

REPORT
ON
LABOUR CONDITIONS
IN INDIA

By
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AND
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(British Trades Union Congress Delegation to India)
November 1927 to March 1928

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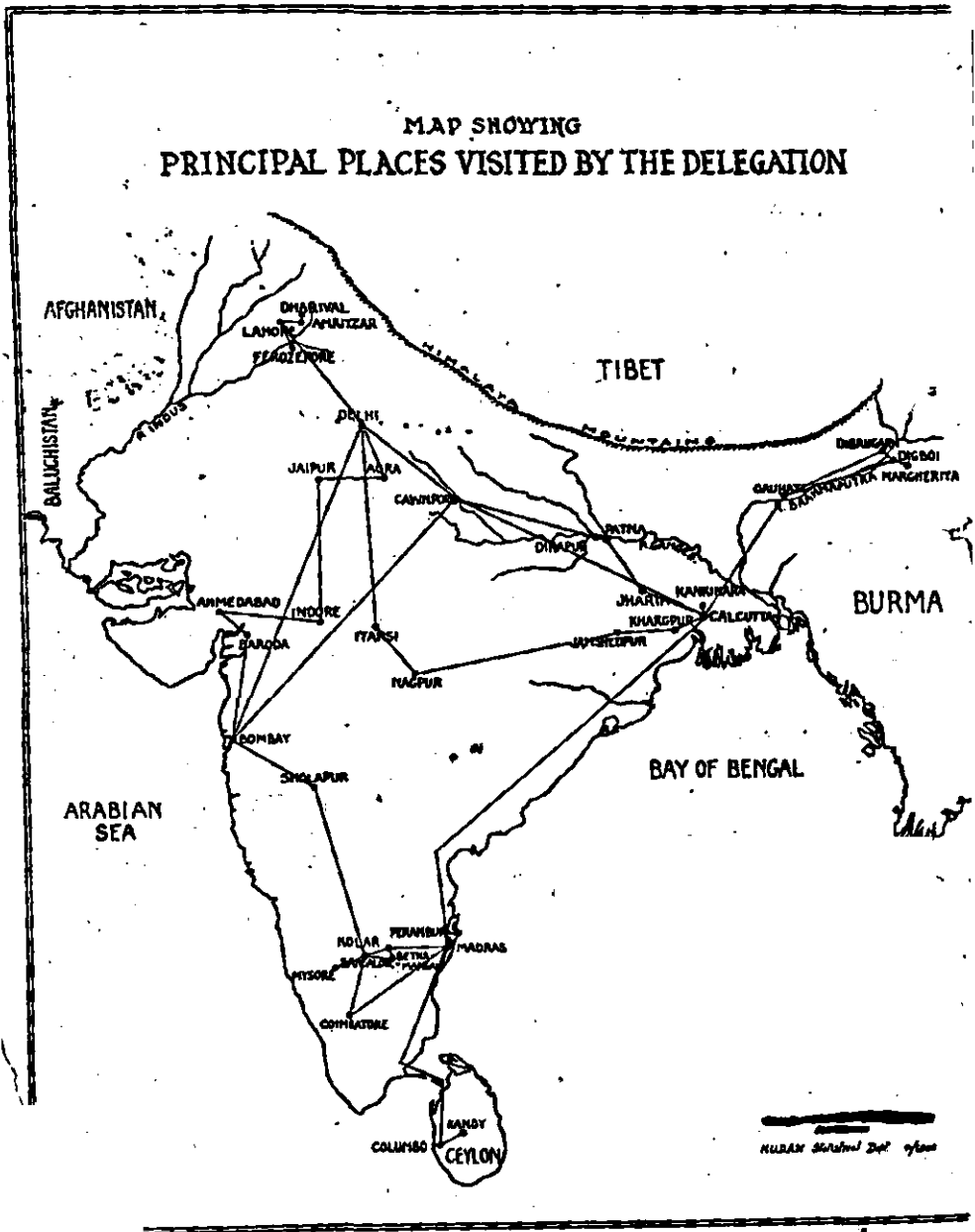
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MAP SHOWING
PRINCIPAL PLACES VISITED BY THE DELEGATION



INTRODUCTION

THE two delegates to India left London on the 10th and arrived in Bombay on November 25, 1927. They proceeded to Cawnpore the same day, reaching there the following evening just in time for the commencement of the All-India Trades Union Congress, which they addressed as fraternal delegates from the British Trades Union Congress. In the intervals of the Congress proceedings meetings with the Congress Executive Council took place, at which arrangements were made for the tour of investigation into labour conditions which the delegates were instructed to make by resolution of the British Congress held at Edinburgh, September, 1927.

The delegates resumed their journey from Cawnpore on November 30, and from that date until March 17, 1928, travelled in India (and one of them in Ceylon) about 14,000 miles, so that, including the journey out to Bombay and the return to London, where the delegates arrived on March 31, the aggregate distance covered was between 27,000 and 28,000 miles. In the course of the tour (shown on the outline map on opposite page) the delegates not only inspected textile mills, railway workshops and offices, engineering plants and foundries, building works and wood-working shops, hydro-electric power stations, water and irrigation works, printing offices, coal and gold fields, oil-fields and refineries, tea gardens and factories, rubber plantations, peasant villages, lodging-houses of seamen and port workers, hospitals and dispensaries, and other places, and investigated the conditions in each case, but made a special point of seeing at first hand at every place visited the housing, bazaar and other social conditions of the workers. No opportunity was lost of visiting trade union offices, executives, or conferences, or of addressing meetings of workers, colleges and universities and others on the need for and value of trade union organisation. Everywhere the message of unity was listened to eagerly at meetings varying in size from a few hundreds to several thousands of persons, some reaching 10,000 to 20,000 in big centres of employment. From time to time the itinerary of the tour had to be changed in order to comply with requests for further meetings, which lasted sometimes for several hours, particularly when more than one translation was required. The great majority of the meetings were held out of doors, and, in contrast to such gatherings in our own country, the audience for the most part squatted on the ground around an improvised platform, and generally an outer ring of listeners standing.

The results of the delegates' experiences and investigations are embodied in the following pages of this Report. It is not suggested that what is thus constituted an exhaustive treatment of the subject of labour and living conditions in such a vast country as India. A very much longer stay than could be by a delegation would be required for a complete survey, and, in any case, the necessary information is not as yet available to anybody. Statistics of all kinds of character are abundant in India, but the recorded data having sp

to labour conditions are scanty and in greater or less degree incomplete. In connection with what follows every effort has been made to elicit reliable information from the workers themselves and/or their representatives and to supplement the evidence thus gained by such official data as seemed suitable for the purpose in view.

Just as the delegation was the first one to India representative of the British Trade Union Movement as a whole, so it is believed that this Report, whatever may be its limitations or imperfections, is the first to be made on the subject of general labour conditions in that country, and it is modestly submitted to the British Trades Union Congress as the beginning of a continuing study of the life and labour of the working class in the East, which are certain to affect profoundly the position of workers in the Western world.

The first Section of the Report is devoted to a general statement on labour and social conditions and the state of Trade Union organisation; the next five Sections deal with the wages and hours of labour in various industries; in the seventh Section a statement is made on India's need of organising assistance and a plea submitted to the British Trade Union Movement to help in meeting that need; and the Report concludes with selected photographs illustrating matters dealt with in the various Sections.

(Signed)

A. A. PURCELL }
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London, *March* 31, 1928.

SECTION I

GENERAL STATEMENT

CENSUS FIGURES: Area of India—Population and its distribution in houses, towns and villages and according to sex and religion—Persons supported by agriculture—Illiteracy on a large scale—Education: Racial and class discrimination—Bad housing—Insanitation—Overcrowding—Bazaar conditions—Neglect of authorities—Diseases—Infantile and maternal mortality—Wages: Rough general average—Instances of very low wages—Stabilisation of poverty—A strong movement for big advance needed—Examples of fines—Welfare work—Beginnings of Trade Unionism in India—Rise of All-India Trades Union Congress—Affected by International Labour Office and Conferences—Great Work done by Indian Trade Union Congress—Assistance rendered by outsiders—Organisations affiliated to Congress and their membership—Unaffiliated Unions—Total strength of all Unions—Task before the movement—Organisable groups of workers—Localisation of Unions and possibility of national organisations being created—Ceylon Labour Union.

The vastness of India, which is really a sub-continent, is exemplified by the following particulars relating to its area and population, according to the results of the 1921 Census.

Including the 711,032 square miles of territory embraced within what are known as the Indian States, the total area is 1,805,332 square miles, or about twenty times the size of Great Britain.

The total population for all India, the distribution of which in houses, towns and villages, and according to sex and religion is shown in the Tables below, was 318,942,480, or about 177 persons to the square mile. In British India alone there were 226 persons to the square mile.

POPULATION OF INDIA AND ITS DISTRIBUTION

	<i>All India</i>	<i>British Provinces</i>	<i>Indian States</i>
No. of Occupied Houses	65,198,389	50,441,636	14,756,753
In Towns	6,765,014	5,046,820	1,718,194
In Villages	58,433,375	45,394,816	13,038,559
No. of Towns and Villages	687,981	500,088	187,893
Towns	2,316	1,561	755
Villages	685,665	498,527	187,138
Total Population	318,942,480	247,003,293	71,939,187
In Towns	32,475,276	25,044,368	7,430,908
In Villages	286,467,204	221,958,925	64,508,279
Males	163,996,554	126,872,116	37,123,438
In Towns	17,845,248	13,971,136	3,874,112
In Villages	146,150,306	112,900,980	33,249,326
Females	154,946,926	120,131,177	34,815,749
In Towns	14,630,028	11,073,232	3,556,796
In Villages	140,316,898	109,057,945	31,258,953

According to religion the population is distributed as follows:—

Hindus	216,734,586
Sikhs	3,238,803
Jains	1,178,596
Buddhists	11,571,268
Parsis	101,778
Mohammedans	68,735,233
Christians	4,754,064
Jews	21,778
Animists	9,774,611
Others	2,831,763
Total	318,942,480

The heavy preponderance of Hinduism is seen in the foregoing list, which will be of some interest at the present time in view of the discussion being carried on regarding the question of community representation, *i.e.*, religious denominational representation, on legislative and administrative bodies.

As might be implied by the relatively large number of persons living in villages, compared with those in towns, shown in the first Table of this Section, the larger proportion of the population of India is supported by the "exploitation of animals and vegetation." This phrase includes not only ordinary land cultivation, but also the growing of special products and market gardening, forestry, raising of farm stock, and fishing and hunting. The total number thus supported, according to official figures, is no less than 230,652,350, or 72.3 per cent. of the total population. Of these, 105,688,373 are described as actual workers, 72,099,953 being males and 33,588,420 females. But returned as farm servants and field labourers were:—Males, 11,743,070; females, 9,933,037; a total of 21,676,107. This total has been accepted as representing the persons available for Trade Union Organisation, a subject dealt with later in this Section.

Illiteracy

Not the least interesting and important figures from the 1921 Census are those relating to the matter of illiteracy, as shown below:—

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Able to read and write</i>	<i>Unable to read and write</i>	<i>Total</i>
Males	19,841,438	142,623,691	162,465,129
Females	2,782,213	150,807,889	153,590,102
Total	22,623,651	293,431,580	*316,055,231

Persons with a knowledge of English numbered 2½ millions.

It will be noted that the illiteracy of females is relatively greater than that of males, a fact which emphasises the lowliness of the woman's position in India.

These figures show in simple but telling fashion, what a great mass of ignorance there is to dispel so far as the general body of the people is concerned. It is doubtful whether there is any parallel case in the world to-day, at least in any country comparable with India. That such a state of affairs should exist in the twentieth century after 150 years of British rule is a serious reflection upon everybody concerned. India for long has been regarded as a country specially suitable for economic exploitation, supported by costly militarism and police, and it is upon

* This number falls short of the total population of India by 2,887,249 persons enumerated in tracts where literacy was not recorded.

those who have instituted and maintained the system and richly benefited from its working that the responsibility for keeping nearly 294,000,000 of human beings in mental darkness and intellectual as well as material poverty must be placed.

Education

Here and there it is true there are employers who, tired of waiting for Government to establish a national system of education, have made an attempt to provide elementary and also technical education themselves, and a few of the Trade Unions also have done something in this respect. As far as these efforts go, they are to be commended as stop-gap arrangements, but they cannot be regarded as constituting the right lines of development. Education is surely a national affair, to be carried on in pursuance of a properly devised scheme adequately financed and equitably administered for the benefit of all classes of the population. At present there is racial and class discrimination in educational institutions. It has been pointed out, for instance, that the amount spent annually on education by the Bengal Government amounts only to the equivalent of 5½*d.* per head of the population, as compared with the sum of 4*s.* 7*d.* on military and police. When calculated on the average cost per student, however, it is shown that the amount is only about 4*s.* 5*d.* per Bengali, while that for the European is about £7 14*s.* 11½*d.* This starving of the educational service is responsible for the fact that only 9.7 per cent. of the male and 2.1 per cent. of the female population of Bengal are literate.

Educational discrimination in favour of the European finds expression in other quarters. It is alleged that on the railways Europeans and Anglo-Indians are allowed grants-in-aid for the education of their children, but this consideration is denied to Indians.

Another example of serious injustice to Indians, in connection with the railway services, lies in the fact that for many years schools for juniors have been reserved for Eurasians and Europeans; thus, those Indians desiring to take part in the mechanical training necessary for railway workshops are almost completely barred the opportunity. Though the door is said to be now open, the restrictions and regulations in practice form a barrier to Indians, on the ground that whatever their state of education may be, the low wages they receive militate against their compliance with the regulations in force.

There are a few States in which compulsory primary education has been established, but in practice not generally enforced because of the cost entailed. Yet the children of the employing class are otherwise provided for by reason of the fact that there is in their case no financial embarrassment such as that existing in the case of the children of the Indian working class, whose wages are so terribly low that they have difficulty in getting merely the bare essentials of life, and there is no margin to spare for education.

The right of every member of the community, irrespective of race, creed or class, to receive the education of which he or she is inherently capable is unchallengeable, and until it is respected and conceded to the Indian people, employers cannot justifiably complain that many of their workers are too illiterate to be efficient. From a labour standpoint it is obvious that widespread illiteracy is a serious obstacle to Trade Union Organisation and the attempt to free the people from the economic and social oppression prevailing throughout India. For this reason alone the Labour Movement must lose no opportunity of pressing for the institution of a public system of education for all.

Housing and Sanitation

The housing of the people in our own country is a serious problem, but in India it is far more serious, for disgustingly bad housing conditions prevail *generally* so far as the working classes are concerned. Wherever one goes in the different parts of the country, whether it be in the villages, in the moderate-sized towns, or in the big cities; and whatever may be the design or lay-out of the houses, whether they be the single-roomed or double-roomed dwellings built in "lines" or tenements, or the single-roomed dwellings dotted about separately in some places, they are all unutterably bad, and cannot in any decent sense be regarded as "homes."

We visited the workers' quarters wherever we stayed, and had we not seen them we could not have believed that such evil places existed. At the end of the Report will be found a number of photographs depicting some of the houses we have personally inspected. The pictures will assist the reader in gaining some idea of the character of the dwellings and their immediate surroundings, but they do not, and cannot, tell the whole story. We propose to fill in some of the details here by quoting a few cases which, in greater or less degree, are practically typical of all.

Here is a group of houses in "lines," the owner of which charges the tenant of each dwelling 4s. 6d. a month as rent. Each house, consisting of one dark room used for all purposes, living, cooking and sleeping, is 9 feet by 9 feet, with mud walls and loose-tiled roof, and has a small open compound in front, a corner of which is used as a latrine. There is no ventilation in the living room except by a broken roof or that obtained through the entrance door when open. Outside the dwelling is a long, narrow channel which receives the waste matter of all descriptions and where flies and other insects abound. Four to eight persons, including children, crowd together into such a room.

Two other groups, perhaps a little worse, were seen, rents in these cases varying, because of the rooms differing in size, from 2s. 3d. to 6s. a month. Wages of residents in these dwellings are about 5d. to 9d. a day, or 10s. 10d. to 19s. 6d. for a full working month of twenty-six days.

