

INDIAN

Life and Labour
in Natal

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INDIAN LIFE AND LABOUR

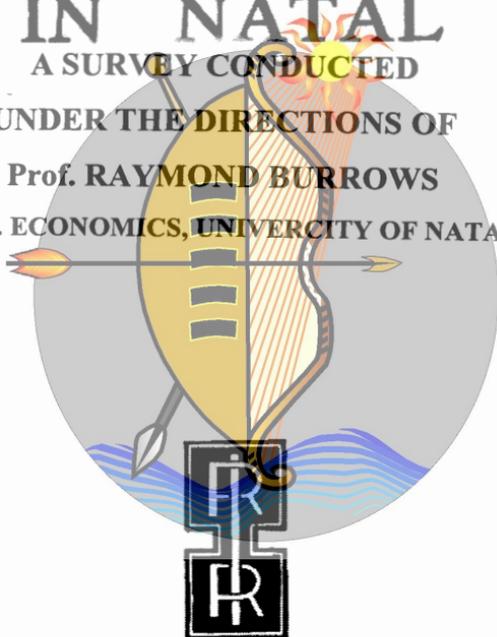
IN NATAL

A SURVEY CONDUCTED

UNDER THE DIRECTIONS OF

Prof. RAYMOND BURROWS

DEPT. ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF NATAL



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Tribute

THIS new edition of 'Indian Life and Labour' provides an opportunity of paying tribute to my late colleague, V. Sirkari Naidoo.

Sirkari was born on a farm at Frasers on the Natal North Coast in 1909. Later, he met the costs of advanced studies by working as a part-time clerk and as a tutor. His mother tongue was Telugu. But he also had a working knowledge of Tamil and a scholar's knowledge of the English language. He was particularly fond of Keats and Shelley.

In due course, he became a successful teacher who also gave lectures in accounting, commerce and mercantile law at the Indian Technical Institute in Durban. His academic distinctions included a teacher's certificate, a Diploma in Commerce and two degrees, B.A. and B.Com conferred by the University of South Africa.

In 1943 he began to take a keen interest in economic and social research and a year later resigned from his post at Sastri College to take up an appointment as Research Assistant in the Economics Department of the Natal University College. In January 1948, he was promoted to the status of Lecturer. Two months later he died from injuries received in a road accident.

Though courteous and unassuming, Sirkari was full of energy and determination and though sympathetic and tolerant trusted more to cold reason than to emotion and prejudice.

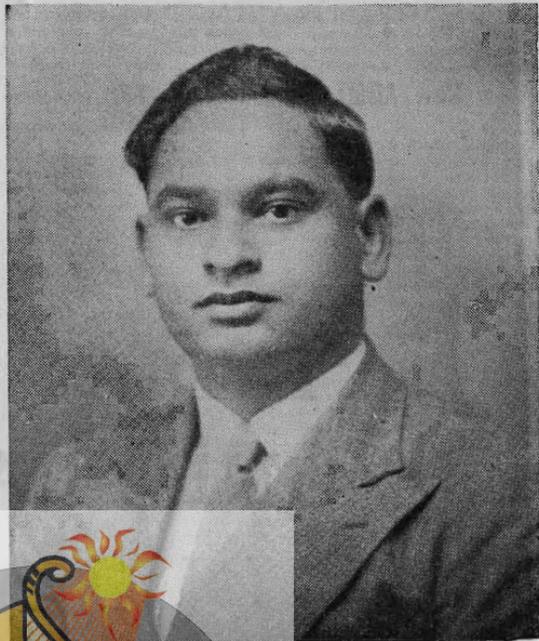
In addition to carrying out detailed economic researches as a member of a departmental team, he contributed informative articles to the S.A. Journal of Economics and to various publications of the S.A. Institute of Race Relations. His ability and knowledge were also evident in the addresses which he gave to the Economic Society, the Rotary Club of Durban, Rhodes University College Summer School, Adams Mission Vacation School, the Student Christian Association and meetings of the Institute of Race Relations, being a member of the executive committee of that Institute.

He rendered valuable service to the M. Sultan Technical College as a member of its Council and to the Non-European Studies Advisory Committee of the Natal University College.

This volume is dedicated to his memory in the hope that others will, by his example, be stimulated to continue research into the economic, educational and social problems of the Indian community in Natal, which he so patiently and earnestly helped to develop. There is little doubt that this is the type of memorial he would prefer.

H. R. BURROWS.

June, 1952.



