Child Labour in India: II [1]

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Health and Safety

The physical bases of industrial efficiency are health and vigour, which are lacking among the majority of Indian children. Most of them suffer from ill-health arising from malaria, hookworm, and other diseases, which sap their vitality. The low vitality of Indian children can be seen in their abnormal death rate as compared with that in other countries. For instance, the mortality among Indian infants under one year of age is about three times that of infants in England and Wales, while that among children from 5 to 14 years of age is over four times as high.

COMPARATIVE DEATH RATES AMONG INDIAN CHILDREN PER 1,000 OF THE POPULATION IN SAME AGE GROUP IN 1930 [1]

Age group (years)	India		England and Wales	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Under 1 [2]	189.1	171.8	68.0	51.0
1–4 [3]	57.1	51.2	20.5	16.0
5–9	10.7	9.9	2.4	2.2
10–14	7.2	7.5	1.6	1.5

[1] *Statistical Abstract for British India*, 1933, pp. 473-474; *The Registrar-General's Statistical Review of England and Wales*, 1931, Tables, Part I, Medical, pp. 7-8.
[2] Rates per 1,000 births during the year.
[3] Including all children under one year in the case of England and Wales.

[1] For the first part of this article, containing statistics of the employment of children in organised industries (principally plantations, factories, and mines), a historical survey of child labour legislation, and a description of the general conditions of employment of children in India, cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 6, Dec. 1933, pp. 796-832.

Further indications of the low vitality and lack of vigour of the people are the high birth and death rates, which were respectively, on the basis of quinquennial averages ending 1930, 33.2 and 24.2 per mille in India as compared with 17.2 and 12.3 per mille in England and Wales [1], as well as by the low average length of life, which was about 24.8 years in India as compared with 55.6 years in England and Wales in 1921. [2]

The most important of the causes of the low standard of health and vitality among Indian children is the extreme poverty of the masses. " The vast majority of the rural population of India lives perpetually on the very margin of subsistence. [3] " This is true also for a large number of the urban population. The effect of this poverty is deficient nutrition, which is aggravated by lack of sanitary and medical provisions throughout the country as well as by bad housing, overcrowding, and insanitary conditions in industrial towns.

Sanitation and Comfort

These initial disadvantages of the young Indian worker render attention to healthy conditions of employment all the more necessary. Some aspects of this question have already been treated, namely, the minimum age of admission to employment, and physical fitness. Provisions for safeguarding the health of child workers by proper sanitation are also of vital importance.

In the case of plantations, the problem begins before the arrival of migrant labour at the Assam tea gardens, and emigration legislation has found it necessary to provide for sanitary arrangements *en route* and in depots. In spite of these provisions, the death rates among all classes of immigrants were appalling in the early years, but with the growth of transport facilities and improvement in sanitation, the death rate has been gradually reduced. The Tea Districts Emigration Labour Act of 1932 provides that all assisted emigrants are to be forwarded to Assam by prescribed routes, and depots for the accommodation and feeding of assisted emigrants and their families have to be

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[1] *Statistical Year Book of the League of Nations*, 1931-1932, p. 52.

[2] *Census of India*, 1921, p. 128 ; *Annuaire statistique*, 1930, p. 222. (These figures refer to the male population only.)

[3] *Statement exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India*, 1930-1931, p. 157.

maintained along these routes at the expense of employers. As a result of these arrangements only 402 out of 60,586 immigrants, who passed through three depots to the Assam Valley in 1931-1932, were detained for treatment in the hospitals. [1]

In the same way, conditions in the tea gardens were very unsatisfactory in the early years. The workers were liable to various diseases, such as malaria, dysentery, and hookworm, which were due partly to the fact that tea gardens were often in unhealthy forests and valleys, and partly to the lack of adequate sanitary arrangements in the gardens. The result was a heavy death rate among all classes of workers, including children, and many of the gardens were classed as " unhealthy ". There has, however, been a decided improvement in sanitation, and most of the diseases have been brought under control. This is best indicated by birth and death rates. The birth rate was very low until 1923-1924, but it has now reached the same level in the tea gardens as in the rest of the province of Assam. In 1929-1930, the birth and death rates were respectively 32.60 and 21.77 per mille in the tea gardens of the Assam valley and 31.11 and 19.43 per mille in those of the Surma valley, as compared with 32.77 and 20.91 per mille in the whole province. [2] It must be mentioned that there has been a great decrease in the number of deaths in the province of Assam since 1920, and the death rate was lowest in 1929.

As far as factory sanitation is concerned, conditions are much better in the larger factories than in the smaller ones. The Royal Commission on Labour reported that the larger factories could compare favourably with the best factories in the world in respect of layout, cleanliness, atmosphere, and general well-being. [3] The smaller factories, however, were found in many cases to be defective in construction and to have no adequate provision for light and ventilation. Dust, fluff, gas, and vapours are not sufficiently controlled, and the temperature, which is very high, together with excessive humidity causes great discomfort to the workers. [4]

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[1] *Report on Immigrant Labour in the Province of Assam*, 1931-1932.

[2] *Statistical Abstract for British India*, 1932, pp. 435 and 451 ; *Report on Immigrant Labour in the Province of Assam*, 1931-1932. The figures for the whole province are for the calendar year 1929.

[3] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 63.

[4] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Memorandum to the Royal Commission on Labour*, pp. 38 and 58 ; *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 115.

Sanitary conditions in unregulated factories are particularly unsatisfactory. There is, for instance, a marked absence of adequate sanitary arrangements, both as regards latrines and washing accommodation, in such industries as the manufacture of shellac, which is mostly carried on in unsatisfactory buildings with leaking roofs, earth floors, and poor lighting and ventilation. There is a similar lack of sanitary arrangements and drainage in tanneries, where there are pools of filthy water and the earthen floors are littered with heaps of evil-smelling refuse, making most of these undertakings even more offensive than is inevitable from the nature of the industry. [1]

The sanitary situation in the mining industry varies considerably with the type of mine. The mica mines, which in 1925 employed about half the children occupied in the mining industry, are situated mostly in rural surroundings ; many of them are not easy of access and remain closed during the rains. They are largely worked by part-time agricultural workers between crops. Questions of sanitation are not of great importance in these mines, but they suffer from the disadvantage that most of them are small and scattered, and are located far away from dispensaries and hospitals. [2] Sanitation in coal mines, which employed the second largest number of children in 1925, is, however, very important. Most of the Indian collieries are shallow, the seams thick, underground passages spacious, and ventilation effective in the larger mines, though not in the smaller ones. Nevertheless, most of the mines are insanitary and the workers suffer to an excessive degree from hookworm. [3]

Sanitation in the mining areas of Asansol and Jharia is under the control of Boards of Health, and at Jharia there is also a Water Board. Since the establishment of these authorities, sanitation and health have gradually improved. The death rate was 21.2 per mille in the Raniganj field in 1929, as compared with 25.5 in the whole province of Bengal. Similarly, the birth and death rates were respectively 28.09 per mille and 16.18 per mille in the Jharia field as compared with 35.6 per mille and 26.9 per mille in the whole province of Bihar and Orissa. In 1931, the death rate was 20.52 per mille and the infant mortality rate 135 per 1,000 births in the Raniganj field, and the birth and death

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 92, 95, 98.
[2] *Idem*, pp. 207-208.
[3] *Idem*, p. 115.

rates were respectively 30.97 and 16.07 per mille in the Jharia field.[1] It must be mentioned that most of the workers in these coalfields are migrants and both births and deaths take place more often in their native villages than in the mining areas.

Safety and Accidents

As regards safety, the general provisions in factories, mines, and other undertakings are the same for all classes of workers, but there are special regulations as to the kind of work in which children may be employed and their employment is prohibited in certain occupations involving special risk. Since 1891, for instance, the Factories Act has prohibited children from cleaning mill gearing in motion, and from working between the fixed and the traversing parts of any self-acting machinery while they are in motion. In addition, since 1911, the employment of children is prohibited in that part of a cotton-pressing factory in which a cotton opener is at work, unless its feed end is in a room separated from the delivery end.[2] Further measures were taken in the amending Act of 1922, which gave power to factory inspectors to prohibit the employment of children in any part of a factory which may involve danger to their safety, and prohibited the employment of children as well as young persons below 18 years of age from employment in any operations involving the use of zinc, lead compounds, and white sulphur and in the preparation of electric accumulators.[3]

Among general measures for securing safety in factories the following may be mentioned: (1) measures taken by local Governments, e.g. the Government of Madras, as well as by employers, e.g. in the railway workshops, to minimise the risk of accidents from certain causes; (2) the agreement in regard to standard guards and safety devices on new machinery to be installed after July 1932 between members of the Indian Jute Mills Association; (3) the development of educational work in regard to safety by the Bombay Factory Inspectorate and the Millowners' Mutual Insurance Association; and (4) various methods of propaganda, e.g. safety posters in the carding departments of cotton mills in Bombay and Ahmedabad, the "Safety

[1] *Statistical Abstract for British India*, 1932, pp. 434 and 449; *Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India*, 1930, p. 41; 1931, pp. 30-31.

[2] Act No. XII of 1911 as modified up to July 1922, sections 19 and 20. (INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE: *Legislative Series*, 1922, Ind. 1.)

[3] *Idem*, sections 190 and 196.