A fourth lot of houses, provided by employers, is a little better than the others. The rent charged is about 3s. a month, and monthly wages of the occupants are stated as being 18s. for men and 13s. for women. The walls of these houses are of brick instead of mud, and there is a paved courtyard, in the centre of which is a common water supply and sloping brick place for washing. But there are the same internal arrangements, except that the latrines are situated a little distance from the houses. Three or four unmarried persons share the one room, or it is occupied by husband, wife and family.

Outside all the houses on the edge of each side of the strip of land between the "lines" are the exposed gulleys, at some places stopped up with garbage, refuse and other waste matter, giving forth horrible smells repellent in the extreme. It is obvious that these gulleys are often used as conveniences, especially by children, and right in the open earth "street" can be seen women up to the elbows in cow-dung preparing it for making-up into cakes which, after being plastered on the walls of the houses and dried in the sun (a custom common in all parts of India), is used as a cheap form of fuel.

In another place the floors of the houses are beneath the ground level, and it is only by crouching low down that ingress to the room can be gained. In the flood season these houses are water-logged and sometimes altogether destroyed, only to be substituted by others equally bad. These dwellings are very overcrowded and the people very poverty-stricken indeed.

The following figures form damning evidence of overcrowding in the residential buildings of one of India's great cities:—

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS LIVING IN ROOMS EACH OCCUPIED BY				TOTAL POPULA- TION
5 Persons and under	6 to 9 persons	10 to 19 persons	20 persons and over	
687,217	236,783	115,731	31,578	1,071,309

If it were necessary, many other instances might easily be given from the mass of accumulated material available. We will add only a few notes about the bazaars, *i.e.*, the shopping quarters of the workers, which are no better than their houses. Here along both sides of the streets, which may be anything from ten to fifteen feet in width, is a jumble of open-fronted retail shops in which many kinds of grain and other foods, clothing and miscellaneous articles are prepared and sold, and where domestic production of various kinds is carried on. Food is exposed to dust, is contaminated by hordes of flies and dirty handling. Meat is seen hanging low over the open gutter or channel into which there flows the liquid trade and other waste exuding from the shops, some of which are used as dye-houses, and where the vegetable and animal refuse is thrust. Here and there heaps of garbage are allowed to lie for a long time before being cleared away by the scavengers. Into these heaps, cattle and goats wandering unattended along the street, as well as pariah dogs, may often be seen nosing for possible food, while the fowls wallow in the adjacent gutters. Evil smells predominate and there is a general unwholesomeness throughout.

The overcrowding and insanitary conditions almost everywhere prevailing demonstrate the callousness and wanton neglect of their obvious duties by the authorities concerned. As we see the situation, it is the job of the appropriate authorities at all costs to put an end to defective housing, to institute up-to-date methods of sewage disposal, to provide for adequate and suitable sanitary arrangements and water supplies, as well as to see that the people are educated in the right use of all these services intended to make for the public health. Until there have been radical changes in these matters, the population of India will continue to be ravished by millions of deaths from cholera, dysentery, diarrhoea, plague, fevers, malaria, small-pox, influenza and respiratory diseases, as well as by an appalling mortality among mothers and infants, in respect to which some remarkable figures were quoted recently by the Director of Public Health, Bengal. In 1926, he stated, 131,000 infants died in Bengal less than a month after they were born. This was in addition to 60,000 children who were still-born. Another 68,000 died between the ages of one and six months and 51,000 between six and twelve months. In the same year 158,000 children between the ages of one year and five years died, making a total of 408,000 children between birth and five years of age who died in a single year. In addition, 87,000 children died between five and ten years old, and 50,000 between ten and fifteen years. Altogether, 545,000 children died in 1926 at ages which the Director considered far below what might be termed any economic value. This means an enormous economic loss to Bengal, because the children die before they can make any economic return to the State. The Director estimated, also, that from 60,000 to 70,000 mothers died either in childbirth or conditions directly related to childbirth. This heavy mortality constitutes a dead loss to the country, because it means so much potentially valuable life is wasted every year.

The Wages Question

Speaking generally, the wages question can be reduced here to a fairly simple statement. All inquiries go to show that the vast majority of workers in India do not receive more than about 1s. per day. In the province of Bengal, which includes the largest mass of industrial workers, investigators declared that as far as they could ascertain, 60 per cent. of workers were in receipt of wages of not more than 1s. 2d. a day in the highest instance, scaling down to as low as 7d. to 9d. for men and 3d. to 7d. in the case of children and women. Upon these miserable pittances the workers are expected to keep body and soul together and labour throughout the whole working day (often in a vitiated atmosphere and under most irksome conditions), which, on the average, cannot be less than one of ten hours.

Our own inquiries support these figures and, as a matter of fact, many cases have been quoted to us of daily rates in operation which descend to 3½d. for women and 7d. or even less for men. Even mining, dealt with in a separate Section of this Report, accounts for workers who are paid much less than 1s. a day. Answers to inquiries made at railway stations on the various systems and statements made in Union reports and meetings, reveal a similar state of affairs. A few illustrations will suffice. Thus, in one report, we read:—

“In our railway service the minimum wage for menials and others on inferior establishment is the ridiculous sum of 16s. 6d. per month of twenty-six days.” Another report states:—“The engineering department of this railway gives a man wages of 19s. 6d. a month to start with, but the traffic department gives only 16s. 6d. The police department, however, pays £1 4s. per month, and gives also two dhoties (clothing), mosquito nets and good quarters with kitchen.”

At an annual conference the Union President said: “First of all, your demand for a living wage is quite reasonable. The cost of living here has gone up, and with your initial wage of 9d. per day, you can never make both ends meet.”

Daily wages in cotton mills were officially returned at an average higher than the Union witnesses at an inquiry were prepared to admit. But even with the forcing-up of the average by the inclusion of salaries of certain upper grades of employees, and leaving out of account considerable deductions by way of fines for alleged offences and charges for interest made on advance payments of wages, it works out at only 1s. 9½d. per head of men, women and children for the entire Bombay Presidency, and less than that in certain centres of the Presidency. Rates in the jute mills fall below those in the cotton mills.

In the light of all the available evidence we feel confident that in submitting as a very rough average the sum of 1s. a day as the Indian worker's wage, we are not understating the position, especially bearing in mind that in the wages field there is a veritable maze of exactions, deductions and forfeitures. At any rate we are satisfied as the result of investigations made at workers' meetings, in their homes, at Union offices, as well as by reference to much documentary evidence, that the average cannot be placed at any higher figure.

There are many statements available as to the cost of living of the Indian worker, but it would be impossible for us to represent in detail what is required for sustenance—taking that one phase of the question alone—in such a big country with widely varying local circumstances. The caste system and the customs it engenders also affect the subject. But it may be said with truth that millions and millions of men, women and children get only half, and often less than half, the amount of food needed to maintain the very lowest state of life. To be satisfied about this is quite easy for anyone sufficiently interested to be present at the midday or evening meals,

and see the very scanty repast set out. What applies to food is true also of other things. It is undeniable that the Indian workers are half-starved and badly clothed, as well as horribly housed. We assert there is no justification whatever for this state of affairs; yet, as far as we can judge, it would appear to be the definite policy of the employing class in India to stabilise poverty on a permanent basis. The Indian workers should be encouraged to make the strongest possible stand against such an inhuman policy. We believe that in spite of widespread illiteracy and ignorance of home and world affairs, the workers could be got to make such a stand, and a really militant movement well led and persistently carried on would have behind it millions of Indian workers who, because they have so little to lose, would be ready to fight for a great advance on their present standard of life. The sooner this is realised the better. To potter about with unheeded petitions regarding minor grievances of this grade of workers or of that is a waste of time so long as the great mass of the workers are left to scramble like barbarians for the supply of the most elementary needs of existence. They should and must be taught that it is wrong to accept their present state as the predestined order of things, and that it can be speedily ended by industrial organisation, discipline and action.

The Fines System

Several references have been made in this Report to fines and deductions levied upon workers' wages. Though not by any means peculiar to the textile mills, it is in those places where the system is thoroughly rooted. The following examples are given to show how inadequate wages are still further reduced by the operation of fines, against which the operatives have not yet been sufficiently strong to make a successful stand.

EXAMPLES

- (1) When a worker leaves the mill before pay-day and has arrears of wages due to him at the time of leaving, he does not generally receive his wages in cash at once. Instead he gets a ticket on which the amount of wages due to him is entered. This ticket is called a *Havala*. The worker, if he remains in the area, can present the ticket for payment on the regular pay-day or ask one of his friends to collect the money and remit to him in case he leaves the area. If the worker, however, requires the money at once he presents the ticket to a PEDHIWALA (money lender) or grain dealer, who in several cases is both a retail merchant and a money lender and cashes the ticket at a varying rate of discount.
- (2) The system of deducting two days' wages for one day's absence from work prevails in all the mills in one area and a few mills in other centres.
- (3) Deductions are made for spoiled work, and the article is handed over to the worker who is charged the wholesale price. If he can, he sells it at whatever price he can get, but it is scarcely likely that he will get an amount equal to that deducted. This is a very common form of deduction and applies to nearly 60 per cent. of the cases inquired into.
- (4) In one district, advances against wages *earned* are granted and made recoverable on pay-day WITH INTEREST, which in certain instances is as high as 150 per cent.
- (5) It is a rule at most mills that no payment is made for any period during which the mill is not working, but if the worker desires to leave he must give thirty days' notice. Further, the workers' wages are paid on the 10th, 12th and more frequently on the 15th day after the month end. As a result, he works six weeks prior to getting a month's wages payment. It must be borne in mind that this applies to not less than a quarter of a million textile workers, and it will therefore be seen what a widespread curse it is.

Welfare Work

This is an appropriate place for a few observations on the subject of welfare work. On our visits to a number of mills we found that a special feature was made of this work. Some of the things we saw being done impressed us favourably in the first instance. The provision for sports, including gymnastics, was quite good, particularly as there were no like facilities anywhere else. But as we probed deeper into matters we became convinced that under the cover of paternalism and benevolence many unjust conditions of work obtained, such as low wages, fines, etc., and that there was not really much, if anything, to be said in favour of employers practising welfare work as against others who do not. But it was from the standpoint of Trade Union Organisation that we particularly judged the situation, and there can be no doubt that the selection of leading workers to associate with the management on welfare committees and the standing this gives them in the eyes of the employers, tend to detach them from the general body of employees and to take up work which ordinarily belongs to, and can only be done effectively by, a strong Trade Union independent of the employers' patronage. In some cases welfare schemes have, for the time being, made the creation of Trade Unions impossible just where they are most needed, and in one case have led to the fostering of a "shop" Union in rivalry to the properly established Union struggling to organise the whole of the workers in the trade.

Our general conclusion on welfare work as at present carried on in India, is that it is a delusion and a snare. Welfare work has its uses, provided always that it is completely controlled by the workers themselves, is made applicable to the whole of an industry, and does not impinge upon Trade Union Organisation and activities.

The Trade Union Movement

Considering that the starting point of Trade Union Organisation in India may be taken only from about the year 1918, when in all the large centres there were signs of great unrest and a desire for mutual association among various classes of workers, the Movement has shown remarkable progress, and in the last few years assumed a position of some national importance.

During the first three years, as might be expected, there were noticeable fluctuations in membership. Some Unions were successful and have kept going, while others, for one reason or another, petered out or were absorbed into more substantial organisations formed with more foresight and able to command that larger measure of discipline necessary to continuing existence.

It can, however, be stated quite definitely that the creation of the International Labour Office had much to do with the establishment of a central Trade Union Organisation in India, because for the first time in history it became necessary for a workers' representative and technical advisers to be selected to attend the annual Labour Conferences at Geneva. This quite naturally gave grounds for national consultations, and accordingly the All-India Trades Union Congress, even though it had only a relatively small following, certainly had the right to claim that it was the sole representative organisation of the workers throughout India, and the presence of its representatives at Geneva has brought the Indian movement permanently in direct touch with the workers' delegates of the Western world.

There is no doubt that the Congress is the only legitimate working-class organisation in India capable of voicing the aspirations and desires of the Indian workers. It is also the only body actually doing a lasting service in the fields of organisational and educational work, and in every respect striving to make the upliftment of all workers in India the pre-requisite of any real advance towards permanent betterment

The preparation of a great mass of literature, pamphlets and leaflets on the question of Trade Unionism, often in a multiplicity of languages, and its distribution over many thousands of miles of scattered territory; the finding of the means to meet the cost of it all from sources outside the ranks of those for whose benefit the advocacy is intended, bearing in mind that Union contributions under present conditions of low wages are exceedingly small; and a large volume of other really useful work must be set down as a great record of self-sacrifice and disinterestedness unmatched by any other case in the world of labour.

The Congress has shown constant regard to the need for organisation work in any place where opportunities are presented. That it does not always meet with the success it deserves is due only to its financial limitations, the absence of the type of organiser capable of pursuing the task set, or the peculiarities connected with the artificial or legal barriers around some of the industrial undertakings, added to which is the serious obstacle represented by the great masses of illiteracy everywhere prevailing. As this last point has been dealt with elsewhere, we do not labour it here; but merely indicate it as a real hindrance to Trade Union development, limiting the field of selection for suitable organisers and other officers.

As in the early days of British Trade Unionism, when it had to rely largely upon men like Robert Owen, Francis Place, and later Kingsley, Ludlow and Frederick Harrison, so, too, the Indian movement in its corresponding stage is almost wholly dependent upon the lawyer or "pleader" class for its Union presidents and secretaries. As the situation stands at the moment, it is fortunate that such a pool exists, and it is difficult to see on the spot how reliance on this type of Union official can be dispensed with. That the present position invites trouble is quite true; that the movement is a very good avenue by which certain "pleaders" may obtain advertisement is clear; that some regard the Trade Union Movement as a useful adjunct to their political progress has been amply proved. But notwithstanding all this, the help these friendly persons have rendered, and are still giving, must be placed at its full value on the ground that no other was available in a form likely to assist the working class. This phase must and no doubt will pass, but it would be stupid to alienate the present source of supply of aids to the movement unless it could be seen that within a short period sufficient officers would be forthcoming from the workshops, mines, mills and railways, etc., to fill the positions with the required degree of safety and efficiency.

The All-India Trades Union Congress, also, is officered mainly by friends who are quite removed from the actual experience of working-class life. But they are certainly not out of touch with it, and are well aware of the nature of the economic problem to be faced as the result of the constant pressure upon the workers exercised by the managements of industrial undertakings. These friends, as already indicated, have done well by the masses, and whatever machinery exists to-day is mainly the result of their handiwork.

The present position of the Congress will be seen by reference to the following list of affiliated Unions, showing their membership at December, 1927:—

List of
TRADE UNIONS, WITH THEIR MEMBERSHIP, AFFILIATED TO THE ALL-INDIA
TRADES UNION CONGRESS

<i>Name of the Organisation</i>	<i>Membership</i>
Bengal Jute Workers' Association	1,500
Bengal Mariners' Union	1,000
Bengal Port Trust Workers' Union	500
Bengal-Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union	25,000

Calcutta Boxmakers' Union	300
Calcutta Corporation Employees' Association	400
Calcutta Port Trust Employees' Association	1,500
Champadany Labour League.. .. .	150
Calcutta Clerks' Union	3,000
Eastern Bengal Railway Employees' Association	11,000
Calcutta Employees' Association	2,500
Henry Williams Workers' Union	200
Hosiery Workers' Association	200
Howrah Labour Union	300
Indian Quartermasters' Union	3,000
Indian Seamen's Union	5,000
Kankinara Labour Union	900
Santipur Labour Association	800
Lansdown Jute Mill Workers' Union	500
Nadia Harinarayanpur Rayats' Association	200
Press Employees' Association (Printers)	3,000
Railway Porters' Association, Eastern I. Railway	300
East Indian Railway Union	11,000
Indian Colliery Employees' Association	3,000
Jamshedpur Labour Association	6,300
Bombay, Baroda & Central Indian Railway Employees' Union	2,000
Bombay Port Trust Dock Staff Union	1,150
Bombay Port Trust Employees' Union	689
Bombay Port Trust Railway Employees' Union	512
Bombay Textile Labour Union	6,000
Bombay Press Workers' Union	300
Great Indian Peninsular Railway Staff Union	160
G. I. P. Railway Workmen's Union	3,000
Bombay Girni Kamgar Mahamandal (Textile) Union	1,500
Government Peons' and Menial Service Union	900
Indian Seamen's Union, Bombay Branch	17,300
North Western Railway Union, Karachi	1,500
Wadi Bundar (G.I.P.) Railway Union	394
Burma Labour Association, Rangoon	3,000
Nagpur Textile Union	2,000
Mechanical Engineers' Association, Akola	500
Pulgaon Mills Labour Union.. .. .	300
Coimbatore Labour Union	1,500
Coimbatore Transport Workers' Union	500
Cordite Factory Labour Union, Nilgiris	300
Madras Government Press Labour Union (Printers)	1,000
Madras Labour Union (Textile)	5,000
Madras Printers' Labour Union	2,000
Madras Electric Tramway & Supply Corporation Employees' Union	1,300
Madras South Marahati Railway Employees' Union	5,000
Madras Corporation Workers' Union	200
South India Railway Labour Union	5,000
All-India Telegraph Workers' Union	1,000
Hariyana Scavengers' Union	200
Punjab Press Workers' Association (Printers)	500
Bengal North Western Railwaymen's Association	3,000
Mazdoor Sabha Union, Cawnpore	1,300
Total Affiliated Membership	150,555

Among the unaffiliated Unions may be mentioned the Postal Workers' Union and the State and Provincial Clerks' Association, which together have upwards of 40,000 members; the several Unions in the Ahmedabad textile trade and a newly-formed Municipal Workers' Union in the same place, with a total membership of about 12,000; the Indore Textile Labour Union; the Bombay Dock Workers' Union, with 1,000 members, and the Bombay Municipal Workers' Union, with 2,000 members, both of which have not been in existence long enough to qualify for affiliation; the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India and Burma, which is stated to have a membership of about 2,000; and a few others, several of which it is understood have made applications for affiliation.