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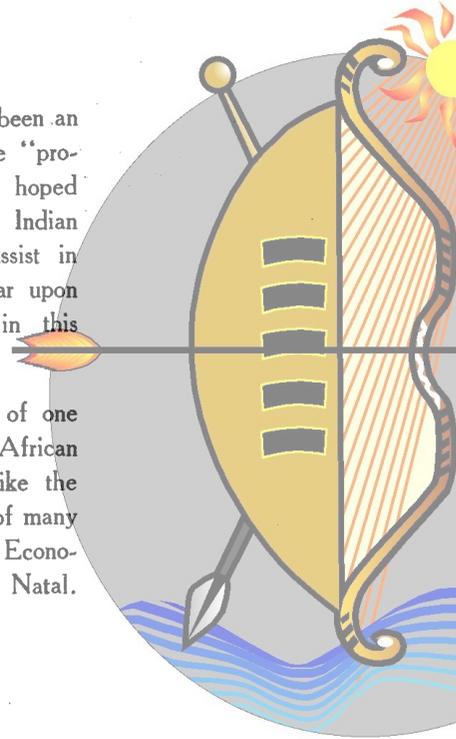


EARLY DAYS

SUGAR-PRODUCING colonies in the early years of the last century were temporarily hit by the abolition of slavery. Several attempts were made to introduce alternative labour. In Mauritius, for instance, Indians under the control of Sirdars, filled a gap, but certain abuses led to an inquiry by the British Government in 1837. Five years later the Government agreed to a system of Indian indentured emigration. Later regulations provided that migration should be voluntary, recruiters licensed, protectors of emigrants stationed in the old and in the new country, and certain indenture conditions adhered to.

Ignorance of the facts has always been an important contributory measure to the "problems" of South Africa and it is hoped that the present short survey of the Indian peoples of Natal will materially assist in bringing greater understanding to bear upon the so-called "Indian Problem" in this country—and particularly in Natal.

This booklet is a revised edition of one first issued in 1943 by the South African Institute of Race Relations, and like the one it replaces is based on the work of many research workers and students of the Economics Department of the University of Natal.



Indian emigration on a large scale began to Mauritius, West Indies and British Guiana. A similar movement to Natal began in 1860. At that time the number of Europeans in Natal was under 7,000. It is true that there was a large Zulu population, but, though virile and trustworthy, Zulu workers were not accustomed to the discipline of wage labour or amenable to the routine of contract employment. In spite of the creation of reserve pools of Native labour assisted by the spur of poll-taxes dating back as far as 1849, and of stimulated tastes and expenditure on European goods, an increasing labour shortage retarded the Colony's development under white enterprise and capital. The first insistent demand for a constant supply of workers came from the new sugar plantations which were being established along the coastal belt. But there were differences of opinion between those who wanted a long-term policy of immigration of permanent settlers and those who were in urgent need of relatively unskilled but dependable labour. Finally, the British Government assented to the entry of Indian workers on definite contracts, and the Government of India, after lengthy negotiations with the Natal authorities, agreed to the terms of indenture.

The main provisions of the initial contracts included free transport from India, an agreement to work for 10s. a month for three years (later extended to five years), and free food, accommodation and medical attention. The first group of Indians arrived in Durban in November, 1860, to work as agricultural labourers in the Colony's sugar estates.

The influx continued, although there were not many immigrants in the short period of economic depression following the American Civil War. In 1874, the stream of immigrants resumed its steady flow and during the next twelve years nearly 30,000 Indian workers entered Natal.

Beginning in 1874, and for a period of twenty years, the Government of Natal contributed up to £10,000 a year towards the cost of transporting Indian workers. Not all these labourers returned to India when their contracts expired. Given the choice between re-indenture, a free passage home to India, or freedom and a small plot of free land,

they usually chose the last named. The promise of land, however, was rarely implemented. Moreover, beginning in 1896, the payment of an annual licence of £3 was imposed as the price of remaining in the country as 'free' Indians. The sugar fields, however, found it difficult to retain workers who were attracted by higher wages to coal mining or other employment. Some Indians emigrated to the Transvaal. Continued immigration into Natal was, therefore, the only means of maintaining an adequate supply of indentured Indian labour. Meanwhile, the number and proportion of Natal-born Indians were adding to a growing supply of free, non-indentured, labour and in 1904 they numbered 19,000 and constituted 22 per cent. of the total Indian population.

There were many who saw the Indians not only as useful labourers but as potential competitors in the economic field. Moreover, others were also coming to the country. Attempts were, therefore, made to restrict the immigration of 'free' Indians.

In 1896, Indians were disfranchised by the Natal Government. Previously some 'free' Indians had the franchise and such individuals were not deprived of it. In 1896, the arrival of ships with 'free' immigrants led to disturbances in Durban, during which Mr. Gandhi was rescued with difficulty and smuggled out of the city by the police.