First " movement in the jute mills of Bengal, and the posters of the Indian Red Cross Society illustrating the most suitable type of dress to be worn by workers in certain kinds of work. [1]

Safety problems are at present most serious in unregulated factories, especially those working with power machinery, much of which is inadequately protected. The buildings in which machinery is erected are often unsuitable and unsafe (protective guards to shafting, belting, and machinery are inadequate) and the lighting insufficient. Since there is no obligation on the part of the employers to report non-fatal accidents, the number of such accidents in these factories is not known. There is reason to believe that fatal accidents are rare. [2]

Mining is an industry which involves great risk, especially in underground work, and detailed safety provisions are contained in the Indian Mines Act. Moreover, the larger mines have introduced up-to-date devices for preventing accidents, and are encouraging preventive measures such as those included under the idea of " Safety First ".

The occupations of trimmer and stoker on board ship also involve various dangers. The rules made under the Indian Merchant Shipping Act of 1923 prohibit stokers from tending more than two fires, from cleaning and relaying more than one fire during any one watch, and from employment in stokeholds where the temperature exceeds 110°F. Similarly, trimmers are prohibited from taking part in the cleaning and relaying of fires and from employment in any ship where the bunker temperature exceeds 110°F. [3]

No information is available to show the number of accidents to children in factories in British India. The figures for all workers, for 1931, were as follows : fatal accidents 174, serious accidents 3,893, minor accidents 15,940, making a total of 20,007, or 13.84 per mille. [4] Since children are not usually employed in occupations involving great risk, it may be presumed that the number of accidents to children in factories is not large.

A considerable number of accidents occur every year to children who are not employed in factories, but are in the factories for various reasons : children bringing food to their

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[1] *Statistics of Factories subject to the Indian Factories Act*, 1931, pp. 4-5.

[2] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 92.

[3] *Gazette of India*, 5 Dec. 1931, Part I, p. 1146.

[4] Compiled from *Statistical Abstract for British India*, 1932, and *Statistics of Factories subject to the Indian Factory Act*, 1931.

parents or who have accompanied their parents or guardians, babies in arms, etc.

The number of such accidents in Bengal was 21 in 1930, including 4 fatal and 16 serious cases, and 12 in 1931, including 4 fatal and 4 serious cases.[1] These accidents are not included in the main statistics, as they are not "accidents" within the meaning of the Indian Factories Act. The majority of these accidents in Bengal occur in jute mills. Mothers bring their babies in arms and lay them under the machinery and in baskets of jute where they sleep. Infants may be found lying on sacking, in the bobbin boxes and other unsanitary places, exposed to the noise and danger of moving machinery and a dust-laden atmosphere. A mother may sometimes be seen holding a baby on one arm and minding a machine with the other, or stopping her work to try to quiet a screaming baby. Enquiry made from 3,832 women workers in different lines or housing quarters in Bengal jute mill areas showed that they possessed 3,401 children of all ages, 443 of whom were taken to the mills by their mothers, while 2,251 others were kept on the mill premises and some of them often came inside the mills. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that no year passes without a certain number of serious and minor accidents, sometimes even of deaths among children. Most of these accidents are caused by children trying to grasp machinery, by bales of jute falling on them, or by their falling from a ladder or being run over by a truck.[2]

These accidents are preventable and the Indian Jute Mills Association has come to realise the fact. The Factories Department of Bengal issued orders in May 1932, prohibiting, with effect from 1 June 1932, the presence in jute mills of children who, by reason of their age, could not legally be employed by the mills, namely, those below the age of 12 years. The mills recognised that these orders were desirable from the point of view of the health and safety of children, and made the necessary arrangements for giving effect to them.[3] Orders have also been given in some seasonal factories to exclude young children from the premises, but it has been found difficult to enforce the orders

[1] *Annual Report on the Administration of the Indian Factories Act in Bengal*, 1930, p. 25; 1931, p. 29.

[2] INDIAN JUTE MILLS ASSOCIATION: *Report of a Survey of Women Workers in Jute Mills*, 1931-1932, by M. L. BALFOUR, p. 12; *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 65.

[3] INDIAN JUTE MILLS ASSOCIATION: *Report of the Committee*, 1932, pp. 15-16. Calcutta.

without driving some women out of employment.[1] It is important to note that, on the basis of a recommendation of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, a provision has been inserted in the proposed Bill to amend the Indian Factories Act to the effect that, in a factory where a special room is provided for the children, no child under 6 may be admitted to a place in which manufacturing processes are being carried on. Under the present provisions of the Act, young children are not excluded from factories, although factory inspectors have powers to exclude them if necessary.

Accidents, or, more properly, casualties[2], are more frequent in mines than in factories, although the statistics are not comparable on account of the fact that minor casualties are not recorded in the case of mines. The total number of fatal and serious casualties in mines was 168 or 1.63 per mille in 1903, and 869 or 3.74 per mille in 1931. How many non-fatal casualties occurred to children is not known, but figures for fatal casualties are available. In 1923, there were 21 fatal casualties to children under 13 years of age and 33 to children from 13 to 15 years of age, while in 1931 only 7 casualties to children between 13 and 15 years of age were recorded.[3] Mining accidents are not responsible for most of these casualties, the most usual causes assigned being misadventure, which accounts for about four-fifths of the casualties, together with the fault of the deceased, fellow workmen, subordinate officials or the management.[4]

Workmen's Compensation

Since 1924, children as well as adults who are victims of industrial accidents or occupational diseases can claim compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923.[5] This Act applies to persons employed in factories, mines, railways, docks,

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[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 85.

[2] In the Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines, the term "accident" has been used both for the event and for the person injured by it. The word "casualty" has here been substituted for "accident" in the latter sense of the word.

[3] Compiled from the *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India* for the respective years.

[4] *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India*, 1931, pp. 14-15 and 104-135.

[5] Act No. VIII of 1923, section 3. (*Legislative Series*, 1923, Ind. 1.) Since this article was written an amending Act has been passed which extends the scope of the original Act and raises the scale of compensation. Cf. *Gazette of India*, 16 Sept. 1933, Part IV, pp. 27-33.

and tramways, and certain other specified occupations, and it makes employers liable to pay compensation for accidents or diseases arising out of and in the course of employment.

The scales of compensation payable to minors or persons under 15 years of age under the Act are as follows : (1) death : a fixed sum of Rs.200 irrespective of wages ; (2) permanent total disablement : a sum equal to 84 months' wages or Rs.3,500, whichever is less ; permanent partial disablement : a sum proportionate to the loss of earning capacity ; (3) temporary disablement : a half-monthly payment of a sum equal to one-third or, after he has attained the age of 15 years, to one-half of his monthly wages, but not exceeding in any case Rs.15. [1]

The Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923 came into force on 1 July 1924. Since then the number of cases of compensation for accidents and industrial diseases gradually increased from 4,168 in the last six months of 1924 to 23,574 in 1930, although the number declined to 17,489 in 1931. [2] The number of cases of compensation to minors is given in the following table :

CASES OF COMPENSATION TO MINORS, 1924-1931 [1]

Year	Total number of cases (adults and minors)	Minors only			
		Death	Permanent disablement	Temporary disablement	Total
1924 [2]	4,168	2	1	18	21
1925	11,371	7	9	21	37
1926	14,096	3	4	41	48
1927	15,216	6	9	27	42
1928	16,708	9	8	34	51
1929	18,865	2	6	28	36
1930	23,574	4	3	44	51
1931	17,489	3	5	21	29

[1] Compiled from *Workmen's Compensation Statistics* for the respective years, and *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), March 1933, pp. 344-348.
[2] Six months only (July to December).

[1] *Idem*, section 4.

[2] This decline was no doubt due mainly to the economic depression, which has led to a reduction in the number of workers, and especially of new workers, who are more liable to accidents owing to their lack of experience.

The average amounts of compensation paid to minors in 1931 are given in the following table :

COMPENSATION PAID IN 1931 [1]

Nature of injury	Adults			Minors		
	Cases	Total compensation	Average compensation per person	Cases	Total compensation	Average compensation per person
		Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Death	696	444,246	638	3	600	200
Permanent disablement	1,266	390,344	308	5	436	87
Temporary disablement	15,498	230,541	15	21	189	9
Total	17,460	1,065,131	61	29	1,225	42

[1] Compiled from *Workmen's Compensation Statistics*, 1931 ; cf. *Labour Gazette* (Bombay) March 1933, p. 546.

As regards the administration of the Workmen's Compensation Act, it has been pointed out that there is a lack of adequate knowledge on the part of the workers of their legal rights in the matter of claiming compensation. On the other hand, the statistics of temporary disablement cases show the increasing tendency of the workers to report slight accidents, and it is stated that employers tend more and more to see that injured employees receive their just dues. [1]

Hours of Work

Together with the age of admission to employment, the most important question of child labour is that of hours of work, the control of which is one of the main objects of child labour legislation.

Legal and Actual Hours

In the case of the important group of plantation industries, however, no measures have yet been taken to regulate the hours

[1] *Workmen's Compensation Statistics*, 1929, p. 1; *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), March 1933, p. 544.

of work of children. Whenever they are employed, they work practically the same number of hours as adults. In the Assam tea gardens, these hours were fixed at 9 a day by the contract under the indenture system, and although the contract system has been abolished the 9-hour day has become customary, except in the busy season. Hours of work depend, however, upon the system of wage payment, and where the payment of fixed wages is contingent upon the completion of a certain amount of work, the hours of work may be long. The number of hours worked in Bengal and in other parts of northern India is the same as in Assam. In the South, work continues from 7.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., with a break of an hour or so for the midday meal.[1] Such hours appear to be too long for children, but their work is generally light and is often done in a leisurely way. Moreover, they are generally employed on a piece basis and may stop working whenever they like.