In several cases shortage of funds is the cause of Unions remaining outside the Congress, but that is not the reason for the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Union remaining aloof. It is unwilling to join, for reasons not plainly stated. It is clear that the Union, while having a useful record of local work in various directions, has no convincing case to justify it remaining in a state of isolation, particularly in view of the deplorable conditions of work not only in the textile trades, which are its special concern, but in industry generally, the remedying of which can be accomplished only by the strongest possible action having the backing and support of the whole movement as represented by the Congress.

Taking account of all the affiliated and non-affiliated organisations, and the big influx of new members which took place in certain Unions, particularly those of the railwaymen, early in the present year, it is estimated that the total strength of the Trade Unions in India is at least 200,000. This forms a basis on which to build in the future, and in order to indicate the greatness of the task to be undertaken, the following table has been compiled, setting out the various industries or groups of industries and number of employed persons in each who may be considered as organisable for Trade Union purposes:—

TABLE SHOWING ORGANISABLE GROUPS OF WORKERS IN INDIA
(Excluding Domestic Servants and Postal and Government Office Employees)

<i>Group</i>	<i>No. of workers in group</i>
Cotton, Hosiery, Silk, Woollen and Jute, including Cotton Ginning and Jute Presses	955,543
Coach Making, Motor Car Repairing, Electrical and General Engineering, Power Stations, and Metal Stamping	63,657
Foundries, Iron and Steel Smelting, Kerosene Tinning and Packing	42,059
Petroleum Refineries	13,389
Paper making, Printing, Book-Binding	42,193
Chemicals, Dyes, Matches	45,917
Woodworking, Glass, Building and Furnishing	60,327
Ordnance, Mints, Telegraph Works, Dockyard, Tramways and Gas	35,326
Mining—Coal, Gold, etc., and Quarries	347,349
Food and Drink Manufacture	168,166
Railways, inclusive of shops and lines	762,553
Leather, Skins, Hides and Clothing	10,347
Seamen, Port and Dock Labour	250,000
Tea Garden Workers	793,176
Agriculture—Field and Farm Labour	21,676,107
Grand Total	25,266,109

Hitherto the Unions have grown up for the most part on local rather than national lines. In this respect it should be remembered the British Movement had a similar experience in the early days, when there were, in some cases, even as many as four or five distinct Unions in one trade in a single town or locality. In the case of India, however, the vast expanse of territory and the great distances that lie between the various centres in which particular industries are carried on, make more understandable the initiation of the "locality" Union and its tendency to become a centre in itself. It may well be that a common understanding or policy on the part of the employers in the various industries will result in the amalgamation of the local or line Unions, as the case may be, into national organisations of all grades, and if that takes place we believe that the Indian movement will develop at a pace that will enable it to exercise a profound influence for the upliftment of the Indian working-class and give it a high place in the international Trade Union world.

We cannot close this Section of our Report without reference to the Ceylon Labour Union with its 40,000 paying membership. It is worthy of note that it is making still further progress and proposes to hold a Congress at the end of the present year, as it is much too far away to be included in the All-India Trades Union Congress.

An interesting feature of the Ceylon Movement is perhaps well worth reporting. Its first big struggle was for the port workers. The issue was one of wages. At the outset the Government brought in criminals from the jails to fill the places of the dockers. After a few days a big Australian liner put into the Port of Colombo. The Australian crew, on being informed of the stoppage among the dockers, refused to take any part in loading or unloading and proceeded to land themselves, marched through the dock and out into the city to greet the dockers, and stood by them until the matter was settled wholly to the advantage of the men.

In the Ceylon Labour Union offices is a photographic display of the "Great Australian Whites."

The relatively small band of Union workers in Ceylon, in view of their remote situation, are deserving of every support that can be given by the British movement.

SECTION II

THE RAILWAYS

Number and classification of persons employed—Route mileage, present and prospective—Line and gauge distribution of route mileage—Ownership and working—Passengers and goods carried and percentages of respective earnings—Net financial gains to Government—Coal-mining operations of railways and their workshops policy—Place of employees—Wages: No uniformity and no negotiated or agreed rates—Average run of rates: Railway shop, train-examining staff, loco. department, traffic department, clerical grades, station masters, etc., and “menials”—Working hours: Theoretical eight-hour day—instances of excessive working hours in practice—Complaints *re* continuous duty for long periods—Lack of accommodation and facilities for return to home station—Inattention of authorities.

The railway systems of India, taken together, form by far the largest and most comprehensive industrial undertaking, employing in all 762,553 persons.

This big labour force is classified as follows:—

<i>Class</i>	<i>Numbers Employed of Each Class</i>	<i>Percentages of Total Number Employed</i>
Europeans	4,998	0.65
Anglo-Indians	14,007	1.84
Hindus	550,925	72.25
Muslims	168,322	22.07
Others (Indians)	24,301	3.19
Total	762,553	100.00

It would appear from the above Table that Europeans and Anglo-Indians constitute a very small proportion of the total number of persons employed on the Railways, but it must be borne in mind that the positions they occupy are of the highest class and, in practice, such positions are barred to Indians.

The total route mileage open to traffic, according to the latest official figures, is nearly 39,049, and the present intention is to increase this total to the extent of 7,000 miles by March, 1932, at which date there will be still 4,000 additional miles under construction.

Mainly, the lines are of three gauges—5' 6"; 3' 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ "; 2' 6". In a few cases, however, there is a small gauge of 2' 0". The following Table shows the present route mileage and its distribution according to single or double, treble, etc., lines, as the case may be, and according to the several gauges:—

<i>Gauge</i>	<i>ROUTE MILEAGE OPEN ON MARCH 31, 1927</i>		
	<i>Single Line</i>	<i>Double, Treble, etc., Lines, as the case may be</i>	<i>Total</i>
5' 6"	16,105.92	3,261.52	19,367.44
3' 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	15,686.86	244.95	15,931.81
2' 6" and 2' 0"	3,749.63	—	3,749.63
Grand Total	35,542.41	3,506.47	39,048.88

Four of the railways are State-owned and worked; five other main railways and the remaining small ones are State lines worked by companies. The employees of the former number 414,260, and of the latter, 348,293.

The number of passengers carried increased from 599,000,000 for the year 1925-26, to 604,000,000 for the year 1926-27, divided as shown below:—

	1925-26	1926-27
	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>
1st Class ..	1,033,000	1,012,100
2nd Class ..	9,901,300	10,006,300
Inter. Class ..	13,602,400	14,944,800
3rd Class ..	574,608,100	578,408,600
Totals ..	<u>599,144,800</u>	<u>604,371,800</u>

The aggregate amounts of goods traffic for the last two financial years were:—

	Year 1925-26	Year 1926-27
Tons of goods carried	79,859,000	85,833,000

Of the total earnings on all railways, 66.1 per cent. was from goods traffic (including parcels, etc.) and 33.9 per cent. from passenger traffic.

Net financial gains to Government for the years 1925-26 and 1926-27, reckoned in sterling (the Rupee being taken at 1s. 6d.), amounted to £6,960,000 and £5,625,000 respectively. Despite the fall in the amount of net profit as between the last year and the previous year, the results, having regard to all the circumstances, appear to have created great satisfaction in Government circles.

The railway concerns own five collieries, the output from which, in 1925-26, was 2,225,613 tons, and in 1926-27 was 2,192,165 tons. Formerly the coal-mining operations of the railways were on a bigger scale, but, largely owing to strenuous opposition of other commercial interests, they have declined, and production now appears to be restricted to the requirements of the railways.

It is evident that the policy of the railway authorities, for some time past, was to extend their business along the lines of securing materials required for their undertakings, as shown by the fact that they intended to build their own locomotives and for this purpose acquired a large plant at Jamshedpur. The slump intervened, and the matter remained in abeyance for a time. Afterwards it was decided to convert the works into a carriage under-frame department, which work is now definitely proceeding despite the frenzied protests of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon, which oppose the Government's policy as "leading to more taxation and dearer transport and the stagnation of private enterprise."

This general sketch of the Indian railways, though necessarily brief, is, we think, sufficient to indicate the large part they play in the national life of the country.

We may now turn to the consideration of the place which the three-quarters of a million railway employees hold in the vast undertakings which affect them so closely.

Taking wages first, it has to be pointed out at once that there are *no negotiated or agreed rates of pay*. The rates of wages are, in fact, all *imposed* upon the workers and determined upon solely by the railway authorities without any reference to the views or desires of the employees themselves, organised or unorganised. We have made every effort to discover some evidences of uniformity in wages rates, but without success. Varying rates for similar kinds of work have sprung up on different railways, which is a matter for amazement, considering the fact that practically all the systems have grown up under experienced British direction or influence.

It has been a task of some difficulty to secure out of the medley of information supplied to us, often as the result of much questioning on points of terminology and comparative grades of work, what might be regarded as representative figures for the various classes of railway employees. These figures do not necessarily express the highest or the lowest rates in each class, but we think they afford a broad indication of the average run of wages rates obtaining on the Indian Railways, described in such a manner as will enable British workers readily to understand their import.

The rates are set out in the Tables submitted below:—

(1) RAILWAY SHOP
Daily Rates of Wages

Trade	Minimum		Maximum	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
Boilermaker	1	1½	4	3½
Brass Finisher	1	1½	3	9
Carpenter	1	1½	4	3½
Coach Maker	1	1½	4	3½
Cabinet Maker	1	9¼	4	3½
Coach Finisher	1	9¼	4	3½
Core Maker	0	10¼	2	3
Crane Man	1	1½	2	0½
Cleaner	0	9	0	10¼
Coolie (<i>i.e.</i> , labourer): Male	0	8	0	9¼
Coolie " " Female	0	5	0	8
Draughtsman	3	9	5	3
Crane Driver	1	1½	3	0
Hammer Driver	0	11¼	1	5
Pump Driver	1	1½	1	6
Die Sinker	1	1½	4	3½
Erector	1	1½	4	3½
Engine Fitter	1	1½	4	3½
Carriage and Wagon Fitter	1	1½	3	9
Fettler	1	1½	1	8¼
Fireman	1	1½	1	10¼
Forgeman	1	1½	4	3½
Furnace Man	1	1½	2	3
Grinder	0	11¼	3	0
Machinist	1	1½	3	9
Wood Machinist	0	11¼	3	4½
Mason	1	1½	2	7½
Moulder	1	1½	4	3½
Acetylene Operator	1	1½	4	3½
Pattern Maker	1	1½	4	3½
Painter	0	11¼	3	0
Polisher	0	11¼	3	0
Pointsman	0	11¼	1	1½
Riveter	1	1½	2	9¼
Rigger	0	11¼	3	0
Striker	1	1½	1	3½
Scaler	0	6¾	1	6
Sawyer	0	11¼	3	4½
Storeman	1	10½	3	0
Blacksmith	1	1½	4	3½
Angle Iron Smith	1	9¼	4	3½
Copper Smith	1	1½	4	3½
Tin Smith	0	11¼	3	4½
Spring Smith	1	1½	3	9
Shop Boy	0	5½	0	11¼
Wood Turner	0	11¼	3	4½
Metal Turner	1	1½	4	3½
Trimmer	1	1½	3	9
Brass Turner	1	1½	3	9
Tailor	0	11¼	2	7½
Sign Writer	1	9¼	4	3½

Note.—The above particulars relate only to *Indian* workers, and the descriptions used are as nearly as may be comparable with the designations applicable in a British railway shop.

(2) TRAIN EXAMINING STAFF

Scales of Monthly Pay

EUROPEAN AND ANGLO-INDIAN			DESIGNATION	INDIAN		
<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Yearly Increment</i>	<i>Maximum</i>		<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Yearly Increment</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
26 5 0	1 17 6	30 0 0	Chief Train Examiner	12 0 0	1 2 6	14 18 6
12 0 0	1 2 6	14 18 6	Train Examiner	15 0 0	1 10 0	16 10 0
15 0 0	1 10 0	22 10 0		6 15 0	0 7 6	7 10 0
5 5 0	0 7 6	7 10 0	Assistant Train Examiner	7 11 6	0 15 0	10 10 0
7 11 6	0 15 0	10 10 0		3 7 6	0 6 0	5 5 0
3 15 0	0 7 6	4 10 0	Probationary Assnt. Train Examiner	5 6 6	0 7 6	6 0 0
				2 2 0	0 4 6	3 0 0

(3) LOCO. DEPARTMENT

	Grade	Monthly Pay						Class
		From			To			
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Foremen		33	15	0	45	0	0	Europeans
Shop Foremen		33	15	0	60	0	0	Europeans
Boiler Inspectors		37	10	0	45	0	0	Europeans
Mechanics		6	15	0	30	0	0	Europeans
Boilermakers		27	0	0	30	0	0	Europeans
Apprentices		3	7	6	5	12	6	Europeans
Drivers		12	0	0	24	0	0	Europeans and Anglo-Indians
Drivers		3	7	6	6	7	6	Indians
Shunters		10	10	0	11	5	0	Anglo-Indians
Shunters		1	13	0	3	0	0	Indians
Firemen		7	10	0	9	0	0	Anglo-Indians
Firemen		1	5	6	1	11	6	Indians
Cleaners		0	12	0	0	16	6	Indians

(4) TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

	Grade	Monthly Pay						Class
		From			To			
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Signal Men (Cabin)		2	5	0	—	—	—	Indians
Signal Men (Others)		0	18	0	1	2	6	Indians
Guards		7	17	6	15	15	0	Anglo-Indians
Guards		3	7	6	7	10	0	Indians
Ticket Collectors and Checkers— B Grade		1	7	0	3	0	0	Indians
Ticket Collectors and Checkers— A Grade—								
Section 1		2	5	0	4	10	0	Indians
" 2		4	10	0	6	15	0	Indians
" 3		6	15	0	8	5	0	Mostly Europeans and Anglo-Indians

(5) CLERKS

	Grade	Monthly Pay						Class
		From			To			
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Head and Divisional Offices	1	12	0	0	15	0	0	Indians
	2	9	9	0	11	5	0	
	3	7	17	6	9	0	0	
	4	6	6	0	7	10	0	
	5	2	2	0	6	0	0	
Sub Offices		2	2	0	5	5	0	Indians
Tally Clerks		1	10	0	Minimum			Indians

(6) STATION MASTERS, ETC.