A few years later the immigration of 'free' Indians was restricted and the annual subsidy previously given by the Natal Government to assist the immigration of indentured workers was withdrawn. An exception was made in the case of wives and children of Indians who were already domiciled in Natal.

The Government of India shortly afterwards (1911) vetoed the further indenture of labourers from India; yet the number of Indians in Natal continued to grow. Repatriation to the mother country, though it was stimulated temporarily by legislation between 1914 and 1933, and by periods of economic depression (when the offer of a bonus and a free passage home became relatively attractive) was not large enough to offset the increase in the South African Indian population.

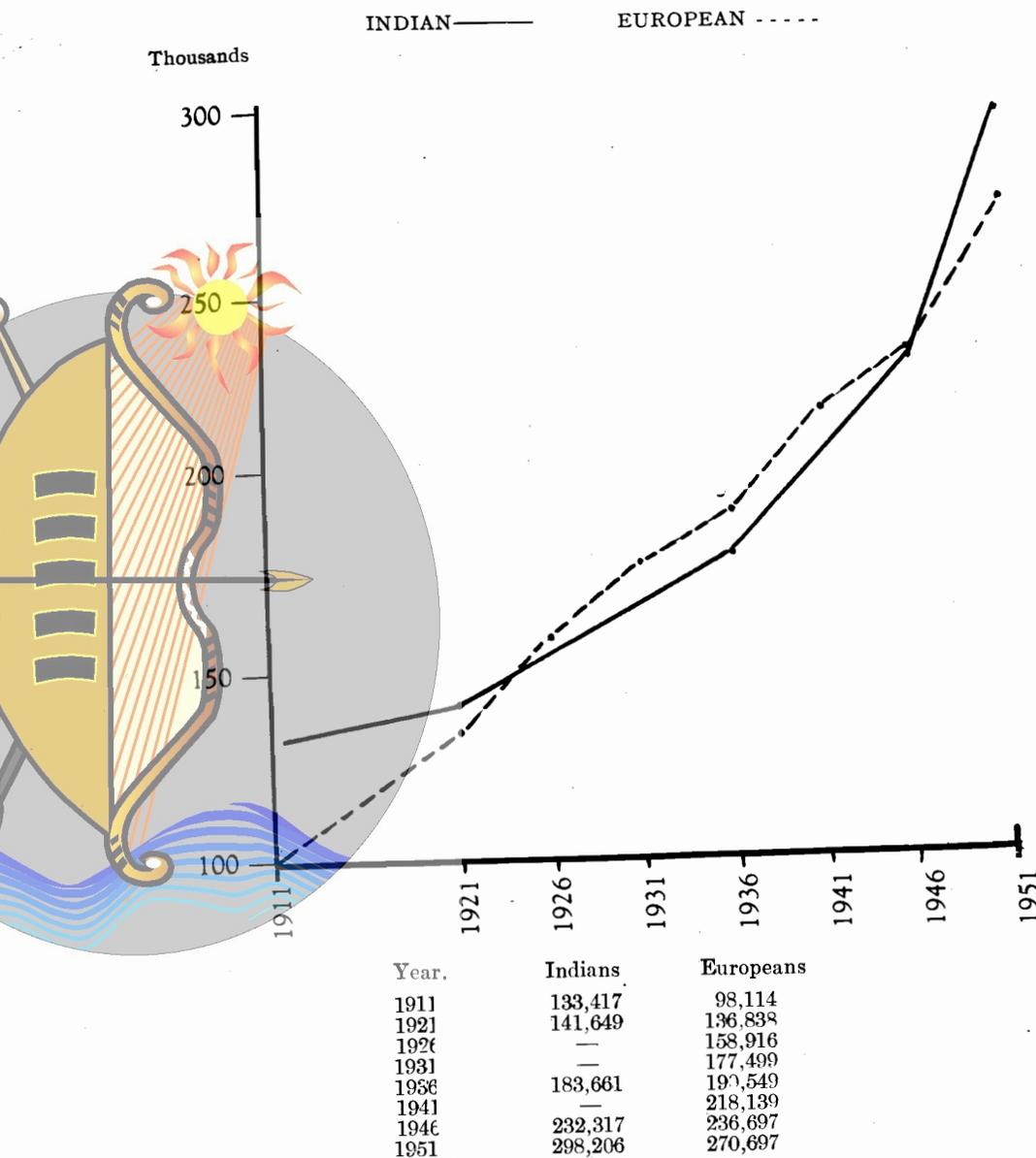
At the same time, the homeward drift was of some importance, for the average annual number of those returning between 1914 and 1933 was about 2,500, though this fell considerably after the latter date; and has now practically ceased.