The hours of work of children over 13 years of age in mines are legally the same as those of adults. Actual hours of work, are, however, different from those permitted by the Indian Mines Act. Since the nature of children's work resembles that of women, some idea of their actual hours of work may be gained from statistics of the length of women's hours. In 1931, for instance, the weekly hours of women in the different classes of mines were found to vary from 35 to 48 for underground work, from 37 to 60 for work in open mines, and from 24 to 54 for surface work. In the coal mines of Jharia and Raniganj, where the largest number of mining workers are employed, the weekly hours of women were 44 for underground work, from 43 to 48 in open workings, and from 49 to 50 for surface work.[2]

While the hours of work of children between the ages of 12 and 15 years may be 36 a week in factories, in practice children in a considerable number of factories work shorter hours. The actual hours worked by children in 1931 were 30 hours a week or less in 30 per cent. of the perennial factories and in 48 per cent. of the seasonal factories; since 1930 there has been a tendency to reduce the hours of work in seasonal factories.[3] Taking the two classes of factories together, it will be seen from

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 400.
[2] *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India*, 1931, p. 85.
[3] *Statistics of Factories subject to the Indian Factories Act*, 1931, p. 3.

the following table [1] that hours of work were less than 30 a week in about two-fifths of all factories.

HOURS OF WORK OF FACTORY CHILDREN IN 1931

Class of factories	Total number of factories employing children	Factories in which children's normal weekly hours are :			
		30 or less		over 30	
		Number	Per cent. of total	Number	Per cent. of total
Perennial	656	198	30	458	70
Seasonal	480	229	48	251	52
Total	1,136	427	38	709	62

It is also of interest to note that in practice the hours worked by children tend to be about half those worked by adult men and women. In 1923, for instance, average daily hours of work for children in different industrial centres of the Presidency of Bombay were only 5 hours, as compared with 10½ hours for men and 9 hours 36 minutes for women.

AVERAGE DAILY HOURS OF WORK IN BOMBAY PRESIDENCY IN AUGUST 1923 [1]

Centre	Average daily hours of work		
	Men	Women	Children
	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.
Bombay City	10 0	9 30	4 40
Ahmedabad	10 0	9 50	5 0
Sholapur	10 0	10 0	5 0
Baroda State	11 20	10 50	5 30
Other centres	10 20	9 50	5 6
Bombay Presidency	10 5	9 36	5 0

[1] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1923*, p. 22.

[3] *Ibid.*

It seems probable, therefore, that if the proposed amendment to the Factories Act is passed and hours of work in perennial factories are reduced to 9 hours a day for adults, the daily hours of work of children may be automatically reduced to 4½ hours. [1]

It should also be remembered, in considering children's actual hours of work in Indian factories, that children as well as adults leave the workrooms for longer or shorter periods during working hours to a much greater extent than in Western countries.

In unregulated factories it is admitted that children's hours of work are excessive. "In such places", says the Royal Commission on Labour, "there has hitherto been no regulation as to either the starting age or the maximum hours of labour and a considerable volume of employment exists throughout the country of children of tender years for excessive hours." [2] In *bidi* factories, for instance, young children work as many as 10 or 12 hours a day; in carpet factories, they are obliged to work any number of hours required by their masters; and in tanneries, their hours of work sometimes exceed those of adults, owing to the fact that they are required to do additional work, such as carrying water. Excessive hours of work for children also prevail in other unregulated factories. [3] It must, however, be pointed out that in those undertakings which do not employ machinery, the pace of work is dilatory and the discipline anything but strict. The Royal Commission of Labour therefore recommended that the hours of work for children in these undertakings should be limited to 7 a day. [4]

There is at present no limitation of the hours of work of dock labourers, and the Royal Commission on Labour recommended that normal hours should be fixed at 9 a day and some allowance made for overtime. This recommendation is still under consideration by the Government. The number of children employed in the shipping industry is insignificant, but some young persons are employed as trimmers and stokers in coasting ships. By notification under the Indian Merchant Shipping Act of 1923, the hours of work of these young persons have been limited to 6 in any period of 24 hours. [5]

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[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 52.
[2] *Idem*, p. 101.
[3] *Idem*, pp. 96, 98, 101.
[4] *Idem*, p. 101.
[5] *Gazette of India*, 5 Dec. 1931, Part I, p. 1146.

Spreadover and Night Work

An important problem of working hours is that designated by the Royal Commission on Labour in India as the " spreadover ", i.e. the period within which the daily maximum hours prescribed may be worked. It is obvious that undue extension of this period may seriously interfere with night rest, open-air recreation, and in some cases with any educational facilities that may be available. Normally, the length of the spreadover is equal to the maximum hours of work plus the prescribed break of an hour or half an hour, but in some cases the maximum hours may be divided into two or more spells separated by long intervals.

In most industries, the question of the spreadover does not arise, but in others it presents a real problem. It does not, for instance, arise on plantations, where, except for the midday rest, which is usually longer than in other industries, the maximum hours are worked consecutively. On the other hand, the problem is serious in the case of mines, especially in underground work, and the limitation of hours to 12 a day by the amending Act of 1928 did not really solve it. It is hoped that the proposed limitation of underground work to 9 hours a day will do much more in this direction.

The problem of the spreadover is, however, most complicated in factories, since with the installation of electricity the work can be prolonged until late at night. Under the Indian Factories Act, the possible spreadover consists of the 13½ hours between 5.30 a.m. and 7 p.m. This long period during which children can be employed has given rise to serious abuses. In two cotton mills in the South, for instance, the Royal Commission found that the interval between two shifts amounted to 7 hours. In Bengal jute mills the adults and some of the children began work at 5 a.m. and finished at 7 p.m. under the multiple-shift system.[1] In 1932, however, all the jute mills included within the membership of the Jute Mills Association adopted temporarily the single-shift system and decided to work 40 hours a week. The majority of the mills worked 10 hours a day for four days in the week, and the hours were usually from 5.30 to 10.30 a.m. and from 1.30 to 6.30 p.m.[2] The half-time employment of children under these circumstances presents no difficulties.

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[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 47.

[2] INDIAN JUTE MILLS ASSOCIATION: *Report of a Survey of Women Workers in Jute Mills, 1931-1932*, p. 3.

The abuses in connection with a long spreadover are evident. It often implies beginning work very early and finishing late, entailing considerable hardship in the case of children who have to walk long distances to the factories and to their homes after work. The Royal Commission on Labour recommended the reduction of the spreadover, including rest periods, for children to a period of 7½ consecutive hours in perennial and seasonal factories and 9 hours in unregulated factories.[1]

There is no night work in plantation industries, which only work during the hours of daylight, and night work of children under 15 years of age is prohibited in factories covered by the Indian Factories Act. In mines, however, children over 13 years of age can still be employed at night.

Intervals and Days of Rest

As regards intervals of rest, no regular rest period is given on plantations, where work is more or less desultory, except for the midday meal. No intervals are prescribed for children working in mines, but in coal mines, where they are usually employed in filling tubs, there is always a break after the filling of each tub. In factories, however, where the speed of work is relatively high and children are employed in processes which require more or less continuous attention, the question of rest is important. The Factories Act at present provides that, if children work 5½ hours a day, no break need be allowed, but if more than 5½ hours is worked, half an hour's rest must be given after not more than 4 hours' work. In practice, the very great majority of the factories have provided regular intervals of rest for their workers. In 1931, for instance, out of 8,143 factories, 6,583 or 81 per cent. had provided for intervals of rest of varying lengths.[2]

Under the proposed amendment of the Factories Act, the hours of work of children would be 5 a day, which might mean even 4½ hours in the majority of factories, and the question has been raised whether a rest period should be granted within such a relatively short working period. A 5-hour period of unbroken work is undoubtedly objectionable, as has been pointed out by the Royal Commission on Labour, but at the same time the provision of a rest in this period might result in split shifts and

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 101.

[2] Compiled from *Statistics of Factories Subject to the Indian Factories Act*, 1931, pp. 32-33.

tend, therefore, to keep the children away from their homes for longer periods. As much of the work done by children in mills at present is intermittent and the hours of work would probably be 4½ a day in the majority of factories, an interval of rest is not, perhaps, necessary. The Royal Commission of Labour recommended that, whenever children were employed for 4½ or 5 hours, employers should arrange the work in such a way that the children should have at least one break. [1]

The weekly rest is also very important, especially for children. The very idea of a free day fills their hearts with a feeling of relief and joy, the value of which cannot be over-estimated.

In the days of indentured labour on plantations, the working week was restricted to six days, thus ensuring a compulsory holiday for all workers, adults and children, and this custom holds good up to the present day. As regards mines, the Indian Mines Act provides that no person may be employed for more than six days in the week, although no restriction is placed in the number of days a mine may operate. In practice, however, most coal mines work only five days in the week.