	Grade	Monthly Pay						Class
		From			To			
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Station Masters—Scale 1		15	0	0	37	10	0	Only 15% Indians. Rest Europeans and Anglo-Indians
Station Masters—Scale 2		3	18	0	12	15	0	Indians
Assistant Station Masters—Scale 1		21	0	0	24	15	0	Europeans and Anglo- Indians
Assistant Station Masters—Scale 2		3	0	0	9	0	0	Indians
Station Superintendents		37	10	0	45	0	0	Europeans and Anglo- Indians
Yard Masters		26	5	0	37	10	0	Europeans and Anglo- Indians
Assistant Yard Masters		21	0	0	24	15	0	Europeans and Anglo- Indians
Transshipment and Wagon Ferry Inspectors		16	10	0	26	5	0	Europeans and Anglo- Indians
Goods Supervisors		22	10	0	37	10	0	Europeans and Anglo- Indians

Grade	Monthly Pay From			To			Class
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Transhipment Foremen	30	0	0	37	10	0	{ Europeans and Anglo-Indians
Traffic and Transportation Inspectors	22	10	0	37	10	0	{ Only 9% Indians. Rest Europeans and Anglo-Indians
Yard Foremen—Class A	5	5	0	7	10	0	{ 22% Indians. Rest Europeans and Anglo-Indians
Yard Foremen—Class B	8	5	0	17	5	0	{ Only Anglo-Indians

In addition to the various grades of railway employees set out in the above lists, there are large numbers of workers described as "peons," "menials," and others on inferior establishment, who are paid a minimum rate of 16s. 6d. per month.

As regards working hours and other conditions, theoretically the eight-hour day applies on the railways, and in certain departments the practice coincides rigidly with the principle. On the other hand, there are many instances in which, although the eight-hour day is assumed to be the regular work period, labour is pursued by individuals continuously over even into Sundays without any extra pay whatever. There are cases where the leaving-off time is regarded as 4 or 5 p.m., yet clerks at one large centre are carrying on a long-sustained agitation in protest against work until 6, 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening and even throughout Sundays. In the traffic department much evidence goes to show that men are left tens of miles away from their homes without any reasonable arrangements being made to return them to their starting point. Charges have been made in some instances for fares to enable men to return to their home station. If the hours question is viewed, as we must view it, from the standpoint of there being regular starting and finishing times, whether by way of the shift system or otherwise, the strict regulation of working hours is more nearly applicable to workshops, where there are large numbers employed, than is the case with other departments in which the personnel becomes scattered. In any case, for men to be required in the performance of their duties to travel considerable distances and then be left stranded without adequate provision being made for their accommodation and reasonable facilities afforded for their return is a grave and unwarrantable disregard for the comfort and convenience of the meanest of the railway workers. As another indication of continuous overwork, it appears that on most of the Lines memorials and petitions innumerable have been presented and discussed relating to the long hours of certain sections, as, for example, men are on night duty for long periods, and pointsmen of the traffic and loco. departments have complained of their duties extending continuously to 28 and 39 hours and night duty for the whole of their service. It is reported also that porters are employed for 36 and 48 hours without a rest, and complaints are made that men are required to work seven days continuously and even on holidays without extra pay in either case. At every conference held during the last few years these complaints have formed the subject of resolutions demanding redress by way of eight hours' rest after eight hours' work. There are so many complaints about injustices such as those to which we have referred that more space than we have at command would be required to detail them. The instances given throw light on a very serious side of railway employment in India, which can be sensibly and favourably affected only by adequate Trade Union Organisation and not by mere memorials and petitions which the authorities appear persistently to ignore.

SECTION III

MINING

Minerals got—Number and classification of all mine-workers—Number of coal-miners and amount of coal raised—No negotiated rates of wages—Character and limitations of statistics—Daily average wages and hours worked in each important mine-field in British India—Some features of the Jharia mines and open workings—Family team work and community system—Wages of man and wife together—The Margherita mines and open workings and wages paid—Kolar gold-fields: Number of mines and amount of capital—Mysore Government's assistance to the industry—Royalties to the State—Value of gold production and dividends paid—Number and classification of persons employed—Official statistics regarding wages of various classes of workers—Working hours—Assam oil workings: Remarkable developments—Progressive rise in production—Labour force unorganised and no statistics as to wages and other conditions at present available.

Mining in India comprises the extraction of (1) coal; (2) iron, manganese, lead-silver, zinc and copper ores; (3) gems, mica, rock-salt, gold and tin; and (4) oil.

During the year 1926 the daily average number of persons working in and about the mines regulated by the Indian Mines Act, 1923, was 260,113, as compared with 253,857 in the year 1925. Of the total for 1926, 118,232 worked underground, 71,139 in open workings, and 70,742 on the surface. Of those employed underground 86,343 were males and 31,889 females. In open workings, 43,306 were males and 27,833 females, and on the surface, 51,967 were males and 18,775 females.

Our report deals only with the Indian coal-fields and with the Kolar gold-fields in the State of Mysore.

In the coal-fields the average number of persons working daily below and above ground in the year 1926 was 170,628. The number of workers employed during each of the six years 1921-26, and the amount of coal raised during the same periods, were as follow:—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Workers</i>	<i>Tons of Coal Raised</i>
1921	190,647	18,358,934
1922	184,355	18,168,988
1923	182,601	18,763,967
1924	187,088	20,256,034
1925	173,140	19,969,041
1926	170,628	20,093,024

It will be seen from the above Table that the number of workers declined by 20,019, or 10½ per cent., as between 1921 and 1926, while on the other hand the quantity of coal raised increased by 1,734,090 tons, or nearly 9½ per cent.

As is the case with railways, there are no negotiated or agreed rates of remuneration in the mining industry, and there are no complete statistics available on the subjects of wages paid and hours worked. Apart from the meagre information that may be

gleaned from isolated inquiries, the only figures upon which any degree of reliance may be placed are those given by the Chief Inspector of Mines, the latest of which are contained in his report for the year 1926. Even his statistics do not include the whole of the colliery undertakings, but are based upon information supplied relating to a large representative mine in each important mine-field in British India. As regards wages returns furnished to the Department the Inspector takes the opportunity in his report to point out that "the wages alleged to be paid at mines in the same mineral field vary within such wide limits—up to 100 per cent.—that there is reason to believe the relevant entries in the returns to have been in many instances made at random," and he concludes with the hope that greater care will be exercised in the future.

The following Table is reproduced from the Chief Inspector's Report, save that we have calculated the daily wage in sterling from the Indian currency figures given, the rupee for this purpose being taken as equivalent to 1s. 6d. The first seven are coal mines:—

HOURS WORKED AND DAILY WAGES PAID AT A LARGE REPRESENTATIVE MINE IN EACH IMPORTANT MINE-FIELD IN BRITISH INDIA IN THE YEAR 1926

NAME	UNDERGROUND				OPEN WORKINGS				SURFACE			
	MALES		FEMALES		MALES		FEMALES		MALES		FEMALES	
	Wages	Hours	Wages	Hours	Wages	Hours	Wages	Hours	Wages	Hours	Wages	Hours
JHARIA ..	1 5	37	8	48	—	—	—	—	0 9	50	8	54
RANIGANJ ..	0 10	54	6	48	—	—	—	—	0 8½	54	5	54
GIRIDIH ..	1 6	48	6	48	0 8½	48	5½	48	0 10½	48	6½	48
ASSAM ..	1 11½	54	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 3	54	9½	54
PUNJAB ..	1 8½	52	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 1½	58	—	—
BALUCHISTAN ..	1 6	35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PUNCH VALLEY ..	1 11½	36	8½	48	—	—	—	—	0 4½	54	3½	54
MADRAS MICA ..	0 6½	54	3½	54	0 5½	54	3½	54	0 11½	54	3½	54
(1) MANGANESE CP ..	0 11½	48	6½	48	0 8½	48	5½	48	0 6½	48	5½	48
(2) " M ..	—	—	—	—	0 7	54	3½	54	1 2½	54	3½	54
BURMA RUBY ..	—	—	—	—	1 1½	54	—	—	1 2½	54	—	—
MADRAS GOLD ..	1 9½	48	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 8½	48	4½	48
(3) B. & O. IRON ..	—	—	—	—	0 9½	44	6½	38	0 6½	44	5½	38
BURMA LEAD ..	2 9	52	—	—	1 10½	52	—	—	1 7	54	—	—
BURMA TIN ..	3 0	44	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 5	44	—	—

(1) Central Provinces.

(2) Madras.

(3) Bihar and Orissa.

We visited two of the important coal-fields, namely, Jharia (Bihar and Orissa) and Margherita (Assam). In the Jharia coal-field, the output from which is more than half the total for British India, the coal is declared to be in seams ranging from 40 to 100 feet in thickness. Much of the coal is mined at a depth of only 150 to 350 feet, though in an adjoining coal-field the depth extends to as much as 1,500 feet. So prolific is the amount available for exploitation that the road running through the colliery is itself on a bed of coal not less than 15 feet solid. It is possible to walk erect, as we did, for hundreds of yards, without the least danger of grazing arms or head. There is no necessity for crouching at any point except where another road crosses, and even there the support is the coal measure itself. Again, where the method of "getting" is by the aid of the coal-cutting machine there is no cramping of space for the working of the machine, which may be seen in operation in close proximity to the work of coal-getting by men simply delving in the main roadway of the mine itself, just like men engaged in ordinary road-making, it being borne in mind all the time that beneath the coal-getters is the solid body of 15 feet of the mineral remaining.

The labour force is quite different from that in our own collieries. In India the family as a whole enters into work of many kinds and, as in certain other industries and on the land, so in the mines, the husband is frequently assisted by his wife, who is his recognised partner as a mine-worker. Another example, which really goes beyond the family to the village community or a section of it, such as the members of a particular caste, is that seen in one mine we visited where we found working the head of a particular village community with a squad of upwards of twenty men and women, who looked upon him in the mine, as they did in the village, as their natural leader and depended upon him entirely for their living, he taking the whole of the pay from the contractor for the work done by the group. We understand that this community system of working is not uncommon in the winter period round about February when the need for work on the land is not so pressing. Mine managers assured us that in order to induce these peasants to take up work in the mine, even for limited periods, they have to offer substantial sums of money in advance to the head man of a group, over and above actual earnings in the mine. Generally speaking, the workers appear to be paid on a wage rate of about 8*d.* to 9*d.* per tub, and in practice this works out so that a man and his wife *together* on the average will obtain three tubs per day, if they avoid broken time, and this will yield about 2*s.* to 2*s.* 3*d.* per day. We understand that the miners generally work not more than five days per week.

In this area there are many open workings, several of which we visited, and in these cases the coal is not more than 12 feet from the surface. In appearance the workings are like the excavations for a huge lake. Here, again, the strata of coal are stated to be 60 feet thick, and in working it, as below ground, the husband and wife and, to a larger extent, other members of the family take part, and wages are on a similar basis to those in the ordinary mines. The coal is removed in baskets carried on the head to wagons on the adjacent sidings.

At Margherita the physical conditions are very different from those in the Jharia coalfield, for there the coal measures all lie in the mountain for a distance of about 10 to 12 miles. The entrance is at the level and the track to the coal face is by way of a corridor nearly a mile long cut into the mountain side. In addition, there is a very large gallery-shaped excavation similar in appearance to one of the big slate quarries in North Wales. The coal seam itself is exposed for a considerable distance along the track of the mountain side and mere blasting is sufficient to bring down enormous quantities of coal. Here, also, men and women work together, the women being employed to carry away the coal in their head baskets. In the internal mine, however,

no women are employed. Rates of wages appear to be on the whole similar to those ruling in the Jharia area.

The Kolar goldfields are situated in Mysore State. At the present time there are five mines at work, each under a separate limited company, but all covered by the ultimate authority of a general Mining Board. Altogether, the total nominal capital of the undertakings is £1,717,000, of which £1,667,737 has been called and paid up.

Whatever may have been the risks, trials and difficulties of the original promoters, there can be no question about the financial success of the industry for very many years. This success has been due in no small measure to the acknowledged help of the Mysore Government which, as pointed out in the official handbook of the Mining Board, financed the construction of a branch railway ten miles in length running from the Bowringpet junction of the Bangalore—Madras line, opened for traffic in the year 1894; installed plant in 1901 for the provision of electric power generated at the Cauvery Falls—93 miles distant from the goldfield; and provided the mines with a filtered water supply from Bethamangala, a few miles away, in the year 1903. The Mining Board admit that in these and numerous other directions, including the privilege of sending a Member to the Representative Assembly and Legislative Council, the Government has conferred invaluable benefits on the industry.

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that the State has drawn from the industry a large sum in royalties on gold (and silver) won and on dividends paid, the total amount of which, in the period 1882—1925, was £3,365,043.

During the same period the total value of the gold production was £63,912,198, and the dividends paid amounted to the very handsome total of £20,923,180.

The aggregate number of persons employed at the five mines, above and below ground, in the year 1925 was 19,347. Of this total, 18,653 were Indians, 365 Anglo-Indians and 329 Europeans. Below ground 9,964 persons were employed, and on the surface 9,383 persons, 6,921 being males, 1,327 females, and 640 children under 12 years of age.

We visited the goldfields, but as there is no labour organisation of any description there, it was impossible to secure information about wages direct from the workers themselves. A few particulars were secured from other sources, which were verified by subsequent reference to official figures, upon which we have again had to rely. These are contained in the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in Mysore.

His list is one of average wages per month of the various classes of employees engaged in nine mines of all kinds (including the five gold-mines) in the State of Mysore for the year 1925. As, however, the wages bill at the five gold-mines alone amounts approximately to 96½ per cent. of the aggregate wages bill for all the mines, the Inspector's list may be regarded for our purpose as substantially representing the position at the gold-mines.

In order to make comparisons with the wages of mine-workers in British India already given in this Section, it has been necessary to reduce the monthly wages to a daily basis (reckoning twenty-six working days to the month) and to express figures in sterling, as before. The working day, it should be explained, is eight hours, three shifts per day being worked.

The average daily wages for different classes of workers are set out below

Unskilled labourers are paid 9d. a day, plus an attendance bonus which works out at about 3d., or 1s. per day in all. Some get higher rates, according to kind of work they are able to do. There are listed six different classes of "coolies," i.e., labourers, all Indians, and the average daily wages for these are, lowest to highest:—

10d., 11½d., 1s. 0d., 1s. 0½d., 1s. 0½d., 1s. 6½d.

Average daily wages of skilled workmen, Europeans and Indians, are shown in the subjoined table:—

Class	Europeans			Indians	
	£	s.	d.	s.	d.
Blasters	—	—	—	2	2½
Carpenters	1	6	2	2	1½
Smiths	1	11	3	2	1½
Engine Drivers	0	18	0	2	9¼(a)
				1	8 (b)
Boiler Smiths	1	6	5	2	8¾
Firemen	—	—	—	1	1½
Fitters	—	—	—	2	5¼(c)
				2	3 (d)

(a) First Class. (c) Surface.
 (b) Second Class. (d) Underground.

There are six other classes of Indian workers about the meaning of whose designations there is some doubt, and they have therefore been omitted. The average daily wages in these cases are, lowest to highest:—

1s. 3½d., 1s. 6½d., 1s. 8½d., 1s. 9½d., 1s. 11½d., 2s. 2d.

In concluding this Section we may mention that while in Assam an opportunity was afforded us to inspect the oil workings of the Assam Oil Co., Ltd., at Digboi. Until only a few years ago the progress of this oilfield was much retarded owing to lack of capital for necessary developments. The acquirement by the Burma Oil Company, Ltd., of a controlling interest in the Assam Company and the greatly increased demand for oil, have transformed the Digboi field into a great hive of industry, now employing about 10,000 workers, whose numbers seem destined to be much further augmented judging by the remarkable developments at present being pushed on as rapidly as possible. There is every evidence that this mineral will be exploited to the maximum, as shown by the enormous extensions in drilling and refinery plant, the erection of large market structures, and the planning of houses for a much larger population than exists at present, coupled with the intention to construct a pipe-line from Digboi to Tinsukia, about 20 miles distant, and a huge tinning factory at the latter town, which is an important railway junction, to replace the much smaller establishment at Digboi.

An idea of the progress already made in this oilfield may be gained from the following figures taken from the Government statistics:—

Year	Production in Gallons
1921	9,530,934
1922	9,382,641
1923	11,004,096
1924	12,975,249
1925	18,730,412

A large part of the labour force in the oilfield is drawn from the various hill tribes, and there does not appear to be any idea of cohesion among them. No opportunity was given to us to obtain particulars of the wages rates and other conditions, and, as far as we can learn, no official statistics are available. We have had, therefore, to content ourselves with reporting on the facts as outlined above, in the hope that at some not remote stage it will be possible to elicit the essential facts about the labour position in this ever-growing branch of the mining industry.