In 1946, 232,317 Indians, 81.4 per cent. of the total number of Indians in the Union, lived in Natal and constituted 10.5 per cent. of the total population of all races in the Province. In spite of emigration and repatriation losses, the Indian rate of growth has been sustained by a large natural increase. It should also be noted that inter-provincial migration of Indians has been barred in the Union since 1913, thus concentrating in Natal the increase of their population.

(Fig. 1—Natal Indian Population Growth in Recent Years, page 3.)

FIGURE 1

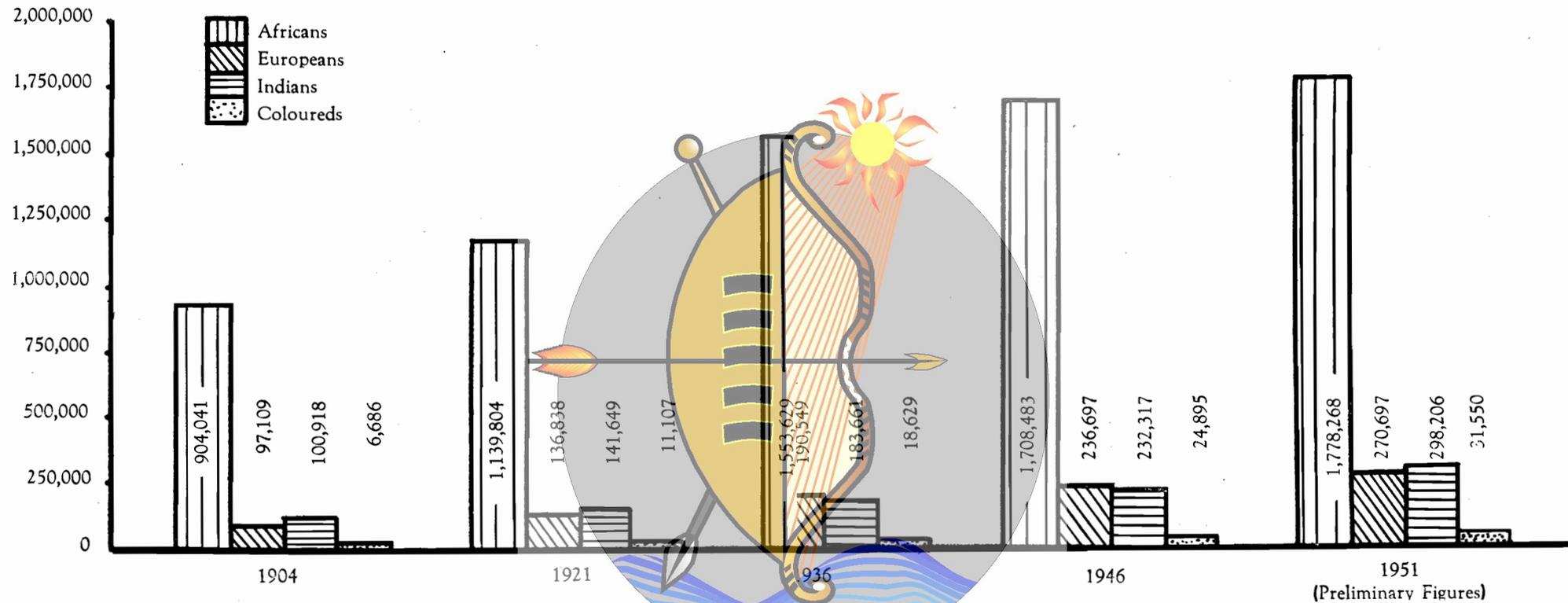
NATAL INDIAN POPULATION GROWTH IN RECENT YEARS



It is fairly certain that the 1951 Census of the Indian population was very much more accurate than that of 1946.

FIGURE 2

NATAL POPULATION STRUCTURE



By 1951 the number of Indians in the Province had grown to 298,000 as against a European population of 270,000. Their future numbers depend on several factors, mainly birth-rates, death-rates and migration. It is possible that a rise in the standard of living will maintain or even increase the birth-rate and lower the death-rate. Later, perhaps, a sustained higher standard of life may reduce the birth-rate as well as the death-rate. The factors of emigration and immigration, however, are factors largely influenced by political policies, and therefore are impossible to predict, at any rate by mere economists.