In factories the law prescribes a weekly rest for children. Generally, the day of rest is Sunday, but employers may substitute for a Sunday any of the three days preceding or following it, subject to the condition that no one may work more than ten days consecutively. The object of this provision is to enable important religious festivals to be substituted for Sundays, and this system is generally appreciated by employers and workers alike. In 1931, for instance, out of 8,143 factories, 2,104 granted the rest day on Sunday and 4,010 partly on Sunday and partly on a week day. The number of factories in which the rest day was granted simultaneously to all the workers was, therefore, 6,114, or 75 per cent. of the total. [2]

Wages and Earnings

The wages and earnings of children in India vary from industry to industry and from locality to locality, alike in regard to the methods of calculation and payment of wages, the rates and movements of wages, and the extent of bonuses and concessions.

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[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 53.

[2] Compiled from *Statistics of Factories subject to the Indian Factories Act*, 1931, pp. 32-33.

Calculation and Payment of Wages

In the tea gardens of Assam, the older system of fixing wages, which is still in operation in many gardens, is known as the *hazira* and *ticca* system. Under this system, the worker does a standard daily task, the *hazira,* which he may be able to complete in four to five hours, thus leaving time for *ticca,* or extra work. This system has, however, been largely replaced by the unit system, under which the worker is paid for a given unit of work. Both these systems are varieties of piece work, time rates being paid only for irregular work. [1]

Most of the workers on plantations are employed in gangs under the supervision of *sardars* or *maistries,* who, in addition to fixed monthly wages, receive bonuses on the total earnings of the workers employed under them. Payment is generally made directly to the workers, but instances are known, e.g. in a number of gardens in the Dooars in Bengal, where payment is made in a lump sum to the *sardars,* who in turn pay their workers. [2]

Practically all work in mines is paid at piece rates, the unit of payment for cutters and loaders being the tub. Payment may be made either to individual workers, or to the gangs or families filling the tubs.

In factories, both time and piece rates are common, and sometimes they are combined. The majority of the children in cotton mills in the Presidency of Bombay are, however, employed on time rates. Of the 17,152 older boys (i.e. from 14 to 18 years of age) investigated in August 1923, 97.4 per cent. were employed on time rates. In Bombay there is a "basic" rate, which is generally the rate existing before the war, to which is added a cost-of-living allowance. In some occupations, however, these two rates have been consolidated. [3]

The periodicity of wage payments varies widely. Wages are paid daily in the case of casual and unskilled workers all over the country, weekly in the coalfields of Jharia, the tea gardens of Darjeeling and of the Surma Valley, and the jute mills of Calcutta, fortnightly in the cotton mills of Ahmedabad, and monthly in the cotton mills of Bombay, the tea gardens of the Assam Valley, and some other industries in various parts of the country. [4]

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India,* pp. 381, 383-384, 398-401.
[2] *Idem,* p. 399.
[3] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY: *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1923,* pp. 4 and 12.
[4] *Bulletin of Indian Industries and Labour,* No. 34, 1925, pp. 10-24; GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY: *Memorandum to the Royal Commission on Labour,* pp. 119-120.

The most objectionable feature of the system of wage payment in India is the long period for which most of the workers have to wait before the payment is made. This period varies from two to five days in the case of weekly wages, from five to seven days in the case of fortnightly wages, and from ten to fifteen days or even longer in the case of monthly wages. Although an interim payment is made in the case of monthly wages, the inconvenience caused by this long delay is obviously very great to the workers, most of whom have to make purchases on credit or even to borrow money from money-lenders at a high rate of interest.

Another very objectionable feature of the wage system is the custom of making deductions from wages for breaches of discipline, bad or negligent work, damage to plant, services rendered by employers, etc. Among 12,031 establishments enquired into in 1926, 441 or over one-third had the system of making deductions from wages on one or more of the above grounds. In 45 factories in the Presidency of Bombay employing 1,497 children, there were 1,223 instances in the first ten months of the year 1926 in which children were fined for one or more of the above reasons, the total amount of the deductions being Rs. 148-13-3, or 1 anna and 11 pies per offence.

DEDUCTIONS FROM CHILDREN'S WAGES IN TEXTILE MILLS IN BOMBAY PRESIDENCY, 1926 [1]

Reason for deduction	Number of instances	Total amount deducted		
		Rs.	a.	p.
Breach of discipline	44	11	10	9
Bad or negligent work	11	1	6	6
Damage to plant	236	19	15	0
Others	932	116	13	0
Total	1,223	149	13	3

[1] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY: *Report of an Enquiry into Deductions from Wages or Payment in respect of Fines*, pp. 90-91. 1928.

From the above table, it will be seen that of 1,223 instances of deductions, 932, or 76.21 per cent. of the total, were for reasons other than breaches of discipline, neglect of work, and damage

to plant. These deductions were generally fines for loss of identification cards and amounted to about 2 annas per instance.

In order to minimise the evils of tardy wage payment and deductions, the Government of India has introduced a Payment of Wages Bill, which applies to wages payable to persons receiving less than Rs.100 a month. It provides that wages must ordinarily be paid to factory workers within seven days of the expiry of the period within which they have been earned, or within two days in case of discharge, and that deductions from the wages of factory and railway workers shall be restricted to half an anna in the rupee (one thirty-second part of wages) in respect of fines of adult workers, to the actual loss or wholesale price of the article damaged, or to the actual value of the service rendered by the employer. Under the provisions of this Bill, no person under 15 years of age may be fined. [1]

A private Bill for the protection of wages which has recently been introduced, and which seeks to limit the evils of the besetting or intimidation of workers by money-lenders in the collection of the principal or interest of loans in or about industrial undertakings, would also have some application to children. [2]

Rates and Movements of Wages

Reliable data on wage rates on plantations are available only in the case of the Assam tea gardens, as shown in the table below. It will be seen that the rates of wages are much higher in the Assam Valley than in the Surma Valley, and that the rates for children are roughly about one-half and two-thirds of those for men and women respectively.

MONTHLY WAGE RATES IN ASSAM TEA GARDENS, 1931-1932 [1]

Class of workers	Assam Valley			Surma Valley		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Men	12	8	5	7	14	11
Women	9	8	7	6	1	1
Children	6	15	8	4	9	1

[1] Compiled from *Report on Immigrant Labour in the Province of Assam*, 1931-1932, Statements, VII. Average wages calculated on the average daily working strength in two typical months, September and March, excluding non-cash payments.

[1] *Gazette of India*, 4 Feb. 1933, Part V, p. 9.

[2] *Idem*, 1 April 1933, Part V, p. 61.

Some indications as to wages in other plantation areas were collected by the Royal Commission on Labour in 1929 and 1930, but since then there has been a decline in wages owing to the economic depression. Nevertheless, the Commission's figures give some idea of the rates of wages of children in different centres. It will be seen from the table below that the daily wage rates of children were highest in the Madras Presidency and Coorg, and that in Coorg their earnings varied from one-third to one-half those of men, and from one-half to three-fourths those of women.

DAILY WAGE RATES OF CHILDREN ON PLANTATIONS IN VARIOUS PROVINCES [1]

Locality	Men		Women		Children	
	As.	p.	As.	p.	As.	p.
The Dooars and the Terai [2]	8	11	6	5	1	9
Darjeeling	7	6	6	0	2	9
Madras	7	6	5	0	2 3	0 0
Coorg	6	0	4	0	2 3	0 0

[1] Compiled from *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, pp. 399-400.
[2] Calculated from monthly rates on the basis of 26 days to the month.

As regards the movement of wages, the only data available for plantations are those for the Assam tea gardens. The following table shows that there was an increase in 1929-1930 as compared with 1923-1924, followed by a decrease in 1931-1932, in both the Assam and Surma Valleys.

The decline in wages in 1931-1932 is the result of the depression in the tea industry, which has resulted in reducing the opportunities of earning *ticca,* or additional pay for work over and above the standard task. However, there has also been a decrease in the price level of almost all commodities, and the standard of living of the working class is said to have undergone very little, if any, change on plantations.

No data are available as to the wages of children employed in the different mining industries, but since children often work with women they may earn approximately the same wages, and some idea of the wages of children may be gained from those of women in coal and mica mines in 1925. The weekly wages of

MONTHLY WAGES OF CHILDREN IN ASSAM TEA GARDENS IN SPECIFIED YEARS [1]

Year	Assam Valley			Surma Valley		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
1923-1924	5	4	9	4	11	4
1929-1930 [2]	7	4	7	5	6	2
1931-1932	6	15	8	4	9	1

[1] Compiled from *Report on Immigrant Labour in the Province of Assam* for the years indicated. Average monthly wages calculated on the average daily working strength in two typical months, September and March.

[2] Total monthly cash earnings excluding diet, rations, and subsistence allowance (average of two months). Figures for earlier years were calculated upon a different basis and included *ticca*, diet, rations, subsistence allowance, and bonus per head. Cf. *Report on Immigrant Labour in the Province of Assam*, 1921-1922, Statement VII.

women were Rs. 2-8 for underground work and Rs. 2-4 for surface work in the Jharia coalfield ; their daily wages were As. 3-6 in open workings and As. 3-9 for surface work in the mica mines of Bihar and Orissa. [1]

Data regarding the wages of children in factories have been compiled only for the Bombay textile mills, where enquiries have been made by the Bombay Labour Office. The recorded wages include basic rates, cost-of-living allowances, attendance bonuses, and, in the case of Sholapur, the monthly value of the grain concession. In the table below it will be seen that in 1926 wages in Ahmedabad were much higher than in Sholapur. Children earned less than one-fourth as much as men in both places, less

AVERAGE MONTHLY EARNINGS FOR FULL-TIME WORK IN COTTON MILLS IN THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY, 1926 [1]

Class of workers	Ahmedabad			Sholapur		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Men	38	4	0	26	10	2
Women	21	1	6	11	6	7
Children	9	11	6	6	13	10

[1] The figures for Ahmedabad are for May and those for Sholapur are for July 1926 ; full time means 27 days for the former and 26 days for the latter. Cf. GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1926*, p. 44.