SECTION IV

TEXTILE AND JUTE INDUSTRIES

Textile delegation to India, 1926-27—Reporting on textile industries: Difficulties—Geographical distribution of the industries—Numbers of persons employed in cotton, woollen and jute mills—Numbers of mills, looms and spindles—Numerical and percentage increases in five-year periods—Chaotic wages position: No standard or uniform rates—Only Government reports afford authoritative guidance as to wages in cotton mills—Bombay Government's two Reports, 1921 and 1923—Number of cotton mills and workpeople covered by the 1923 Inquiry and Report—General results of Inquiry: Average daily earnings of men, women, big lads and children, and of all workers in various centres of and for the whole of Bombay Presidency—Explanations and definitions—Criticism of the "average" by the Bombay Textile Labour Union—Wages in woollen mills: No general information—Wages in some individual mills quoted—Wages in jute mills: Paucity of documentary information—Delegation from Dundee in 1925—What they found: No standard rates, but mill to mill variations—Their representative wages figures analysed and submitted on a daily basis by Trades Union Congress delegation—Working hours in British India and Indian States of Baroda and Indore—Limits set by Factories Acts and working hours in practice—Number of workers in Indian silk factories—No information as to wages paid and hours worked.

In recent years Trade Union delegations specially representing textile and jute workers have visited India and reported to their constituents on the conditions of these industries as carried on there. Being thoroughly conversant with the varied technicalities of the industries concerned, their reports naturally included matters with which it would be manifestly impossible for us to deal, since our task is, as far as possible, to submit a report on the general position with regard to labour conditions throughout India, avoiding technicalities in connection with any particular industry. Therefore, in reporting on the textile and jute industries we have followed the plan adopted in regard to other industries, and regarded them simply from the standpoint of the relative places they occupy and indicated in general terms the average run of wages for men, women and young people, believing that this is the kind of information likely to be of interest to the general body of the British Trade Union Movement. At the same time, we have to confess that even in this limited sphere it is a thankless job to try and unravel, much less satisfactorily explain, the tangled mass of figures which inquiry produces, as every other investigator—official and non-official—who has attempted the task will readily admit.

As regards the extent of employment in the cotton, woollen, and jute industries, we are quite well supplied with information published only recently by the

Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics in India, and contained in the Statistical Abstract (No. 2088).

The Tables immediately following this paragraph show for the cotton and jute industries the average daily number of persons employed therein and the number of mills, looms and spindles, for each of the five years 1921-22 to 1925-26, and the same information for the woollen industry for the five years 1921 to 1925. It should be explained that, except as regards the jute industry, which is centred in and around Calcutta in the east, the Indian textile industry is not wholly concentrated in a particular locality, but is distributed, geographically, in places separated by many hundreds and even thousands of miles. For example, far in the North it is found at Dhariwal (Punjab) and right down in the South in Madras Presidency and Mysore State, as well as at Colombo (Ceylon) and in various parts of the intervening territory between those northern and southern points. This diffusion of the industry to some extent has the advantage of enabling local home markets to be easily satisfied, but of hindering association of workers in a particular place with their fellows elsewhere in the same occupations. Of course, by far the largest numbers of cotton operatives are employed, first in and around Bombay, and next in Ahmedabad and Sholapur, both of which are situated in the Bombay Presidency, although it must be realised that the rail distance from Bombay to Ahmedabad is 310 miles and to Sholapur 286 miles.

COTTON MILLS.—NUMBERS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED, MILLS, LOOMS AND SPINDLES
1.—BRITISH INDIA

Year	1921-1922	1922-1923	1923-1924	1924-1925	1925-1926
Employed	313,228	321,790	314,103	337,790	330,225
Mills	237	242	259	255	255
Looms	118,902	125,621	133,060	135,822	139,643
Spindles	6,375,560	6,665,940	7,194,548	7,479,890	7,551,343

2.—INDIAN STATES AND FOREIGN TERRITORY

Year	1921-1922	1922-1923	1923-1924	1924-1925	1925-1926
Employed	28,716	34,968	35,946	38,222	40,392
Mills	34	47	51	50	48
Looms	9,412	11,617	14,027	14,858	14,948
Spindles	438,713	579,179	708,648	806,316	851,993

3.—BRITISH INDIA, INDIAN STATES AND FOREIGN TERRITORY COMBINED.

Year	1921-1922	1922-1923	1923-1924	1924-1925	1925-1926
Employed	341,944	356,758	350,049	376,012	370,617
Mills	271	289	310	305	303
Looms	128,314	137,238	147,087	150,680	154,591
Spindles	6,814,273	7,245,119	7,903,196	8,286,206	8,403,336

WOOLLEN MILLS.—NUMBERS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED, MILLS, LOOMS AND SPINDLES
1.—BRITISH INDIA

Year	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Employed	5,087	5,172	8,244	8,710	7,314
Mills	8	8	10	12	11
Looms	1,576	1,537	1,684	1,652	1,834
Spindles	50,981	54,051	77,612	79,097	80,614

2.—INDIAN STATES

Year	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Employed	530	1,015	1,883	1,543	1,461
Mills	2	3	5	5	5
Looms	68	68	151	151	169
Spindles	2,920	3,260	9,159	9,259	9,469

3.—BRITISH INDIA AND INDIAN STATES COMBINED

Year	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Employed	5,617	6,187	10,127	10,253	8,775
Mills	10	11	15	17	16
Looms	1,644	1,605	1,835	1,803	2,003
Spindles	53,901	57,311	86,771	88,356	90,083

JUTE MILLS.—NUMBERS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED, MILLS, LOOMS AND SPINDLES

Year	1921-1922	1922-1923	1923-1924	1924-1925	1925-1926
Employed	288,450	321,296	330,408	341,723	331,326
Mills	81	86	89	90	90
Looms	43,025	47,528	49,038	50,359	50,503
Spindles	908,359	1,003,179	1,043,417	1,067,633	1,003,700

Analyses of the foregoing Tables enable us to show that as between the years 1921-22 and 1925-26 in cotton mills throughout India there were *increases* as follow: in number of persons employed, 28,673, or 8.4 per cent.; in number of mills, 32, or 11.8 per cent.; in number of looms, 26,277, or 20.5 per cent.; and in number of spindles 1,589,063, or 23.3 per cent.

In woollen mills in all India the workers *increased* by 3,158, or 56.2 per cent. in 1925 as compared with 1921; mills by 6, or 60 per cent.; looms by 359, or 22 per cent.; and spindles by 36,182 or 67.1 per cent.

The *increases* as between the years 1921-22 and 1925-26 in the jute mills, which are all in British India, were: in number of persons employed, 42,876, or 14.9 per cent.; in number of mills, 9, or 11 per cent.; in number of looms, 7,478, or 17.4 per cent.; and in number of spindles, 155,341, or 17.1 per cent.

Altogether, the workers employed in the three industries totalled 710,718.

When we come to consider the position regarding wages in the cotton mills we are confronted with very real difficulties, for the state of affairs is chaotic in the extreme. There are no agreed rates; such rates as are fixed upon by individual firms and thrust upon the workers are sometimes supplemented by various types of bonuses and allowances, and, on the other hand, subject to reductions by way of vicious fines. Workers in the same grade of work may be employed on different conditions in the same mill. Wages will vary from mill to mill and differ from one mill to others of the same firm.

It is useless, therefore, to quote the average earnings in a particular mill with those obtaining in another unless all the circumstances in both instances are known, which is rarely the case. An unofficial investigator is subject to exceptional disabilities in this respect and because of it we are frankly of the opinion that as regards the cotton trade the statistics we have collected at various places are not suitable upon which to base an accurate report. It is necessary on that account to draw upon the much greater sources of information to be found in special reports on the industry made as the result of Government inquiries.

The only authoritative reports to which reference can be made are those published by the Government of Bombay. The first of these, which is of no service for our purpose, dealt with wages in May, 1921. A second inquiry relating to August, 1923, the report on which was published in 1925, was more complete and wider in territorial scope. In connection with this second inquiry, the number of mills in existence and working, all of which furnished returns, was 186, and the total number of workpeople covered by such returns for the whole of the Bombay Presidency was 251,219, classified as follows: Men, 179,475; women, 44,810; big lads, 17,152; children, 9,782.

The general results regarding average daily earnings of all the classes of workpeople covered by the returns are contained in a Table printed on page 6 of the Report,

which is reproduced below, as printed, except that we have calculated and stated the figures in English instead of Indian currency:—

COTTON MILLS IN BOMBAY PRESIDENCY
Average Daily Earnings

Centre	Men		Women		Big Lads and Children		All Workpeople	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Bombay City	2	2	1	2	1	1½	1	10½
Ahmedabad	2	1	1	2½	1	0½	1	10½
Sholapur	1	6	0	7	0	10	1	2½
Baroda State	1	6½	1	0½	0	9	1	5½
"Other Centres" of Bombay Presidency ..	1	6	0	9½	0	9½	1	3½
Bombay Presidency	2	0½	1	1	1	0½	1	9½

It is necessary to explain that in computing the figures of the last two columns two half-timers have been counted as one full-timer; that big lads are boys working as full-timers, of not less than 15 years but under 18 years of age; that children are boys and girls, half-timers, between 12 and 15 years of age; and that males from 18 years and females from 15 years of age are regarded as men and women respectively.

The earnings stated in the Table are the actual earnings, including monthly bonus and special allowances which are regarded as of the nature of wages; but excluding overtime pay, and the annual bonus, if paid, and all remuneration in the form of grain or clothing or accommodation at rates below market prices or rentals.

Although the figures relate to August, 1923, there has been no change since that date and therefore they may be taken as representing a close approximation to earnings at the present time. It is pointed out, however, on page 111 of volume 1 of the Indian Tariff Board Report (Cotton Textile Industry Inquiry), 1927, that another inquiry similar to those of 1921 and 1923 is at present in progress, but the results of this are not yet available.

The Table submitted above has been subjected to some criticism by the Bombay Textile Labour Union on the ground that the average for all workpeople for Bombay City is overstated, first, as the result of the statistical methods of calculation employed, and second, in consequence of the salaries of certain higher grades of workers being included in the lists, which are bound, it is claimed, to have some effect in swelling the average figure. For these and other reasons the Union, though not able to work out its own average, does not accept the average given in the official Table, and is of opinion that it is something appreciably less than stated. We have mentioned this point in fairness to the Union, which conducts its work with conspicuous efficiency, in order that its reservations may be borne in mind when the figures in the Table are studied.

So far as we can ascertain, there are no data available in respect to wages generally prevailing in the woollen mills, and we can quote only a few cases in which we were able to make personal inquiries on the spot. At one fairly large mill a strike was in progress, conducted by a Union formed a few months previously, and it was stated that daily wages ruling there were for men, from 9d. to 11½d.; women, 5½d.; and children, 2½d. This mill is one of a number of branches of a firm whose central establishments are situated hundreds of miles away, and while at this centre we elicited information from a number of workers that the daily wages of men were 8½d. and 9d., and those of women 5½d. and 6½d. In another branch mill of a different group daily wages were 11d. to 1s. 0½d. for men and 5½d. to 7½d. for women. On the other hand, we came across a mill in which the daily wages were stated to be

for the least skilled men 1s. 1½d. and 1s. 5d. and for thoroughly experienced men 3s. 6¾d. to 4s. 2½d.

As in the case of the woollen mills, there is a lack of documentary information on the subject of wages in the jute mills. A delegation representing the Dundee Jute Workers' Organisation which visited the Indian jute mills in November, 1925, compiled some wages figures at that time, and we were informed when we visited the area in December, 1927, that there had been no change since the earlier date. As was pointed out by the Jute Workers' Delegation, there are no standard rates of wages; each firm pays what it likes, and thus wages vary from mill to mill. The figures compiled by the delegation named were set down in their printed report as being the normal rates earned by large numbers of workers and as representing practically the average cases. The figures submitted are for various classes of workers for a week of four days (38 hours actual work), and "wages" includes also 50 per cent. war bonus, general bonus, and food allowance granted to compensate the workers for compulsory idleness upon two days per week, due to the employers' policy of restricting production. For the purpose of easier comparison with other classes of textile workers we have calculated the figures on a *daily* basis, and the result is to show that the different rates, according to the class of work done, reading lowest to highest, are as follows:—

Men.—6½d. (old men); 1s. 0d.; 1s. 1½d.; 1s. 2¼d.; 1s. 6d.; 1s. 7d.; 1s. 9d.; 1s. 10½d.; 2s. 0½d.; 2s. 3d.; 3s. 0d.; and 3s. 9d. (Very few at latter figure).
Boys.—6½d. and 11d.
Women and Girls.—10d. and 1s. 0d.

Dealing with working hours in the textile industries, it may be pointed out that these are limited in British India by the Indian Factories Act of 1911, as amended by the Factory Amendment Act of 1922, which prescribes that no person shall be employed in a factory for more than 60 hours in one week, and the number of working hours on any day is limited to eleven. A limit of six hours in any one working day is fixed for the employment of children, and no woman or child can be employed in more than one factory on the same day. The provisions of the Indian Factories Act do not apply to States. For example, in Baroda State, which has a Factories Act of its own, the daily limit for a child is seven hours as compared with six hours in British India. The daily limit for a woman in Baroda State is twelve hours, as against eleven hours in British India. Again, in Baroda State there is no limit to the number of hours that may be worked by men.

In actual practice, with some exceptions, the weekly limit of sixty hours is usually worked in British India, on the basis of a ten hours' day for six days. But in Baroda City we found sixty-three hours being worked. In Indore State there is now a ten hours' day in operation as the result of legislation which was passed after a strike in the latter part of 1926, before which daily hours worked in the mills exceeded thirteen in the summer season and were on the average a little over twelve.

Only the main textile industries have been considered in this Section. There are, however, a number of silk mills, but no up-to-date statistics exist in regard thereto. The only figures we have discovered are those from the 1921 Census returns, and according to these the number of workers employed in silk mills in all India was given as 9,423. We have no information about wages and hours in this section of the textile industry.

SECTION V

THE TEA INDUSTRY

Exports of tea from four chief producing countries in 1926-27—India's premier position—Acreage under tea cultivation in 1926 in various parts of India—Daily average employment, permanent and temporary, in different parts of India for the year 1926—Features of the recruiting system in Assam—Averages of monthly wages in Assam tea gardens for the years 1922-23 to 1926-27 for men, women and children—What the average in each case includes—Assumed daily wages averages—Additional sources of income and concessions—Organisation needed and possible—Periodical revolts—Governor's warning—Sordid story of labourer's life—"Contentment"—Virtual slavery in Assam—The *Canganny* at work in Ceylon.

According to the official Indian Tea Statistics for the year 1926, published as a supplement to the "Indian Trade Journal" for November 10, 1927, the quantities of tea exported to foreign countries from the four chief producing countries for the year 1926-27 were as follow:—

<i>Country</i>	<i>lbs.</i>
India	362,880,932
Ceylon	217,183,666
Java	118,712,500
China.. .. .	111,908,900
Total ..	<u>810,685,998</u>

The aggregate total for the above-named countries forms, as nearly as we can estimate from the latest published statistics from other sources, about 94 per cent. of the world total of tea exports. It will be seen that India easily holds the premier position, followed by Ceylon, and that India and Ceylon combined export, roughly speaking, 7 lbs. of tea to every 3 lbs. exported by China and Java together.

In India the total area under tea cultivation in the year 1926 was 739,700 acres, geographically distributed as stated below:—

<i>Acres</i>	
Assam	420,600
Bengal	194,700
Southern India	106,100
Northern India	16,200
Bihar and Orissa	2,100
Total ..	<u>739,700</u>

The largest area is that of Assam, which has about 56.9 of the total acreage.