It is difficult to estimate the future rate of population growth, but a more or less intelligent guess, after ruling out drastic political changes

and policies, would suggest that by 1960 there will be at least 360,000 Indians in Natal. In contrast with forty years ago because of the increase in number of females, the sex ratio is now normal, showing that the Indian population has settled down to a period of natural population growth. Moreover, it is a youthful population, as indicated by the fact that 48 per cent. of Indians in 1946 were under the age of fifteen years and only 10 per cent. were above the age of forty-five years. This is in marked contrast with the European record, with its low birth-rate, with only 26 per cent. of its numbers under fifteen years of age, but with 28 per cent. over forty-five years.⁽¹⁾

(1) See Figures 3 and 4. Natal Indian Age Structure of Different Races—Changes in Age Composition (page 6).

FIGURE 3

NATAL INDIAN POPULATION
CHANGE IN AGE-COMPOSITION

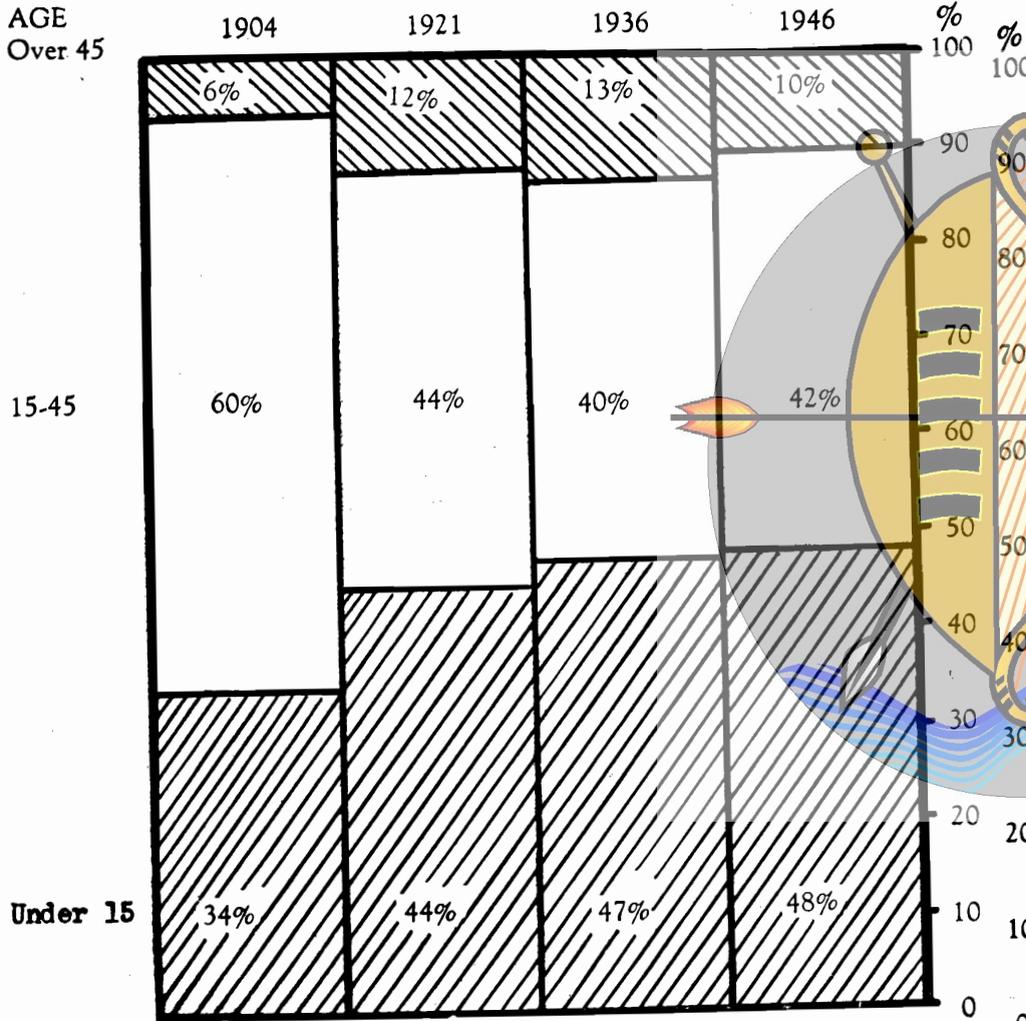
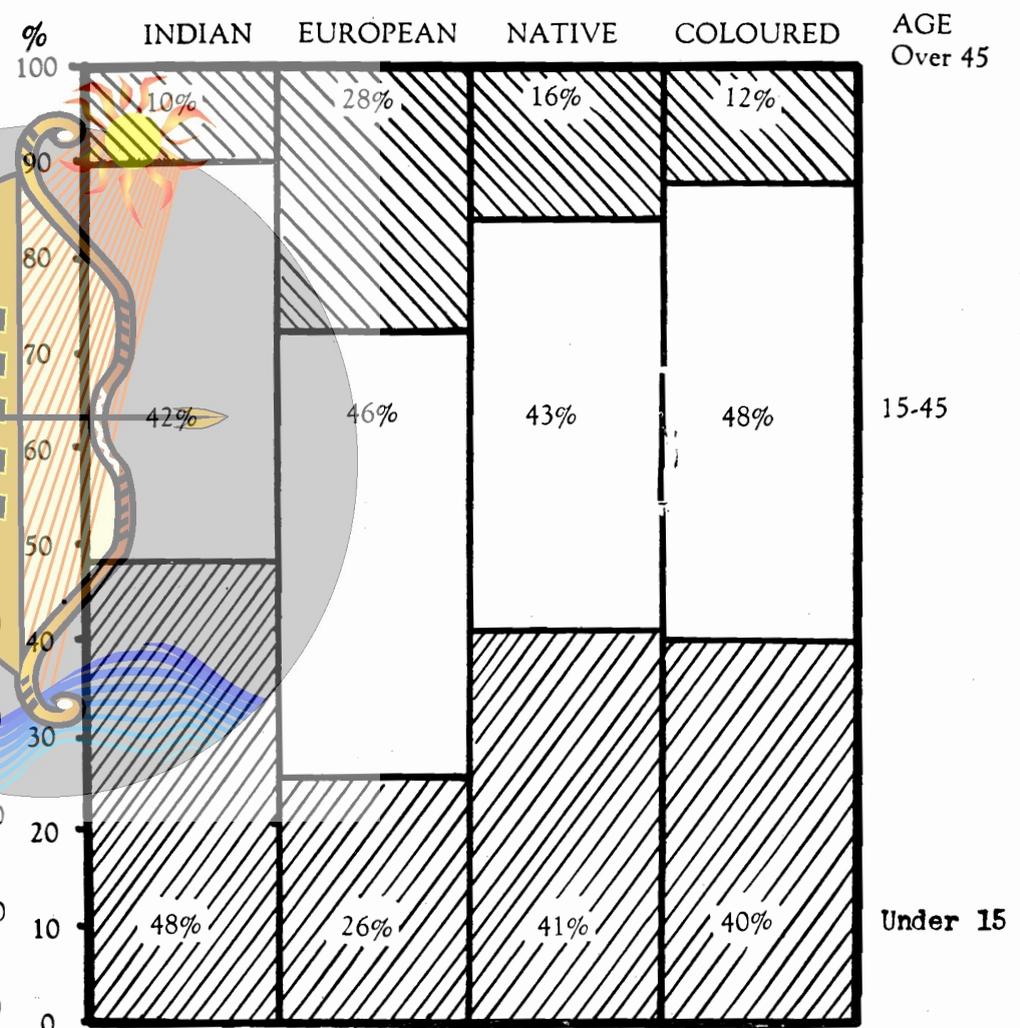