[1] Compiled from *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India*, 1931, p. 6.

than half as much as women in Ahmedabad, and little more than half as much as women in Sholapur. No children were found employed in the mills investigated in Bombay City in 1926.

The above earnings are calculated on the basis of full-time work, and are therefore higher than average actual earnings, as a large number of children are usually absent. The average actual earnings in Sholapur, for instance, were only Rs. 5-10-4, instead of Rs. 6-13-10 as shown in the above table. [1]

Some idea of the movement of wages in factories may be obtained from the data available for Bombay textile mills. It will be seen from the table below [2] that, as compared with 1914, the monthly earnings of older boys and children, on a full-time basis (i.e. counting two half-timers as one full-time worker), had more than doubled in 1921, but have declined since then.

Date	Full-time monthly earnings		
	Rs.	a.	p.
1914 (May)	7	13	4
1921 (May)	17	3	7
1923 (August)	16	9	6
1926 (May and July) [1]	16	2	4

[1] Average of the earnings of children for full-time work at Ahmedabad and Sholapur. Computed from : GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1926*, p. 44.

Cost-of-living allowances were first introduced by the Bombay Millowners' Association in January 1918, when an allowance of 15 per cent. was granted to all mill workers. On 1 January 1920 the increase was raised to 70 per cent. in some cases and 80 per cent. in others. These allowances have been maintained as a separate item in the payroll. Similar allowances were also made in Ahmedabad.

In addition to regular employment, children are also to some extent employed casually on daily rates both in factories and in various miscellaneous occupations. These children are paid roughly about 4 annas a day, as compared with 8 annas for men and 6 annas for women in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and parts of the Central Provinces. The rates are lower in Madras, the United Provinces, and parts of the Central Provinces, and higher in Bombay, Burma, the Punjab, and Delhi. [3]

[1] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1926*, p. 43.

[2] IDEM : *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1923*, p. 11.

[3] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 203.

Bonuses and Concessions

In many industries the earnings of children are increased by different systems of bonuses and concessions. According to the enquiry made in 1926 by the Bombay Labour Office, all the 192 children in two representative cotton mills in Sholapur and 99.2 per cent. of the 647 children in sixteen representative cotton mills in Ahmedabad received bonuses. The average bonus per child amounted to Rs. 0-8-11 per month in Ahmedabad, and Rs. 1-2-8 per month in Sholapur. [1]

It is difficult to estimate the money value of different kinds of bonuses and concessions granted to all classes of workers, including children, in various industries, but they form a substantial part of their income, especially in plantations and mines. They may be briefly classified under the following headings: (1) free, or partly free, quarters in most of the mines, plantations, and some factories; (2) medical help in almost all industries; (3) free fuel in coalfields and plantations; (4) land, either free or at a reduced rate, for gardening, pasturing, and cultivation in most of the plantations; (5) purchase of commodities at a reduced price, or advance of money at a low rate of interest in isolated cases. Some of these bonuses and concessions concern families rather than individuals, but others directly benefit children as workers. [2]

Welfare and Education

In the absence of general public provision for housing, medical care, etc., the work of employers, trade unions, and private organisations has particular significance for child welfare. Moreover, since compulsory elementary education has not yet been generally established in India, the education and training schemes for children initiated or supported by employers are also of special importance.

Welfare Work

There are four main agencies by which welfare work is carried out in India: (1) employers, whose activities lie chiefly

[1] Data for the month of May in the case of Ahmedabad and for July in the case of Sholapur. Compiled from: Government of Bombay: *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1926*, pp. 65, 159, 161.

[2] Government of Bombay: *Report on an Enquiry into Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry in 1926*, p 168.

in the supply of housing and medical help; (2) semi-public organisations, such as Port Trusts and Municipalities, which have undertaken specific work in Bombay, for instance, for the reduction of infant mortality; (3) private organisations, of which the most important are the Social Service League, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the workmen's institutes and *seva sadan* (social service) organisations; and (4) labour organisations, such as the Labour Union of Ahmedabad, the *Kamgar Hitawardhak Sabha* (Workers' Welfare Association), and some of the postal unions in different parts of the Bombay Presidency, which carry on welfare activities for the benefit of their members.

Housing [1], which is of great importance for child welfare, is generally unsatisfactory in India, and has become a problem of the first magnitude in industrial centres as a result of lack of sanitation and overcrowding.

Most of the workers on plantations and mines and many factory workers are housed by employers. In Calcutta and the vicinity, for instance, 53 jute mills accommodated from 30 to 40 per cent. of their workers in 1930 [2]; in Ahmedabad, 34 cotton mills provided housing for 58 per cent. of their workers in 1931 [3]; in Bombay, 28 textile mills provided single-room tenements for 20 per cent. of their workers in 1930 [4]; and Port Trusts housed 3,502 of their 9,342 workers, i.e. 37.2 per cent., at the end of 1931. [5] Employers in such cities as Nagpur, Cawnpore, and Madras also house a part of their workers.

By far the largest number of workers, however, live in private tenements. Nearly 89 per cent. of the workers in Bombay and 82 per cent. in Ahmedabad live in one-room tenements. [6] Most of these tenements are overcrowded, and the average number of persons living in them in Bombay City, for instance, was 3.7 per old tenement and 4.25 per new tenement. [7]

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[1] Housing conditions have been more fully discussed by the writer in a previous article on "Woman Labour in India" (cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5, Nov. 1931, pp. 552-556).

[2] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 272. These figures were collected by the Commission in 1929 and 1930; it is assumed that they refer to 1930.

[3] *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), Sept. 1931, p. 58.

[4] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 273.

[5] *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), Nov. 1932, p. 119.

[6] *Idem*, Jan. 1931, p. 480; Nov. 1931, p. 58.

[7] *Idem*, May 1931, p. 890.

Sanitation is lacking in most of the workers' dwellings. Planning is generally unknown ; the houses are built close to one another, without leaving sufficient space for streets and roads, and are often in a dilapidated condition ; they lack lighting and ventilation, adequate latrine systems, and sufficient pure water ; and the courtyards and surroundings are full of dust, garbage, and filth. It is not surprising therefore that there are frequent outbreaks of cholera, smallpox, and plague. In brief, the majority of the workers' dwellings in industrial centres are unsanitary, congested, and overcrowded, and are unfit for human habitation.

A direct effect of insanitation and overcrowding is the high rate of mortality among infants. An investigation of 6,857 deaths out of 21,685 births in 1927 indicated that while the average infant mortality was 316 per 1,000 births, it was 490 in the case of one-room tenements, 203 in the case of two-room tenements, 222 in the case of three-room tenements, and 195 in the case of tenements of four or more rooms[1]. Although much has been done by some employers, there is therefore an urgent need for the provision of housing by the public authorities.

The Royal Commission on Labour made several recommendations for improving housing accommodation, of which the most important are : (1) a survey of urban and industrial areas by provincial Governments to ascertain housing needs, and the laying down of minimum standards regarding cubic space, ventilation and lighting, drainage and sanitation ; (2) the development and lay-out of industrial areas, and the provision and maintenance of proper sanitary conditions by local authorities ; (3) the amendment of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, to enable land to be acquired when it is intended for the housing of labour, either by companies or by other employers.[2] In order to give effect to the last recommendation, the Government of India has introduced a Bill into the Legislature.[3]

Both the prevalence of disease and the lack of adequate medical arrangements have made it necessary for employers to establish medical services in a large number of organised industries (plantations, mines, and factories). The benefits of these medical services are often not confined to actual workers, but are

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India* pp. 272, 276, 277 ; *Statistics of Factories subject to the Indian Factories Act*, 1928, p. 5 ; 1931, p. 5.

[2] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, pp. 286, 287, and 291.

[3] Since this article was written the Bill has been passed. Cf. *Gazette of India*, 16 Sept. 1933, Part IV, p. 34.

extended to the whole labour population, especially in plantation areas and mining districts.

The physique of plantation labourers and their families is generally satisfactory and the standard is higher than among the population of the recruiting areas. In many of the larger and more progressive concerns, medical arrangements are of a high standard, but in smaller tea gardens they are often unsatisfactory, both as regards staff and facilities of treatment. [1]

In the coalfields, as already mentioned, the health of the workers is taken care of by the Asansol Mines Board of Health and the Jharia Mines Board of Health, organised for the purpose.

Many of the larger factories have also organised medical services ; some of the jute mills on the Hooghly, for example, have admirably planned medical arrangements. Other undertakings have small dispensaries attached to the works, patients suffering from serious illnesses being sent to the local or municipal hospitals. There are still other industrial concerns which have made no medical arrangements of any kind for their workers, their contention being that the whole responsibility for the provision of such service should properly lie with the municipality or local boards concerned. [2]

The adequate protection of mothers and infants, including anti-natal and post-natal care, is also of great importance for the welfare of future young workers. Both maternal mortality and infant mortality are very high in India. An analysis of 9,373 maternity cases in 31 tea gardens in the Assam Valley over a period of three years, 1930-1932, showed that the rate of maternal mortality was 42 per 1,000 births, or nearly ten times as high as in England. [3] The records of the maternity benefit scheme in Calcutta also showed that maternity mortality per 1,000 births was 22 in 1929, 11.3 in 1930 and 7.9 in 1931. [4]

As regards infant mortality, the enquiry made by the Bombay Labour Office in September 1930 shows that in 5,911 cases of childbirth among women workers there were 190 stillbirths, or 33 per 1,000 births, and of the infants born alive 1,159, or

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[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, pp. 405 and 410.

