikes and lock-outs bring about and examines the steps that may be taken to secure harmony and goodwill in the industry.

In the preparation of the book the writer has had the advantage of personal talks with employers and labour leaders in the Madras Presidency and elsewhere and he wishes to acknowledge his obligations to them. His indebtedness to various books, reports and pamphlets has been indicated in the body of the book. To Dr. John Matthai who helped him in the early stages of the work and to Dr. Gilbert Slater, of the London School of Economics and sometime Professor of Economics, Madras University, who has so kindly written the introduction, he is under a deep debt of gratitude. Lastly he desires to express his thanks to the Syndicate for kindly publishing the book under the auspices of the University and to Dr. P. J. Thomas, University Professor of Indian Economics, for the interest he has evinced in the publication.

P. S. L.

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