For the production of the exported surplus and of her own internal requirements of tea India employs, apart from agriculture in the widest sense, one of the largest

bodies of workers in the country. The numbers of persons employed in the tea industry for each of the Provinces and States for the year 1926 are shown below:—

Province or State	PERSONS EMPLOYED (Daily Average)		
	Garden Labour (Permanent)	Outside Labour (Permanent)	Outside Labour (Temporary)
Assam	463,847	29,964	38,213
Bengal	156,285	4,982	9,699
Bihar and Orissa	66	1,094	155
United Provinces	1,919	673	1,404
Punjab	1,207	2,860	7,868
Madras	35,247	16,650	15,515
Coorg	432	50	150
Travancore	58,842	781	2,388
Tripura (Bengal)	3,323	589	644
Totals	<u>721,168</u>	<u>57,043</u>	<u>76,036</u>

The aggregate total is 854,800, of which 778,811 were permanently employed and 76,036 temporarily employed. Compared with the previous year, there was an increase of 19,900 permanent and 9,700 temporary employees.

For the maintenance of the labour strength engaged in the tea plantations and factories there is a most elaborate and costly system, officially sanctioned and recognised, of recruitment from outside the tea districts. For Assam alone the total number of persons recruited during the 1927 season was 41,176 as against 32,412 in the previous year. As demonstrating the costliness of the system in one respect alone, it may be pointed out that the number of garden sirdars engaged in connection with it in Assam was 40,331, so that the number of recruits per sirdar was only 1.02!

Whatever excuses may be put forward by the tea planting firms in defence of the recruiting system, it is very bad from the point of view of the immigrant labourers and their families. Large numbers of recruits, for the most part primitive and illiterate, are lured from their villages, situated hundreds of miles away, in the belief that in the tea gardens the struggle for a living will be less grim than in their usual places of abode. Once in the gardens, however, their freedom is severely restricted, and although some of the worst legislation which the planters long ago invoked to prevent the labourers leaving the gardens has been repealed, there are still sufficient punitive regulations to make it exceedingly difficult for the labourers to give up the work, if they desire to do so, and in any case the cost of return to their native villages is prohibitive. Moreover, the geographical disposition of the gardens and the fact that the workers' dwellings are within the garden territories restricts contact with the outside world, and there is a strict understanding among the planters not to take labourers from each other. Practically nothing is done for the social welfare of the labourers or for the education of their children.

The average *monthly* wages of labourers in the tea gardens of Assam (which is the only Province for which statistics appear) for the years 1922-23 to 1926-27 are set out in English money equivalents in the Table presented below. These averages are calculated on the figures for September and March of monthly cash wages (including *ticca*, that is, overtime, diet, rations, subsistence allowance, and bonus) per head of the total number of labourers on the books. In the absence of specific information as to the number of days actually worked in the months selected for the purpose of the calculations, it is impossible to make an exact computation of average *daily* earnings. If, however, it is assumed that on the average twenty-six days per

month were worked, the average daily earnings for men, women and children would be about 6½*d.*, 5*d.*, and 3¼*d.* respectively, in 1926-27.

AVERAGE MONTHLY WAGES OF LABOURERS IN TEA GARDENS IN ASSAM DURING
1922-1923 TO 1926-1927

(Figures for 1926-1927 subject to revision)

Year	Men		Women		Children	
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1922-1923	12	0	9	1½	5	7½
1923-1924	11	9½	9	0	5	4½
1924-1925	12	6½	9	10	6	0½
1925-1926	13	7	10	5½	6	7½
1926-1927	14	3½	11	2	7	2½

It should be added that a fairly large proportion of the labourers are given small plots of land, on the average about two-fifths of an acre per family, for private rice cultivation, which has been estimated to give each family an additional average monthly income of about 1*s.* 6*d.* or 4½*d.* per head. The labourers also do not pay for grazing their cattle, when they have any, or for fuel, which they gather themselves from the garden forests.

Our visits to several of the spacious tea gardens in Assam convinced us of the urgent necessity for trade union organisation. We feel bound entirely to discount the pessimistic view prevalent among many in India that it is impossible to organise the garden workers, a view born of disappointment at their failure to rally in support of some boycott or political movement. We contend that the workers are an organisable force, and in support of that contention it may well be pointed out that every report for the last six years contains many references to revolts on the part of the workers, the distance between the scene of one revolt and another being often two hundred to three hundred miles. For instance, in his report for 1927 the Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam says: "A more disquieting feature of the year was a sudden epidemic of strikes. Rumours of concessions which had been obtained by a strike on one estate led to a series of strikes in the Lakhimpur district, and a few strikes occurred also in the Sibsagar and Nowgong districts. They were all very short-lived, and with one exception, where some coolies who refused to join were assaulted by the strikers, no breach of the peace occurred. . . . It is, however, improbable that the last has been heard of the strike as a weapon to enforce demands, reasonable or otherwise, on tea estates in Assam."

Quite recently the Governor of Assam was urging the planters to do something better for their coolies than was their present intention, otherwise the Trade Unions might come in and then a great deal more would have to be done.

The story of the poor labourers in the tea gardens of Assam is about as sordid a one as could possibly be related. The official statement on wages, it will be noticed, includes many things, and even then makes a most miserable show in putting down the amount of wages for a month's labour. If the highest figure is taken, including all the items named, the combined labour of husband, wife and child brings this human trinity only one shilling and threepence per day!

We refrain from narrating the many other facts which were garnered, except the significant one that we witnessed a group of men, women and children working away together, while about five yards away was a planter's young assistant proudly hugging a whip. This we regarded as good proof of the "contentment" prevailing among the tea garden population.

Our view is that, despite all that has been written, the tea gardens of Assam are virtually slave plantations, and that in Assam tea the sweat, hunger and despair of a million Indians enter year by year.

In Ceylon there is a pretty little scheme of corruption in operation. There is a person termed the *Canganny*, whose job it is to get as many labourers as possible to turn up at work. He is the pence man—the more there are at work the more he makes. But he carries matters farther, for if he can secure more by driving the coolies from one plantation into another he does so most obligingly. We were informed of instances where the *Canganny* will bargain for the highest bid for “hunching-up” a group to work, and even after closing the deal he will unhesitatingly take a still higher bidder’s offer. He is regarded as a very wealthy person, and is the terror not only of the coolies but of the planters too, the latter, strangely enough, being his original sponsors. A kind of Nemesis !

SECTION VI

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS

Daily wages and working hours in the building and woodworking trades—Average daily wages and hours of labour of various classes of workers engaged in the electrical and engineering trades in four centres—Average monthly and daily earnings and weekly hours of work in the printing trade offices of the largest centre—Wages, hours of service and grievances connected therewith of tramway-men in three important centres—Wages, hours of work and notice conditions, etc., of municipal workers in a large city—Seamen and port workers: Number of men available for work and number employed at any one time—Evils of recruiting system—Brokers' and lodging-house keepers' charges—Pay and hours of work of seamen—Wages and hours of dock workers and bribery in connection with employment.

In this part of our Report we deal with those occupations in respect of which the information we have been able to gather is less complete than in those to which separate Sections have been devoted.

Building and Woodworking Trades

In the building trades, outside electrical and engineering establishments, women labourers are employed on similar work to that done by men in Great Britain. Their wages in certain places average about $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ per day; those of male labourers $8\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $10\frac{1}{2}d.$ per day; while masons and bricklayers get from $1s. 6d.$ to $3s. 4d.$ a day of about ten hours.

Carpenters in the country are paid about $2s. 0d.$ and those in the towns from $2s. 0d.$ to $4s. 6d.$ a day.

A good deal of cabinet work of the very best kind is made by hand in the up-country villages on the joint family system and no wages question here arises, but the wages of employed cabinet makers, trimmers or upholsterers vary from about $2s. 0d.$ to $4s. 6d.$ a day, the latter figure being exceptional.

Working hours are not limited, but appear to be determined by the urgency of the work in hand or the distance from the shop to the job. Whatever may be the theoretical number of hours per day or week, there is little regard paid to it in practice, and there is no enhanced rate of pay for overtime.

Electrical and Engineering Trades

The following Table shows the average *daily wages* of various classes of workers engaged in electricity undertakings, engineering establishments, and maintenanc

and repairs departments of works and mills, other than railway workshops. The figures are representative of four centres in India:—

Class of Workers	Average Daily Wages Centres							
	1		2		3		4	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Stationary engine drivers ..	5	5	2	4	2	4	2	11
Assistant engine drivers ..	3	11½	2	0	1	6	1	7½
Boiler attendants ..	3	1½	3	5	2	4	1	2
Firemen ..	2	0	2	4	1	5½	2	2
Oilers ..	1	9	1	9	1	2	1	7
Boiler cleaners ..	1	7	1	7	0	11½	0	11
Motor attendants ..	4	6	3	4	2	1	1	2½
Motor attendants (assistant)	2	3	2	3	1	6½	—	—
Generator attendants ..	3	0	1	11	—	—	0	11
Wiremen—Class A ..	4	0	3	10	2	0	—	—
" " B ..	3	9	2	6	1	4	—	—
Boiler makers ..	5	0	—	—	2	4½	—	—
Turners ..	3	9½	3	1	1	7½	3	6
Moulders (1) ..	4	11	2	6	3	0	—	—
" (2) ..	3	6	1	11	1	10½	—	—
" (3) ..	3	0	1	9½	1	10½	—	—
Coremakers ..	2	3	3	6	0	11½	—	—
Millwrights ..	6	6	3	8	2	6	—	—
Head fitters ..	5	6	4	0	2	10	4	9
Fitters ..	3	10½	3	0	1	10	2	9
Head carpenters ..	4	6	4	8	3	0	3	1
Carpenters ..	3	5	3	6	1	10½	3	0
Patternmakers ..	4	8½	3	7	2	10	3	8
Blacksmiths (1) ..	4	5	3	6	2	4	3	7½
" (2) ..	3	8	3	0	2	0	2	3
Strikers and hammermen ..	1	7½	1	10½	1	1½	1	3
Bricklayers ..	3	0	1	8	—	—	3	0
Masons ..	3	2	3	6	1	9½	3	0½
Painters ..	2	6	1	6½	1	10	1	4
Plumbers ..	5	7½	—	—	—	—	—	—
Riveters ..	1	5½	1	6½	—	—	1	3
Tinsmiths ..	3	5	3	1	2	4	2	8
Draughtsmen ..	5	6	4	11½	4	4	—	—
Sawyers ..	—	—	2	9½	1	7½	1	6
Labourers (1) ..	1	9½	1	10½	0	11½	—	—
" (2) ..	1	6	1	5	0	11½	0	11½

So far as hours are concerned in connection with the places to which the above figures refer, where the three-shift system is applicable there is a regular eight-hour day, but not necessarily a forty-eight-hour week, as in some cases the full seven days are worked. There are other instances, such as foundry and maintenance work, in which the daily hours will exceed eight, and the weekly hours run to fifty-eight and sixty.

Printing Trades

There are no uniform rates of wages in the printing trades, but we were furnished by the Press Workers' Association with some particulars of average monthly earnings

in four different classes of printing offices in the largest centre, upon which the following Table is made up, with an additional column showing the daily average earnings:—

Class of Worker	Class of Office	Average Monthly Earnings						Daily Average					
		From			To			From			To		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Lino Operators ..	(a)	3	0	0	3	7	6	2	3½	2	7		
" " ..	(b)	4	10	0	—	—	—	3	5½	—	—	—	—
" " ..	(c)	4	10	0	4	17	6	3	5½	3	9		
" " ..	(d)	3	15	0	4	2	6	2	10½	3	2		
Hand Compositors ..	(a)	1	10	0	—	—	—	1	1½	—	—	—	—
" " ..	(b)	1	10	0	—	—	—	1	1½	—	—	—	—
" " ..	(d)	1	2	6	—	—	—	0	10½	—	—	—	—
Type Distributors ..	(a)	2	5	0	2	12	6	1	8½	2	0½		
" " ..	(b)	2	5	0	—	—	—	1	8½	—	—	—	—
Machinemen ..	(a)	3	0	0	3	7	6	2	3½	2	7		
" " ..	(b)	3	15	0	—	—	—	2	10½	—	—	—	—
" " ..	(c)	2	5	0	2	12	6	1	8½	2	0½		
" " ..	(d)	and			1	17	6	2	5	0	1	8½	
Binders ..	(a)	3	0	0	3	7	6	2	3½	2	7		
" " ..	(b)	3	15	0	—	—	—	2	10½	—	—	—	—
Ink Men ..	(a)	1	17	6	—	—	—	1	5½	—	—	—	—
" " ..	(b)	1	17	6	—	—	—	1	5½	—	—	—	—
" " ..	(c)	1	2	6	1	10	0	0	10½	1	1½		

The hours of work are 47½ and 48 per week.

Tramways

Particulars are given herein regarding wages and hours of tramway workers in three important centres.

In the service at the first centre the scale of monthly wages for drivers and conductors is as shown below. On the basis of twenty-six days per month being worked, an additional column shows the daily rates of wages:—

Year of Service	Monthly Wages			Daily Rates	
	£	s.	d.	s.	d.
1st	1	16	0	1	4½
2nd	1	17	6	1	5½
3rd	1	17	6	1	5½
4th	1	19	0	1	6
5th	1	19	0	1	6
6th	2	0	6	1	6½
7th	2	0	6	1	6½
8th	2	2	0	1	7½

At the time of our visit the re-established Union of Tramway Workers was pressing the company for an improved scale on the ground that the existing wages were insufficient to maintain themselves and their families in these days of high cost of living. An increase was proposed of 9s. od. per month in the initial pay, the rate to be increased by 3s. od. per month each year until the pay amounted to £4 10s. od. per month. This proposition was rejected by the management, which declined to make any increase in the scale. The tramwaymen also complained that the extra conductors, although obliged to attend daily and punished by fines for non-attendance, were actually paid (at the rate of £1 16s. od. per month) only for those days on which they were given active duty.

As regards the hours of service, the men represented, in spite of the denials of the management, that there was no regularity or definiteness, and that the drivers and conductors, more especially the conductors, from the time they attended at their respective depots to the time they were discharged were engaged for about

ten hours per day. It was further represented that conductors' hours of service were increased by their having to wait unduly long periods after active duty to deliver cash receipts, which caused hardships and inconveniences in several ways. In addition to the questions of pay and hours of service the men raised a number of other grievances for the consideration of the company's management.

At the second centre, conductors are paid rates higher than those of drivers. The rates per month and also per day (on the basis of a twenty-six day month) are approximately:—

For drivers.—£1 17s. 6d. to £2 5s. 0d. per month, or 1s. 5½d. to 1s. 8½d. per day.
For conductors.—£2 5s. 0d. to £3 0s. 0d. per month, or 1s. 8½d. to 2s. 3½d. per day.
The hours of work are from 9 to 10 per day.

Wages of drivers and conductors in the third centre, prior to the year 1922, ranged from 1s. 6½d. to 1s. 11d. a day, and a small number of the men with long periods of service are paid at these rates. The present daily rate, applicable to the vast majority of the men, is 1s. 1½d. Line cleaners are paid 8½d. and permanent way men 6½d. and 11½d. per day.

The nominal number of working hours for drivers, conductors and line cleaners is eight per day, but in practice about ten hours are worked, for which only nine hours' wages are given. For permanent way men an eight-and-a-half-hour day is in operation.

Municipal Employees

By the agency of a recently formed and recognised Union of Municipal Employees in a large city, we are able to give some particulars about wages and service conditions of the various classes of such employees. There are on the city's pay roll no fewer than 17,000 workers. In the ward divisions of the city, although men are on the books and in the continuous service of the Corporation for as long as twenty-five years, they are still regarded as temporary employees, liable to dismissal at a moment's notice, yet they are legally declared to be utility workers and as such debarred from entering upon a strike without giving a month's notice. As regards wages, drivers of motor vehicles, steam rollers and the like are paid from £3 15s. 0d. to £4 10s. 0d. per month, or 2s. 10½d. to 3s. 5½d. per day; workshop and pumping station men, from a minimum of 9d. up to 5s. 3d. a day; men in the roads and health departments, £1 14s. 6d. and women £1 8s. 6d. per month, or 1s. 4d. and 1s. 1d. a day. A singular point about the road and health departments workers is that their housing accommodation, which is supplied free of rent, but not of rates, is in a frightful condition, more particularly as affecting the scavengers and sweepers.

In the workshop the hours of work are eight-and-a-half on five days, five-and-a-half hours on Saturday, with Sunday off. At the pumping station there is a forty-eight hour week, but shiftmen work fifty-six hours. All outdoor workers are employed for ten hours a day.