[2] JHARIA MINES BOARD OF HEALTH : *Annual Report for 1929-1930; Annual Administrative Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health*, 1930-1931 ; *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 258.

[3] M. L. BALFOUR, C.B.E., M.B., F.C.O.G. : *Report of a Tour in Assam Tea Gardens in 1932*, p. 2.

[4] INDIAN JUTE MILLS ASSOCIATION : *Report of a Survey of Women Workers in Jute Mills, 1931-1932*, p. 10.

202 per 1,000 births, died before they reached the age of one year. In 1930-1931, the infant mortality rate was 129.2 per 1,000 births in the Raniganj coalfield. [1]

The high rates of both maternal and infant mortality show the necessity of granting maternity benefit. This means that expectant mothers should be granted rest and benefit immediately before and after childbirth.

Voluntary maternity benefit schemes exist in a number of industries. Most of the large tea gardens in Assam and Bengal have adopted some form or other of maternity benefit. In Assam, for instance, the leave may extend as long as six months, part being given before and part after delivery, and the benefit may be from 1 rupee to 1½ rupees, or at the rate of 5 seers (about 10 lb.) of rice and 4 annas cash, per week. Most gardens also pay the wages of one or more *dais* (midwives) to attend confinements, though the *dais* are, as a rule, not trained. Moreover, the benefits paid not being equal to the wages which the women workers can earn, they often prefer to work as long as they can. Several gardens have recently stopped paying benefits, owing to the depression. [2]

The importance of granting maternity benefit has not yet been fully realised by mine owners. The Jharia Board of Health has, however, sanctioned an experimental maternity scheme at a cost of Rs. 6,000 per annum, and in November 1930 a health officer was appointed to supervise the work of midwives employed on a group of collieries in the Jharia coalfields. [3]

The jute mills in Bengal have also realised the importance of granting maternity benefit and in 1929 the Indian Jute Mills Association recommended the introduction of the system by its members. By 1931, out of 64 mills, 53 had adopted a maternity benefit scheme. The number of women who received benefits was 958 in 1921, 2,142 in 1930, and 2,380 in 1931. The amount of benefit differed in different mills ; in 5 mills it equalled the wages earned, in 42 mills the benefit was at the rate of Rs. 2-4-0 per week, and in others the rate varied from Rs. 2-1-0 to Rs. 3 per week. The duration of benefit was four weeks in 48 mills. [4]

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[1] *Annual Administrative Report of the Asansol Mines Board of Health*, 1930-1931, p. 7.

[2] *Report of a Tour in Assam Tea Gardens in 1932*, p. 2.

[3] *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India*, 1930, p. 42.

[4] *Report on a Survey of Women Workers in Jute Mills in 1931-1932*, p. 9.

Up to the present only two provinces, Bombay and the Central Provinces, have passed Maternity Benefit Acts for women workers in factories. The maximum period for which the benefit is available is seven weeks in the former and eight weeks in the latter province, while the amount of benefit is 8 annas a day in Bombay and at the average rate of the woman's earnings during the preceding three months in the Central Provinces.[1] The results of the administration of the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act for the first six months of 1929-1930 and subsequent years are shown below :

ADMINISTRATION OF THE BOMBAY MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1929-1932 [1]

Year	Average daily number of women workers	Number of women claiming benefit	Number of women receiving benefit [2]	Claims granted per 100 women employed	Average amount of benefits per claim
					Rs. a. p.
1929-1930 [3]	53,309	2,568	1,700	3.15	20 6 0
1930-1931	51,950	5,963	5,231	10.06	23 3 0
1931-1932	53,487	6,185	5,455	10.20	29 9 0

[1] Compiled from *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), Dec. 1930, pp. 338-341 ; Nov. 1931, pp. 231-233 ; Nov. 1932, pp. 191-193.
[2] Includes claims granted under section 7 of the Act when either the infant or the mother dies during the period for which the benefit is available.
[3] Six months only.

The Royal Commission on Labour has recommended that maternity benefit legislation should be enacted throughout India on the lines of the schemes operating in Bombay and the Central Provinces, this legislation to be applicable to all permanent factories and plantations, and to provide benefit for four weeks before and four weeks after childbirth.[2]

Ignorance and poverty leading to the neglect of infants are the greatest obstacles to the work of protecting infancy. In this connection, reference must be made to the evil practice, found in some parts of India, of administering opium to infants. In 1922 the Government of Bombay appointed a woman doctor, and her investigations led to the discovery of the fact that 98 per cent. of infants born to industrial women workers in Bombay had

[1] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Memorandum to the Royal Commission on Labour*, p. 54 : Bombay Act (VII) of 1929 ; *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), 1931, pp. 789-793.
[2] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, pp. 263-265, 412.

opium administered to them in one form or another, and that this was responsible for much of the "atrophy" group of diseases met with among infants in Bombay.[1]

This problem, like that of the bringing of babies into the workshops, shows the importance of providing crèches where infants can be cared for while their mothers are at work. Although the importance of establishing crèches has long been realised, up to 1931 the number of mills which provided crèches was only 24 in Bombay, 7 in Sholapur, and 16 in Ahmedabad.[2] Some of the textile mills in Madras and Nagpur have up-to-date crèches, but until recently the system of providing crèches was almost unknown in Bengal jute mills. The jute mill owners began an enquiry into the matter some two years ago with a view to the establishment of crèches, but the progress which has been made up to the present is said to be insignificant.

The Royal Commission on Labour recommended that there should be compulsory provision of crèches in all factories employing 250 women, or even fewer in certain cases.[3] The draft Factory Bill, to which reference has already been made, suggests that rooms should be reserved for the use of the children of women workers, and that, where such rooms are provided, no children below six years of age should be admitted to the place in which the manufacturing process is being carried out.

Finally, the importance of welfare work in the homes of the workers cannot be over-estimated.

Home life on plantations and mines resembles more or less that in the villages from which the workers are recruited. Although the environment, including climate, food, and habits of life, is different, and very often people of different races are employed together, the very fact that groups of families are recruited from the same districts and are employed in the same undertaking creates a good deal of resemblance with life in the villages. Most of the workers on plantations and mines, however, belong to the aboriginal races, or the so-called low castes, and the lives of the majority are dominated by tribal tradition and superstition. Moreover, drinking and drug habits, to which they have long been addicted, have increased with improved economic conditions.

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[1] *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), Oct. 1931, p. 153.

[2] The figure for Ahmedabad refers to the year 1927; the number has since increased. Cf. *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), Oct. 1931, p. 155.

[3] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, p. 66.

The home life of factory workers has been much more influenced by the changed environment than that of workers in mines and on plantations. The family system tends to break down among the migrant factory workers, and the housing in tenements in "lines", "*bustees*", "*chawls*", etc., with their unsanitary conditions and uninviting surroundings, can scarcely supply the physical basis on which home and family life can be built. There is also a great disparity between the sexes, the number of women per 1,000 men being only 444 in Rangoon, 500 in Calcutta, 524 in Bombay, 667 in Cawnpore, and 763 in Ahmedabad, a situation which has led to a great deal of prostitution in these industrial centres. It is not surprising that drinking, gambling, and other vices are common in the slums in which so many factory workers have to live.

It would be out of place to attempt to describe here in detail the work that is being carried on, mostly by private religious organisations, in the workers' homes or in an endeavour to create a healthy social life both for adult workers and for their children. This work usually takes the form of institutes for recreation and education, founded sometimes by or with the aid of employers, as well as attempts to stimulate the workers to adopt higher standards in the home. Unfortunately, this work only touches the fringe of the many problems that have been created by the *laissez-faire* policy of industrial development in India.

Education and Training

Among the larger countries of the world, India is the most backward as far as literacy is concerned. Of the total population of 353 million, only 28 million, or about 8 per cent., were literate in 1931.[1] That most of the workers are illiterate can fairly be assumed. "In India", says the Royal Commission on Labour, "nearly the whole mass of industrial labour is illiterate, a state of affairs which is unknown in any other country of industrial importance. It is almost impossible to over-estimate the consequences of this disability, which are obvious in wages, in health, in productivity, in organisation and in several other directions."[2]

The total number of children who attend school at present is insignificant. Out of an estimated total of 72 million children

[1] *East India (Census 1931): Abstract of Tables*, p. 5.
[2] *Report*, p. 27.

of school-going age (i.e. from 5 to 14 years) in British India, only 11.64 million were attending primary and secondary schools in 1930-1931. Including students in higher education, only 12.68 million, or 3.6 per cent. of the total population, were in educational institutions in British India, as compared with 15 per cent. in England and Wales. [1]

The fundamental cause of the illiteracy of the Indian masses is the lack of compulsory education. Attempts were made as early as 1911 to introduce compulsory education in India, and since 1918 eight provinces have passed Primary Education Acts authorising the introduction of compulsory education by local option, in either urban or rural areas or both, for boys or for both boys and girls from 6 to 10 years of age. In some cases education may be extended to a longer period. [2] In 1929-1930, however, only 132 municipalities and 3,137 rural areas, out of a total of 500,088 towns and villages in British India, had introduced primary education. [3]

The lack of general education has also retarded the growth of vocational education or a conscious and purposive training for an industrial career. The necessity for technical education has long been realised and the Industrial Commission of 1916-1918 elaborated a scheme of technical education [4], but little progress has been made in that line. In 1930-1931, for instance, out of about 12.68 million children and young people attending educational institutions, only 2,092 were in engineering and surveying schools, 27,209 in technical and industrial schools, 6,519 in commercial schools, and 561 in agricultural schools. [5]

Like technical education for organised industry, vocational education in unorganised industries, such as arts and crafts, is inadequate. Such education was first introduced by the Christian missionaries in Madras in the seventies of the last century and has since been started in other provinces. At present it is imparted by three agencies, namely, Governments, local bodies

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[1] Compiled from *Statistical Abstract for British India*, 1933, p. 370, and *Statesman's Year Book*, 1933. (Out of a total population of 39.98 million in England and Wales in 1931, there were 6,007,657 pupils and students, consisting of 5,514,401 in elementary schools, 452,578 in secondary schools, and 40,678 in universities.)

