

LABOUR IN INDIA

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LABOUR IN INDIA

*A STUDY OF THE CONDITIONS OF
INDIAN WOMEN IN MODERN
INDUSTRY*

BY

JANET HARVEY KELMAN



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

DURING a visit to India of some sixteen months, from December 1920 to March 1921, I had the opportunity of studying factory conditions in that country. It was originally intended that my inquiry should be confined to the effect of modern industry on women. I found, however, that it was not possible to secure sufficient exact information to give completeness to a sectional study, and also that in most cases the conditions which demanded attention concerned men and women alike. I have therefore attempted to open up a wider subject, to note special dangers, and to suggest openings for advance.

One of the problems of agricultural life in certain districts of India is the fragmentation of holdings. A diagram of such isolated plots of land scattered round a village rises in my mind as a picture of this book, and my hope is that, fragmentary as the study is, it may inspire others to work out from the individual sections until the whole area is overtaken. The hope recalls the familiar saying of the farmer who was sure he would be content if he possessed all the fields that adjoined his own land.

The questions that have been raised are of world-wide significance. The new atmosphere of thought in which men and women, to-day, in widely separated countries, are working for better social and international relationships is the justification for re-examining problems that have hitherto been considered insoluble; and the reason for attacking these problems with hopefulness is that through the fulfilment of the new demands for world-wide co-operation the highest religious aspirations of mankind

will find ever fuller expression, the demands themselves being the outcome of a clearer understanding of the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ.

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity of expressing my sincere gratitude to the Council of the Selly Oak Colleges for the Research Fellowship which set me free for this study, and very specially to Mr. Edward Cadbury, through whose generosity the Fellowship was founded.

I wish also to acknowledge my great indebtedness to Principal and Mrs. McKenzie of Wilson College, Bombay, through whose forethought and kindness I was brought into immediate touch with industrial conditions there and in other parts of India; to Professor J. C. Kydd of the Selly Oak Colleges who, first in Calcutta and later in England, has given most valuable assistance, and has in my absence carried the proof through the final stages of the Press; and to all those, Indian, American, and British, who, by their interest, their criticism and their practical help, have made the writing of this book possible.

JANET HARVEY KELMAN.

LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK STATE,
August 1923.

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