FIGURE 4

AGE STRUCTURE OF DIFFERENT RACES
NATAL 1946



On the lines of present tendencies it looks as though Natal should still plan to build more houses and schools for the youthful Indian population and more hospitals and bowling greens for the ageing European section. Certainly, economic and social planning in Natal, particularly by municipalities must cater for a large and rapidly increasing Indian population in the early future. Whatever other implications are involved, it is clear that the future growth of Indian population is a highly important factor, if only as indicating large numbers of potential consumers or, as some fear, possible competitors in employment and trade.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

In the early years of the indenture system the sugar planters of the coastal belt were by far the largest importers of Indian labour. Later in the nineteenth century, however, the new coal mines in Northern Natal also came into the market for such labour. Another factor in determining the distribution of the Indian population was the fact that the 'free immigrant' Indian trader was more at home in the towns than in the countryside, and the Indian trading element soon became an integral part of the new Colony's economic structure. One offshoot of this development was a spread of Indian population along the main transport routes from Durban to the growing inland towns. Moreover, large numbers of plantation labourers who did not renew their employment contracts and who remained as 'free' Indians in the Colony turned to cultivating small holdings or market gardens near the growing towns.

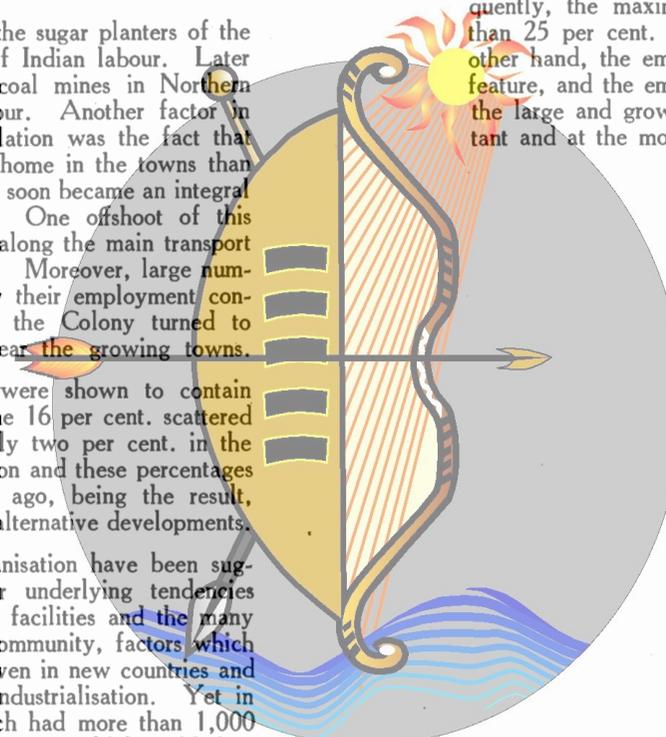
In the 1936 census the coastal districts were shown to contain 80 per cent. of the Indian community, with some 16 per cent. scattered along the main routes to the Transvaal and only two per cent. in the coal areas. It is worth noting that this distribution and these percentages are almost identical with those of fifty years ago, being the result, perhaps, to some extent, of an artificial check to alternative developments.

Two reasons for a tendency towards urbanisation have been suggested already. There are, of course, other underlying tendencies encouraging this development, such as transport facilities and the many advantages of living in a large and organised community, factors which have resulted in a high degree of urbanisation even in new countries and even sometimes in the absence of large-scale industrialisation. Yet in 1911, there were only six towns in Natal which had more than 1,000 European inhabitants, and by 1936 only three more could be added to the list, and in 1946 this number had grown to 18. Moreover, two cities, Durban and Pietermaritzburg, were responsible in 1946 for over 74 per cent. of the total European urban and 77 per cent. of the total Indian urban population of Natal.⁽¹⁾

Today, therefore, approximately seven out of every ten Indians in Natal live in the eight largest towns in Natal. As the process of

urbanisation has not yet checked the birth rate, the rate of 'natural' urban increase is also likely to be an accelerating one. This growth of Indian population is an important factor to consider in planning to meet consumer demands, especially for houses, schools, hospitals, health services and urban amenities, as well as in gauging the supply of available labour for industrial, commercial and agricultural employment. In particular, the rapid increase in the number of urban children has intensified the problem of educational facilities in the towns.

One qualification, however, must be made. At the present time in the towns much more than half the Indian population is too young or too old to work, while Indian female labour is as yet little used. Consequently, the maximum available labour supply at the moment is less than 25 per cent. of the urban population. In the rural areas, on the other hand, the employment of women in Indian agriculture is a normal feature, and the employment of children is commoner than in towns; but the large and growing reserves of potential workers are a highly important and at the moment, a partly neglected factor.



(1) See Figure 2 (page 4). Natal Population Structure.

EMPLOYMENT

GENERAL

It has already been noted that the field of Indian economic activities was fed from three main sources, (a) indentured labourers, (b) free immigrant traders, and (c) natural increase of Natal Indians. At the beginning of the present century the main avenues of employment for indentured labour continued to be the sugar estates, coal mines, and the railways. The free Indian immigrant group of traders naturally clung to their business, although some became landowners, and some of the sons of traders took up financial and professional occupations, including the legal profession. The greatest employment spread flowed from the once indentured Indians and their descendants. Even in 1872 half of them had drifted into other occupations such as domestic servants, small traders, market gardeners, etc. Some went to the diamond fields, and in 1896 nearly 1,000 male Indians emigrated to the gold fields of the Transvaal. Most of the Indians who did re-indenture did so with the railways and the coal mines.

The growth of population and the development of Natal considerably expanded the opportunities for employment. Sugar became more important, agriculture developed, and urban centres expanded. The opening of the diamond and gold fields created rapidly growing inland markets and the main route from Port Natal to the Orange Free State and Transvaal carried an important trade. Coal mining and railway transport hastened development and quickened economic activity. Labour was in keen demand, and although wage employment was gradually being introduced to the local Africans, their enlistment into the ranks of available labour was slow and uncertain. The prohibition of Indian immigration in 1911 increased still further the relative scarcity of Indian labour, with the result that in the sugar industry, for example, wages rose by 50 per cent. during the next five years. In general, the distribution of Indian employments changed considerably although their geographical distribution changed little.