[2] *Indian Year Book*, 1932-1933, p. 347.

[3] *India in 1930-1931*, p. 626. The number of towns and villages is taken from the 1921 census.

[4] *Report of the Indian Industrial Commission 1916-1918*, pp. 99-119.

[5] *Statistical Abstract for British India*, 1933, p. 371.

(municipalities), and private enterprise, including missionary schools [1], but the progress made is insignificant.

Educational facilities provided by employers are therefore of considerable importance, a fact which was realised as early as 1908 by the Indian Factory Labour Commission. In accordance with its suggestions, the Government of Bombay sanctioned in 1913 the opening of special schools for factory workers at an annual cost of Rs. 2,080. [2] A special simplified course was drawn up and sanctioned by these schools. Owing, however, to the migratory habits of the children's families, the spasmodic attendance and defective accommodation, comparatively little progress was made. According to the report of the Government of India, only 17 per cent. of the children employed in certain provinces were actually attending school in 1913. [3]

In 1916 an understanding was arrived at between the representatives of the Bombay Millowners' Association and the Bombay Schools Committee, whereby the Schools Committee and the Millowners' Association undertook to pay fees and give bonuses for regular attendance. In 1917 there were 10 factory schools with an attendance of 465 children in Bombay, but in 1921 there were only five such schools with an attendance of 310 children. It was found that the principal difficulty experienced was unwillingness on the part of the children to attend the schools provided, and the conclusion arrived at was that no rapid progress in the education of factory children could be looked for until compulsory education was introduced in the areas in which these children resided. The Bombay Municipality has now introduced compulsory education in the wards which are generally peopled by mill workers [4], and the Government of Madras has passed orders commending to the Municipalities for sympathetic consideration the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Labour for the introduction of compulsory education. [5]

Elementary schools have also been started by several individual factories in other industrial centres. The education provided by

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[1] *Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-1918*, p. 97 ; A. G. CLOW : *The State and Industry*, p. 15.

[2] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Memorandum to the Royal Commission on Labour*, p. 66.

[3] GOVERNMENT OF INDIA : *The Education of Factory Children in India*, pp. i and ii. Calcutta, 1918.

[4] GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY : *Memorandum to the Royal Commission on Labour*, p. 66.

[5] *Labour Gazette* (Bombay), July 1932, p. 1073.

the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills in Madras, for instance, consists of a sound elementary course, some technical classes, and training in hygiene. Similar educational facilities are offered by the British India Corporation in Cawnpore. The most elaborate system of education has, however, been developed by the Empress Mills in Nagpur. Education commences with nursery and kindergarten classes for infants up to the age of 6 years ; primary schools are provided for children from 6 to 12 years of age, and industrial classes for boys over 12, and factory schools for half-timers. Moreover, an annual contribution of Rs. 35,000 is made to the schools attended by the children and dependants of the workers. [1]

The general tendency among factory employers is to provide schooling for their half-time workers. As to this policy, the Royal Commission on Labour has pointed out that after five or six hours' work half-timers are scarcely in a position to learn anything worth while in factory schools. While recognising that the main responsibility for education in industrial areas cannot be thrown on employers, the Commission points out that it would be in the interests of employers to facilitate the education of workers' children who are not employed, since they would thereby be helping to create a better class of future workers. [2]

Schools have existed for a long time in the coalfields of Bengal and Bihar ; there is even a school run by miners themselves in the Asansol area. In 1929-1930 the number of schools in the coalfields was 17 in the Giridh district and 88 in the Jharia district. But most of these colliery schools are attended by the children of clerks and higher officials rather than by those of ordinary miners. Moreover, there is no concerted action to bring the children of the workers under the provisions of the Bihar and Orissa Primary Education Act of 1919. In view of the fact that children under 13 years of age are excluded from employment in mines and that there is no alternative employment even for older children, the introduction of compulsory primary education becomes particularly necessary in the coalfields, as suggested by the Royal Commission on Labour. [3]

The education of children on plantations presents a special problem in view of the fact that most of the plantations are

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[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, pp. 260-261.
[2] *Idem*, pp. 27-29.
[3] *Idem*, p. 134.

located in out-of-the-way places. The Royal Commission on Labour recommended the co-operation of Government and industry for the education of plantation children on the basis of the Ceylon system, by which the estates make themselves responsible for the building, maintenance, and equipment of suitable schools whenever there are resident on the estates 25 or more children between the ages of 6 and 10 years, and the Government contributes the salary of the teachers and the general supervision of the curriculum and organisation.

The inadequacy of both general and technical education in India also has repercussions on industrial training in the factory and on efficiency and discipline.

From the beginning of modern industry, there has been a shortage of supervisory staff in India. This was natural in a country where industrialism was introduced from abroad and has not grown from within. The deficiency was made good at first by importing European supervisors for modern industrial undertakings, but, in recent years, there has been a tendency to replace Europeans by Indians. Anglo-Indians were the first in the field, but educated Indians have followed them closely. An important method of forming supervising staff is apprenticeship, which has made fair progress in engineering and metal works, such as ordnance factories, railway workshops, and the iron and steel works at Jamshedpur. [1]

The development of the apprenticeship system among Indians has been brought about by several factors : first, the high cost of employing Europeans, especially in these days of keen foreign competition ; secondly, a strong desire for the Indianising of all services as a result of the rising spirit of nationalism ; thirdly, a change of attitude among educated Indians towards the dignity of labour, due partly to economic pressure and partly to decreasing prejudices ; and finally, the growth of technical education enabling young Indians to undertake the work of an apprentice in modern industries.

Efforts to replace European by Indian supervision have not met with the same success in textile mills as in the engineering and metal industries. This is mainly due to the faulty system of engaging and training supervisory staff, as pointed out by the Royal Commission on Labour. [2] Instead of supervisory staff

[1] *Idem*, p. 30.
[2] *Ibid.*

being created by gradual promotion from below, as in England and other countries, they have been appointed from outside and are often ignorant and inexperienced in the actual working of the factory system. The mill owners, however, have been obliged to go outside the mills for their supervising staff, since practically all workers in textile mills are drawn from the peasant population and are illiterate, lacking both technical education and social tradition in the kind of work they are called upon to undertake. The introduction of compulsory primary education in the mill areas of Bombay is a great step forward. But elementary education alone is not sufficient to solve the problem. It must be supplemented by instruction in extension and continuation schools, especially in the case of promising students. What is still more important is the recruitment of young persons from high schools, colleges, or technical schools so that they may be trained for supervisory posts by themselves working through the various factory processes.

Conclusion

In the foregoing pages it has been indicated that, although the exact number of child workers in India cannot be ascertained, it may be assumed that, owing to the large percentage of the total population in the younger age groups, the low average length of life, the extreme poverty of the masses, and the absence of compulsory elementary education, the proportion of children in the working population is larger in India than in most other countries. The number of children employed as wage earners is, however, very small, and that of children in organised industries even smaller. Nevertheless, the employment of a small number of children in modern organised industries has given rise to several social, political, and economic problems.

Children have always helped their parents in agriculture and handicrafts in India and the majority of children no doubt do so even to-day. But the specific problems of child labour arose mostly with the development of modern industry. The employment of children in organised industries under adequate control has, of course, some beneficial aspects : first, it provides an opportunity of adding to the family income, which is extremely low in India ; secondly, it offers the possibility of learning a trade in a country where there are very few new openings in industrial activity ; and finally, it gives the children a chance to come in

contact with the outside world, thus giving them a new outlook on life and bringing a dynamic element into society itself. But to be beneficial the employment of children must be properly organised and regulated, otherwise it is liable to be a danger to society and to the children themselves.

The problems to which the industrial employment of children have given rise may be considered from three distinct points of view, namely : (1) working conditions, (2) living conditions, and (3) social policy.

As has already been shown, increasing attention has been given in India to such main problems of working conditions as the age for admission to employment, health and safety, hours of work, wages, and workmen's compensation ; and the report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, which was issued in June 1931, promises to be the starting-point of a considerable new development of labour legislation.

A most important factor in the revision, amendment, and even initiation of labour legislation in India has, as noted before, been the International Labour Organisation. Since 1919, the International Labour Conference has adopted various Conventions and Recommendations bearing directly or indirectly on child labour, and most of these have been given effect to by the Government of India by legislative or other measures.