Seamen and Port Workers

Shipping and dock labour is practically confined to only a few ports, notwithstanding the enormous coast-line of India, but the labour position in those ports is so complicated and the organisation so weak that it is difficult to present anything more than a general statement thereon.

There are, as far as can be ascertained, about a quarter-of-a-million Indians available for work on ships, rivers and docks, but the number that can be employed

at any one time will be less than one-third of that total. For example, officials of the several Unions jointly representing seafaring and shore workers have stated emphatically that in connection with the leading port alone there is work at any one time for only about 21,500 seamen, although more than 100,000 are on the waiting list.

For some years the whole question of recruitment and supply of labour has been agitating the minds of the men's representatives, who bitterly complain of existing methods under which the labour force is selected for employment by the agency of Government licensed shipping brokers and *ghat serangs*. Under this system bribery and corruption are rife and cause great hardship to the men and their families. The seaman is charged a sum equal to 25 per cent. of wages merely for the brokers' recommendation for service, and it is alleged there is collusion between the brokers and the lodging-house keepers by which the latter also make an imposition upon the seaman, over and above rent, for his opportunity of being registered to occupy a few feet of room in exceedingly bad quarters ashore. Small wonder is it that the men get into debt at ruinous rates of interest when they have to pay such extortionate sums merely to have the right to earn their living, while those who are not fortunate enough to secure employment are always living in a state of dire poverty.

The pay of an Indian seaman is on the average not more than £2 per month. His working hours in most cases are not fixed and may vary from twelve to eighteen and nineteen per day. Overtime pay is unknown.

The difficulty in connection with negotiations for improved wages is exemplified by a case in which an agreement was made towards the end of 1920, which has since been violated by the ship-owners, who have made reductions without in any way consulting the Union party to the agreement.

Wages of dock workers are at the rate of £1 7s. 0d. a month, or 1s. 0½d. per day. Their hours of work are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., which means after allowing breaks for meals, they are employed for about nine hours daily. In the event of overtime being worked only about 1d. an hour is paid therefor. This section of workers also complain about bribery in connection with selection of labourers, and have demanded that it should be abolished and offences dealt with sternly by the authorities. As matters stand at present no one can get a job as a dock worker unless he pays a bribe amounting to 7s. 6d. to 12s. 0d.

At another port, as the result of strong Trade Union organisation and action, the wages of dock workers have been raised to 2s. 7½d. per day of nine hours.

SECTION · VII

INDIA'S NEED AND A PLEA FOR HELP

The foregoing pages make up a report of things industrial as we saw them in India. We shall be asked, but what of agriculture ? We do not shirk the question. As a matter of fact, when the plan of the Report was being formulated the subject of agriculture was prominently in our minds, but we frankly confess that neither the time nor the particulars at our disposal would enable us to present a suitable or understandable rendering of a condition of things involving the maintenance of over 230 millions of human beings, with age-long customs, traditional rights and privileges, oppressions amounting in certain cases to slavery, caste privileges and disabilities, and wholesale money-lending practices which will bring many yet unborn into potential slavery despite all the so-called illegality with which much of the system is said to be clothed.

It is true we have ventured on some account of the tea gardens; but these are employment agencies so affected by certain regulations as to make them bear a closer relationship towards industrialism than does general field and farm work.

We had to choose which sphere of work should have our major attention and, in making our choice, we considered our British Trade Union Movement would be very much concerned about the wages and hours of labour in comparable industries and with the housing of the workers employed therein. Our Report, therefore, was limited to an account of industrialism, and though our task for that reason was a more direct one than would have been the case otherwise, it was invested with many difficulties due to the reaching over of one industry into another. If we may venture the opinion, we think our choice was justified by the material facts obtained.

In travelling from point to point in the great sub-continent of India we felt grow upon us very strongly an apprehension that we were in the presence of tremendous forces which sooner or later would be applied to a great expansion of manufacturing activity. India has coal in abundance; it is uncovering increasing quantities of iron ore; expanding its foundries; steel plates can now come with greater ease than before from within its own shores to its shipyards; and its tinsplate and cable and wire works also are swiftly filling demands for supplies which formerly were carried to its works after a sea voyage of thousands of miles. It is of course quite true that coal can be brought to Bombay from Natal at a cheaper rate than is possible by rail from Bengal to Bombay. This is scarcely relevant, however, as what matters mainly is that in the heavy industries India has yet to reach maturity. It has coal, iron ore, and so on in the form of raw materials. Its railways are developing and some of the finest bridge-building yet known to the civilised world is in progress. In the last twenty years or so it has developed one of the largest steel works in existence, with all the required material resources at its door and all the necessary facilities of expansion north, south, east and west, practically without let or hindrance.

The early stupidities of inter-capitalist rivalry are all that hold industrial India from manufacturing its own locomotives, a matter to which reference has been made elsewhere in this Report. But there is a big field awaiting the arrival of the necessary skill, and with the constant changes taking place the day of arrival is not

far away. Then, if India really settles down to the production of textile and kindred machinery, not only the working class of Great Britain, but that of Europe and America, also, will feel the severe shock of a very great change. It is not a question of fiscalism. The Indian cotton trade has had a generation of that, all in its own way, and yet it is crying out louder than ever that it is in another financial hole. Tariffs or no tariffs, India will be bigger industrially and its efficiency and capacity will increase as each year passes.

The question for our great Trade Union Movement is: Can we afford to sit still while this stupendous industrial expansion takes place, having regard to the fact that in most trades, occupations, callings and industries in India it takes six to eight workers to obtain as much in wages as one of the lowest paid workers in Great Britain?

What is happening and is likely to happen forms part of the one great international story. Countries formerly customers are now competitors in productive enterprise. All are on the look-out for any aids to the exploitation of their own natural resources. And if they cannot start with their own native labour or the initiative of their own native capitalists, they will import all they need until they attain a position enabling them to compete quite independently and successfully against the very country which gave them the technical advice, brain and muscle to reach that position.

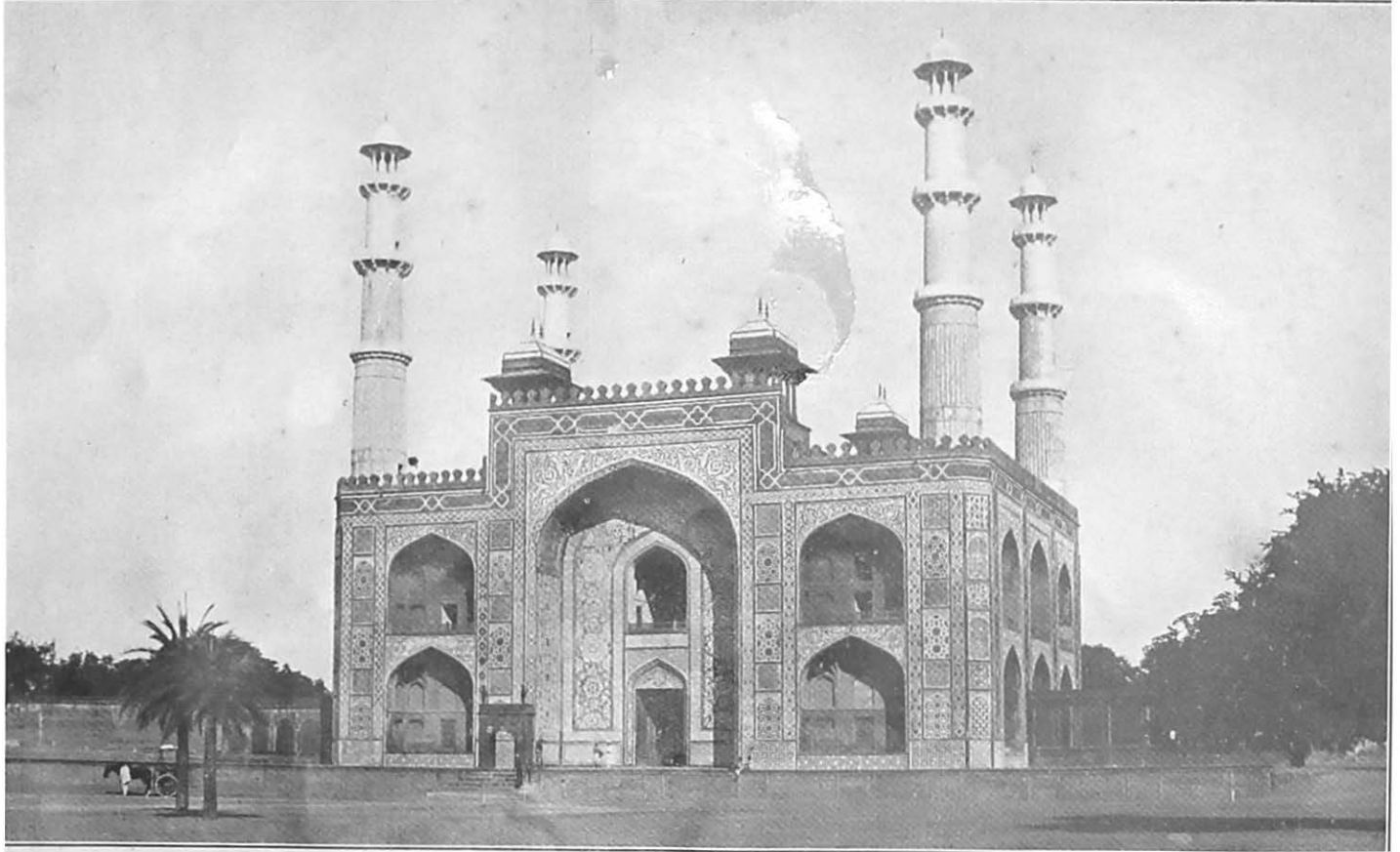
Hence the problem, such as it is, and big as it is, must be faced by the British Trade Union Movement: It is so urgent that it cannot wait upon the caprice of various international units each wondering what its advantage is likely to be and then moving swiftly or slowly as suits the individual case. That is not the right thing to be done. Our view is that we must take the mighty step of linking-up the British and Indian Trade Union Movements for the purpose of positive and sustained organising work, followed by joint action wherever conceivable and immediately practicable, with the object of lifting Indian workmen and workwomen out of the morass of filthy and ghastly conditions, socially, morally, and physically, into a new stage of constantly improving wages standards, giving them hope for the immediate future and enabling them here and now to have what is the first essential to all Indian workers, namely, a firm grip on the means of life by the necessary increase of purchasing power at present kept out of their reach.

If this organising work can be arranged, we believe that the response would be such as would amply repay the British Movement for a great effort as well as place in the mosaic of World Trade Unionism a big-hearted, full-souled mass of workers who, by reason of their emergence from the existing slavish and degenerate state, would be a wonderful example to the whole world of labour, to say nothing of the salutary effect that would be made on the employing class everywhere.

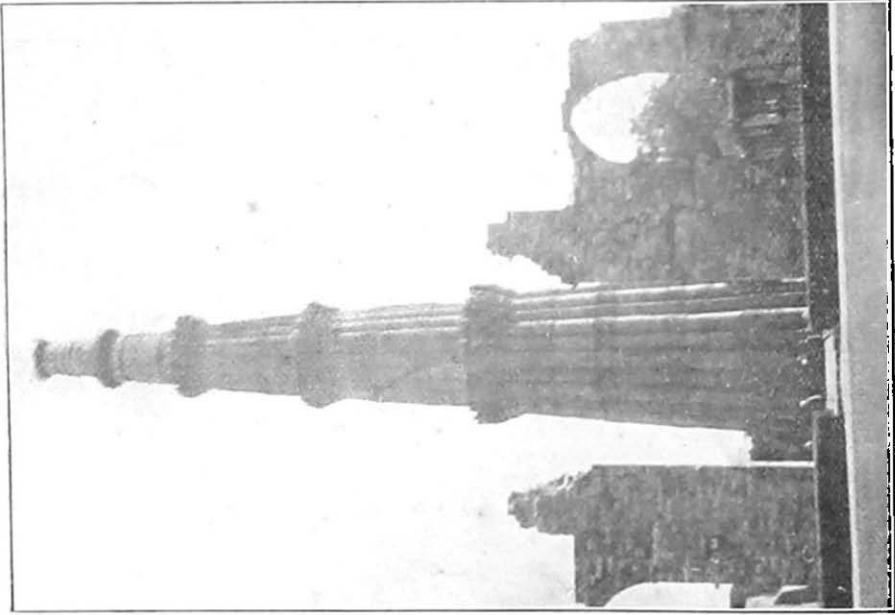
Indian workers can be won for trade unionism. They are in frightful distress just now. Is it too much to expect that out of Great Britain—the one land which has made so much profit from its associations with India, no matter what the history books may say—a really practical and lasting form of help may be afforded to over three hundred millions of human beings who, if they had the wherewithal, are sufficient in number to set going the wheels of world industry at high speed?

We make our appeal to the British Movement which sent us to India to see and learn and report. Our hope is that the Movement will respond to what we believe to be The Call of the Indian Working Class.

SECTION VIII
PHOTOGRAPHS



INDIAN WORKMANSHIP : A CENTURIS' OLD EXAMPLE.



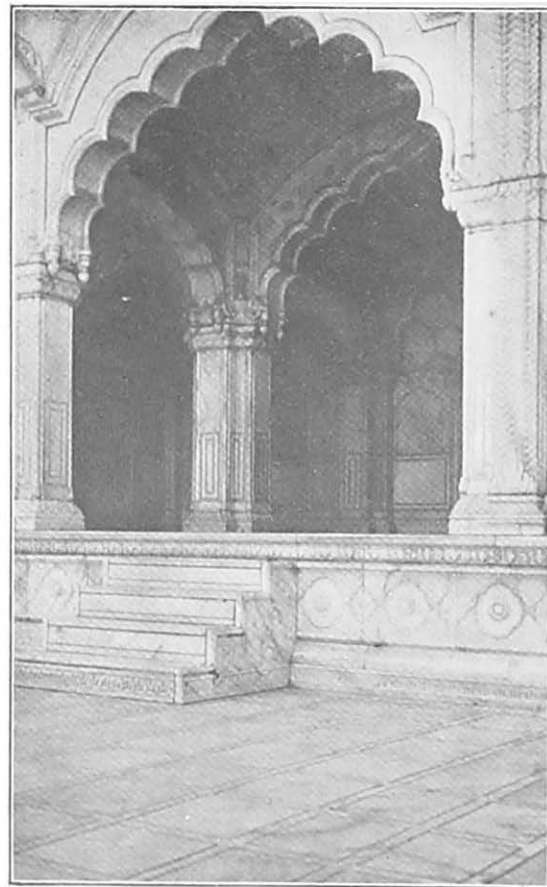
THE CENTURIES' OLD QUTAB MINAR.



A SECTION OF THE TOWER AT CLOSE QUARTERS.



PRESENT DAY WORKER'S RESIDENCE.



CENTURIES' OLD BUILDING—INTERIOR.



A BETTER CLASS WORKER OUTSIDE HIS "HOME."



THE "KABULI" OR "AFGHAN" MONEY LENDER.



A TEXTILE WORKERS' VILLAGE, SHOWING OPEN DRAIN.