It must be recalled that child labour legislation aims at securing health and safety for children and providing them with all the facilities for education in the period which is most suitable to intellectual development. This object is attained by fixing a minimum age below which they may not be employed and also a maximum age up to which they may work only under certain conditions.

Although the minimum age for admission to employment has been progressively raised, it is still below the standard fixed by the Conventions for industrial countries generally. Moreover, there is a lack of uniformity in the provisions relating to factories, mines, and docks, while no legal minimum age has yet been prescribed for plantations, unregulated factories, and non-industrial occupations. The extension of minimum age legislation is no doubt a problem of great difficulty, particularly in the absence of compulsory elementary education. In most countries, the minimum age of employment corresponds with the maximum age for compulsory school attendance. The final solution of the

problem of the employment of young children in India depends, therefore, to a great extent on the organisation of a general system of compulsory elementary education.

As regards other questions of working conditions affecting children, it has been seen that hours of work have been gradually reduced in both factories and mines, and measures are under consideration for their further reduction. Health and safety arrangements are generally satisfactory in new and large undertakings, but leave very much room for improvement in small, seasonal, and unregulated factories as well as in small mines and plantations. Wages have only been dealt with by legislation in India in respect of methods of payment, but it would appear that serious consideration should be given to the establishment of minimum wage fixing machinery in those industries in which children as well as adults are "sweated", particularly in the absence of collective bargaining. Social insurance is represented in Indian labour legislation by the Workmen's Compensation Act, which has recently been amended and extended. Nevertheless, it seems obvious that the development of industry in India is gradually creating a situation which calls for the extension of social insurance, not only in regard to accidents, but also in the case of sickness, old age, and unemployment.

Labour laws, like all laws, are not only useless but may be harmful unless they are properly administered, since once a law is on the statute book both employers and the public feel that their responsibility is diminished in regard to the matters dealt with by the law, whether it is enforced or not. The essential feature of the administration of labour law is inspection, and in this department there has been great improvement in India in recent years in the case of mines and non-seasonal factories. A large number of seasonal factories, however, still remain uninspected, and there is not yet adequate inspection of the Assam tea gardens ; under the present system, a casual visit to a tea garden is made by a subordinate officer only once in two years. Moreover, the employment of large numbers of women and children on plantations, and to a lesser extent in factories and mines, would seem to make the appointment of more women inspectors desirable.

Existing labour legislation still leaves unregulated a large number of occupations, both industrial and non-industrial, and there are three classes of employment to which it would be desirable that the law should be extended without delay :

(1) unregulated factories, especially those which employ women and children ; (2) plantations outside Assam, in which there are about half a million migrant workers, including women and children ; and (3) non-industrial occupations employing children.

The second class of problems concerns the improvement of living conditions with a view to creating a favourable physical and social environment for the development of childhood. The main problems of living conditions are those of housing and hygiene, maternity and infancy, and home and community. At present these problems in India are left to the welfare activities of employers and private organisations, with the exception of the grant of maternity benefit, which is dealt with by legislation in two provinces. The intervention of the public authorities in these matters, which are of such great importance for the moral and material welfare both of children and of the workers generally, is one of the most urgent needs of India.

Housing is the physical basis of home and family life. The lack of proper housing aggravates such problems as the high rate of infant mortality, the low proportion of women to the total population in industrial centres, and the presence of immorality, drunkenness, and gambling among men. Except in special cases, such as seasonal industries and plantations, the supply of housing accommodation by employers or landlords is undesirable, as it is liable to lead to servility, exploitation, and the growth of slums. It is the duty of public and semi-public organisations to provide housing accommodation for workers in industrial centres, so that they can live without fear of eviction and on the payment of a minimum rent.

The provision of suitable housing is not only in the immediate interest of the workers themselves. India needs well-planned and well-organised industrial towns, in which the housing conditions shall be such as to promote the growth of a settled population of efficient workers, able to take an intelligent interest in the development of industry, and in social and civic progress. Moreover, the urbanisation of the population, about nine-tenths of which live in the country, has become an urgent need for relieving the pressure on the land, for saving the people from the tyranny of obsolete social customs, for promoting freedom of thought and action, and for inspiring the younger generation, both boys and girls, with new and higher aims and ideals of life.

Housing improvements must of course be accompanied by the provision of proper sanitation, including modern sewerage

and water supply systems. Such improvements in housing and hygiene will do much for the protection of motherhood and infancy. Nevertheless, it is also important to provide recreational and cultural facilities both for children and for adult workers, and it is only under such sanitary conditions and salutary atmosphere that the real home and community life can grow. In this connection, with due appreciation for the voluntary work now being done in India, it would seem very necessary that social service should be subsidised and co-ordinated by the public authorities.

What is still more important is the development of a social policy with regard to children in general and child labour in particular. The various measures, in force or proposed, for the improvement of conditions of life and work in India need to be integrated in an organic policy for promoting the well-being of the children of India. The underlying principle of this policy should be to secure the fullest and richest possible development of childhood, upon which depend the continuous progress of society. [1] The elements of this policy should be : (1) the encouragement of voluntary and responsible parenthood ; (2) the development of compulsory primary education ; and (3) the adoption of progressive social legislation.

Voluntary and responsible parenthood has a three-fold object, namely : (1) the conscious control of population growth ; (2) the securing of sound birth, i.e. freedom from congenital defects ; and (3) the safeguarding of health during childhood. On the analogy of the proportion of the children under 15 years of age to the total population in England and Wales, as noted above, India has 56.5 million too many children. This comparatively high proportion of children in the population implies a high rate of mortality and a great wastage of national energy and health in the form of unnecessary gestation and lactation on the part of women and of useless expenditure for rearing on the part of the family and the community. Moreover, this redundant number of children not only places a burden upon the national food supply, but also deprives the remaining children of better nutrition and educational facilities.

The reduction of the birth rate is therefore essential for the promotion of child welfare in India. In a country where there

[1] This point was thoroughly discussed by the present writer in his article on " The Problem of Child Labour ", in *Modern Review* (Calcutta), Jan. 1922.

is a high rate of maternal mortality and stillbirths, where about one-fifth of the children born alive die before reaching one year of age, and where a great number die before reaching manhood or womanhood, birth control becomes a national virtue. The initiative in the birth-control movement has already been taken by the Indian State of Mysore [1], and the Government of Madras has recently expressed its intention of introducing birth-control clinics. What is needed is the introduction of such clinics all over the country. [2]

The question of sound birth, or freedom from congenital defects, depends partly upon the enlightenment of parents, and partly upon the responsibility of society for the control of undesirable parenthood. In this respect there is an immense field of work in India for the responsible public authorities, and the same observation applies to the provision of suitable conditions for healthy childhood.

The second main feature of this social policy is the provision of compulsory education for children, about five-sixths of whom are without educational facilities at present. As has been seen above, various local authorities have introduced compulsory education for children up to the age of 12 years, and it may be suggested that, given present social and economic conditions in India, this age would be suitable for the country generally. Once compulsory education is well established, this age can be gradually increased, and elementary education supplemented by continuation and extension classes, which have been successfully adopted in some other countries. It is only through the gradual increase in educational facilities, covering the whole period of childhood and training the children for more useful service to themselves and to society, that the problem of child labour can ultimately be solved.

This general education should be accompanied by vocational training, especially in India, which has lost many of her once famous arts and crafts, and has made little progress in the technique of modern production. The future economic success of the children themselves, the need of industry for skilled workers, and economic independence and national prosperity in the

[1] The Government of Mysore sanctioned the establishment of birth-control clinics in the four principal hospitals of the State in 1930. Cf. *Statement exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India*, 1930-1931, p. 153.

[2] Cf. *Guardian* (Madras), 28 Sept. 1933, p. 459 ; *Madras Weekly Mail*, 12 Oct. 1933, p. 11.

face of growing international competition depend, to a large extent, upon industrial efficiency, which can be developed only by the vocational education and training of the younger generation.

The last and, from the point of view of this study, the most important phase of social policy is progressive social legislation, which has been fully discussed in the foregoing pages. It may only be pointed out here that, with increasing industrialisation, there is every chance of a rapid rise in the number of children who will be employed in modern organised industries, and who will be in need of the benefit of social legislation.

In brief, the object of this social policy is to secure to all children the fullest possible opportunity for the development of their intellectual, moral and spiritual faculties, so that when grown up they may become efficient workers, intelligent citizens, and responsible men and women, for their own greater good as well as that of society. [1]

[1] While this article was in the press, the final report of the Census of India for 1931 was received by the writer. According to this report, the number of children aged 5-9 is 45 million out of the 349.7 million for which alone detailed information is available, or about 46 million out of the total population of 353 million, instead of the figure of 52 million estimated on the basis of the Census for 1921 as given in the second paragraph of the first part of this article. This reduction in the number of children in this age group for All India involves a proportionate reduction in the corresponding figure for British India (from 40 million to about 36 million). The discrepancy is due to the lower proportion of children in the age-group 1-4 in 1921 following the heavy death rate from the epidemic of influenza in 1918, which resulted in an artificial increase in the 1921 percentages for the age-groups 5-9 and 10-14 used in the calculations ; it does not affect the general argument of the article. (Cf. *Census of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 86-87, and Part II, pp. 1 and 120.)