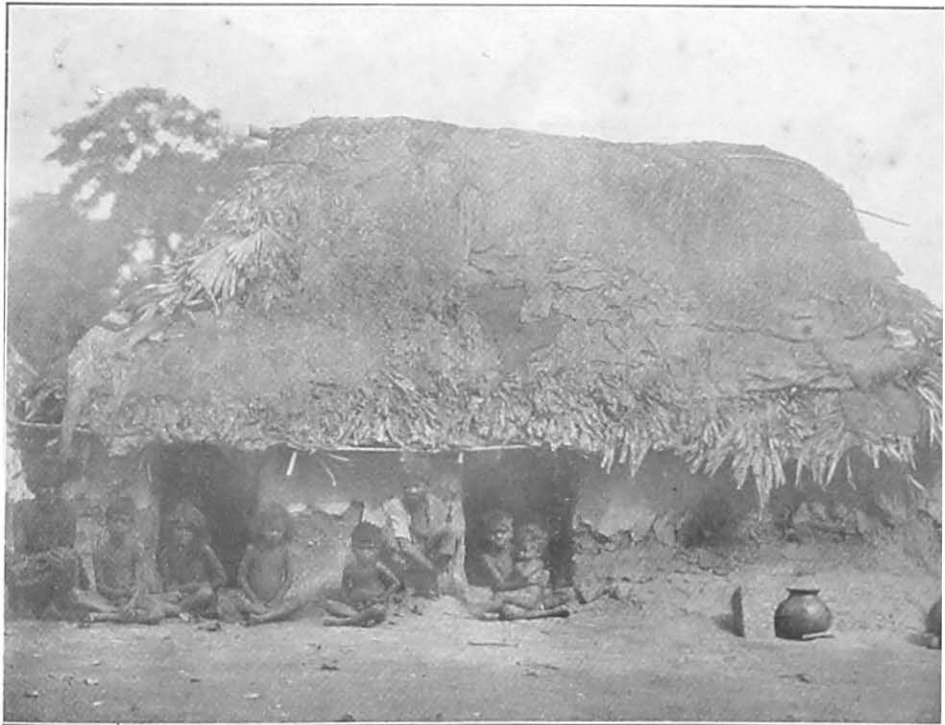
HOUSING.



HOUSING.



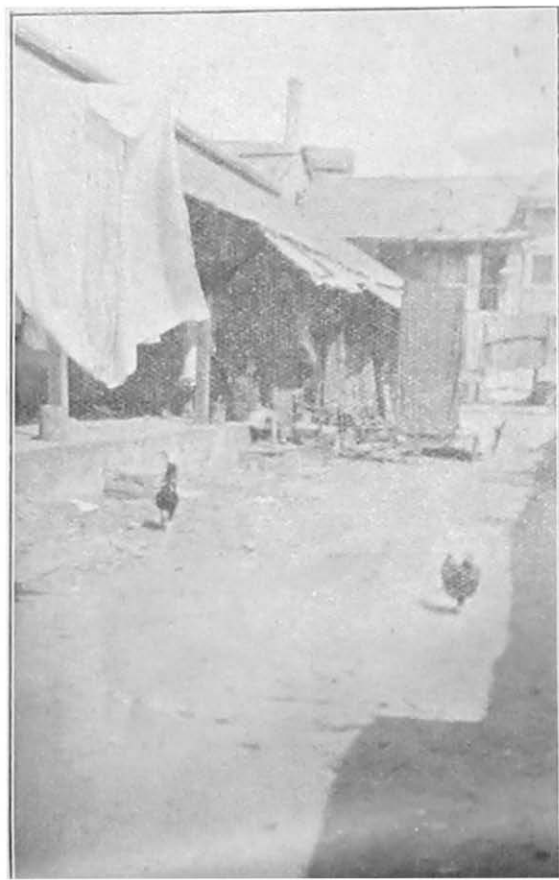
WORKERS' HOUSES.



WORKERS' HOUSES.



PEASANT VILLAGE.



WORKERS' HOUSES IN THE CITY.



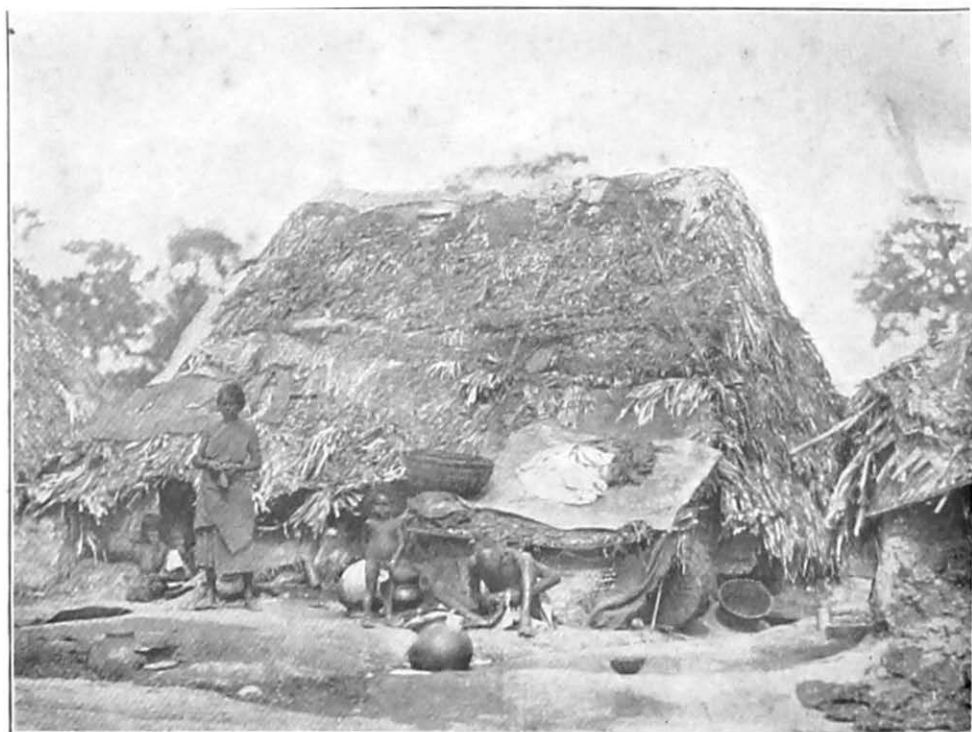
HOUSING TYPES.



DEVASTATED BY FLOODS.



HOUSING TYPES.



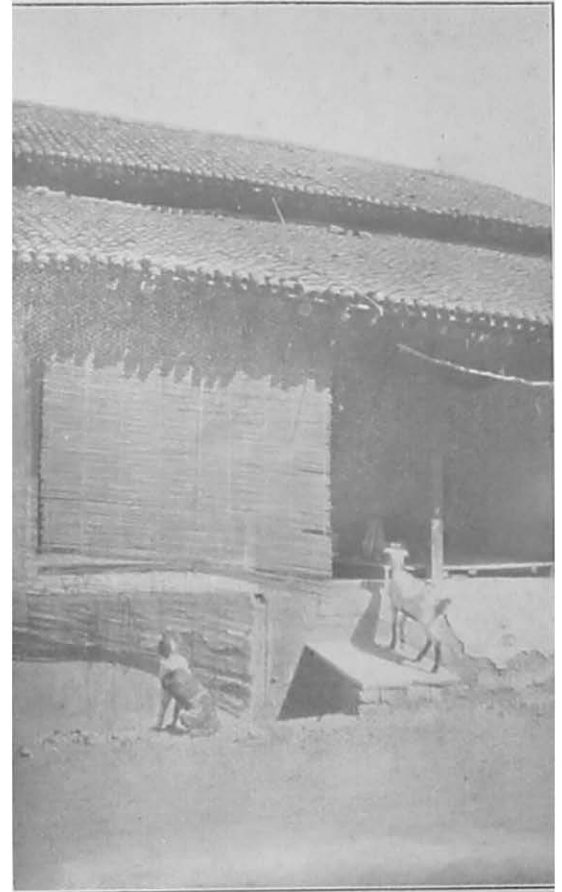
HOUSING TYPES.



A BAZAAR.



A FOOD STALL.



SHOPS IN A CITY MAIN STREET. OBSERVE THE SEWAGE DRAIN BENEATH THE STEP IN EACH CASE.



GRINDING THE RICE MEAL.



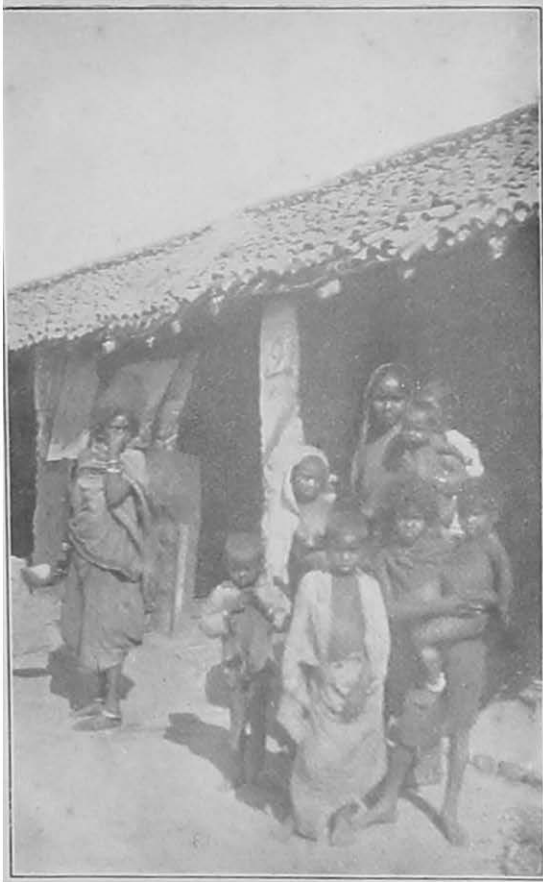
WATER DRAWING.



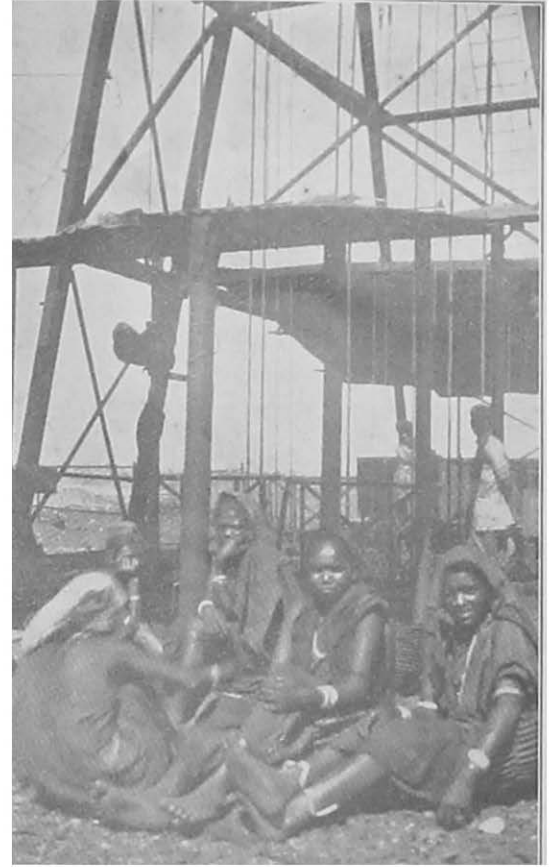
OPEN WORKING: THE THICKNESS OF THE SEAM CAN BE PARTLY OBSERVED.



COAL GETTERS STARTING NEW CUTTING.



A MINER'S FAMILY OUTSIDE THEIR DWELLING.



WOMEN MINERS WAITING TO DESCEND.



COW MANURE POUNDED AND PLACED ON WALL
TO DRY FOR FUEL.



WOMEN COAL CARRIERS.



COLLIERS' " HOMES."



COLLIERS' " HOMES."



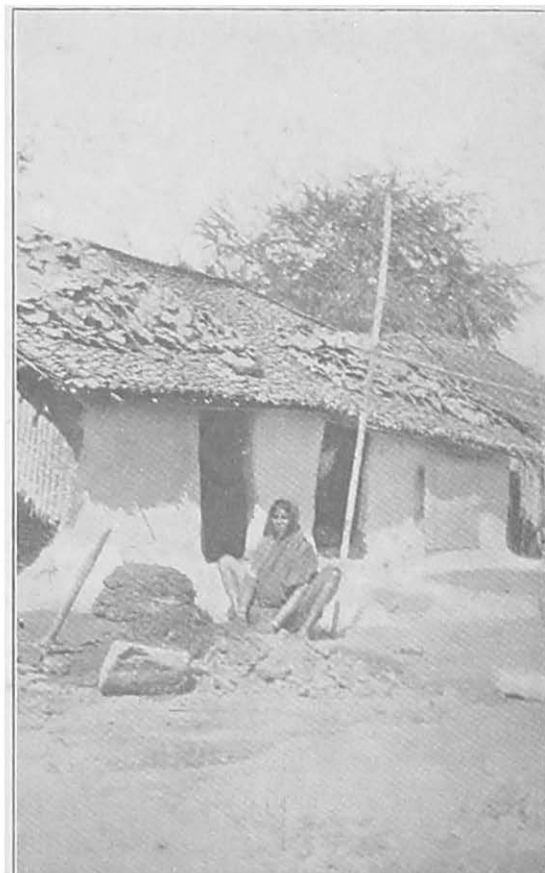
WORKER'S FAMILY. OBSERVE CHILD'S STOMACH, SAID
TO BE QUITE COMMON AS RESULT OF RICE FOOD.
ALSO NOTE ANKLES.



A GROUP OF MINERS' WIVES.



BRICKLAYER'S LABOURER,



WOMAN MIXING MORTAR WITH HER HANDS,



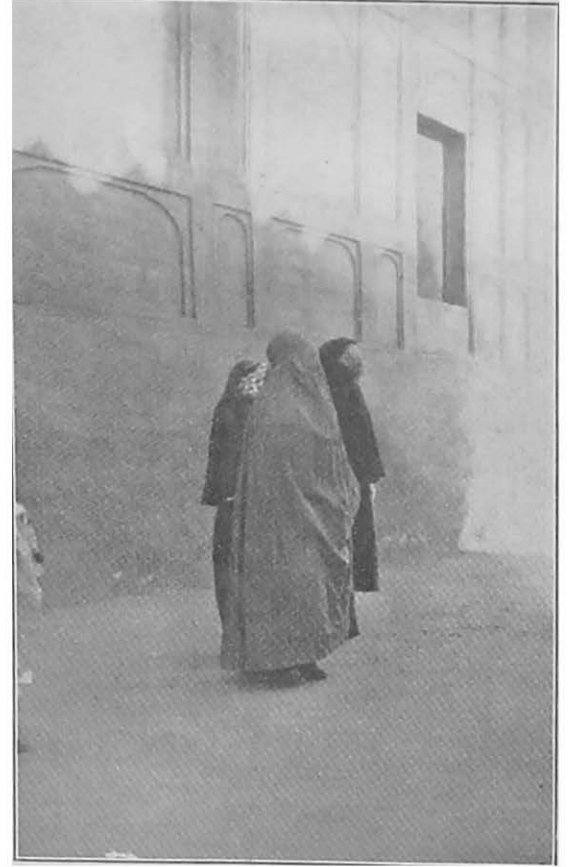
ANGLO-INDIAN OFFICIALS' QUARTERS.



BASKET AND TREE GUARD MAKER.



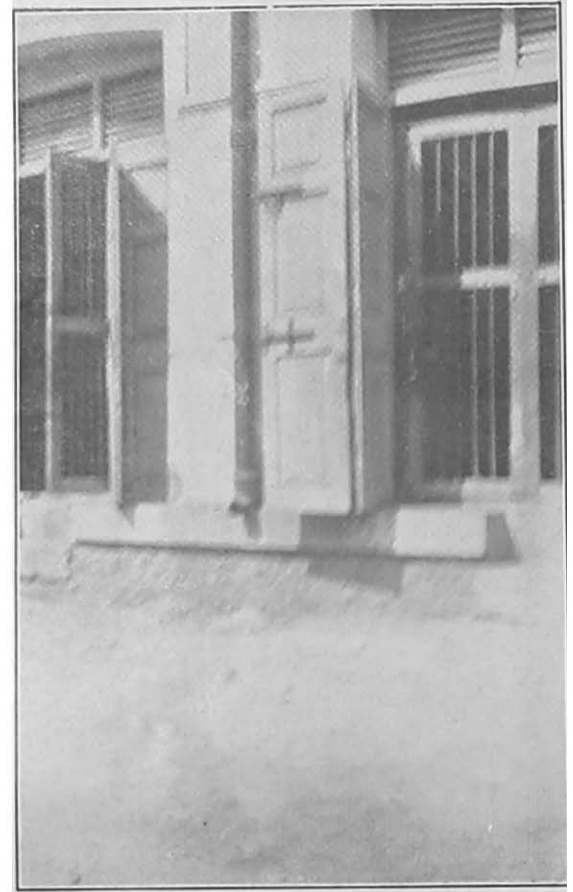
A STREET SWEEPER.



"PURDAIL" WOMEN.



VIEW OF THE SO-CALLED "BIRD CAGES."



VIEW OF THE SO-CALLED "BIRD CAGES."

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