The main changes in employment have been as follows. Since 1904 the proportion of Indians over fifteen years of age engaged in agriculture fell from nearly 50 per cent. of the population of working age to only 25 per cent. in 1936, in mining from 4 per cent. to 0.6 per cent., whereas in industry there has been an increase from 6 per cent. to 36.9 per cent. in 1936 and 37 per cent. in 1946, and in commerce from 6 per cent. in 1936 to 23 per cent. in 1946. Between 1911 and 1936 the dependent and domestic section of the working age population rose from 14 per cent. to 48 per cent. In 1946 the percentage was approximately 49 per cent. and the 1951 census preliminary figures makes the percentage higher still. The marked and rapid fall in agricultural employment is part of a world-wide phenomena, and as has already

been noted, the migration to the towns was strengthened in Natal by the constant dwindling of the indentured labour force and emphasised by the changes in the sex-and-age composition of the Indian population.⁽¹⁾

On the whole, the change in employment has been away from heavy manual work towards more skilled industrial occupations, commercial activities and personal service. At least two factors have been responsible. On the one hand there has been some development of opportunities in the better paid semi-skilled occupations. Secondly, the African has now become a growing competitor in the field of relatively unskilled manual labour, partly because of the advantage of possessing a more robust physique. Moreover, the Indian's dexterity and patience can be used to better advantage in certain types of industrial employment than in unskilled manual labour. This important fact should constitute another fundamental brick to use in planning the future economic structure of Natal. At the same time, it is of interest to note that, except in farming and market gardening Indian employment outside home duties is largely a male preserve.⁽²⁾

AGRICULTURE

In 1937, over 17,000 Indians, constituting nine per cent. of the Indian population of Natal, were engaged in agriculture, and accounted for 99 per cent. of all Indians in South Africa so occupied. In 1946, this figure was only some 13,500, indicating clearly the drift away from agriculture. More than half of these are labourers, mainly on the sugar estates, one-fifth are farmers (mostly sugar planters but also including citrus, tobacco and banana growers), and about one-eighth are market gardeners.

In the sugar industry there have been two important tendencies, a change from indentured to free Indian labour, and from Indian to African labour. Today less than three per cent. of the Indian population is employed on the sugar estates, not more than 7,000 Indians out of a total labour force of some 55,000.

It is clear that Indian field workers are disappearing as an important labour force in sugar growing, their place being taken by migrant African labour. Undoubtedly the change is to a large extent due to the growing expense of housing permanent Indian labour with large families. On the other hand, there is a very definite seeking after urban life by the younger generation. A typical case is that of a young Indian (whose parents have lived and worked on the sugar fields) very comfortably employed as a barman with monthly wages many times that of his father.

For those Indians who do remain on the estates the conditions are somewhat better than they were, but in many cases housing and sanitation leaves much to be desired.

(1) See Figure 5 (page 12). Occupational Distribution of Indian Population over 15 years of age.

(2) See Figure 6 (page 13). Occupational Distribution expressed as a Percentage of those Gainfully Occupied.

FIGURE 5

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INDIAN POPULATION OF NATAL OVER 15 YEARS OF AGE

| OCCUPATION | 1911 | 1921 | 1936 | 1946 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| Domestic & Dependent | 14% | 38% | 48% | 49% |
| Other | 3% | 4% | 1% | 7% |
| Transport | 1% | 1% | 2% | 3% |
| Personal Service & Domestic | 5% | 6% | 6% | 5% |
| Public Service and Professional | 10% | 6% | 4% | 2% |
| Commerce | 5% | 7% | 8% | 7% |
| Mining | 4% | 3% | 1% | 0.2% |
| Industry | 10% | 9% | 12% | 16% |
| Agriculture | 48% | 26% | 18% | 10.8% |

In 1934, independent Indian growers, cultivating thirty acres on an average, contributed six per cent. of Natal's sugar cane output. Producing only on a small scale, their position was becoming precarious in the threatened monopolisation by the large estates which controlled mills as well as plantations. The Sugar Agreement of 1936 afforded a measure of protection to the small European grower (who produced less than 3,500 tons of sugar cane a year). A rough average of the yields of Non-European planters (Indians and Natives) in that year was just under 100 tons. The fact that forty or fifty Indian growers are operating on a fairly large scale puts up the average Indian sugar production, but out of some 1,200 Indian planters over 1,000 are so small as to make it certain that they are either near or at starvation level or are dependent on some other form of income, in many cases fruit and vegetable production, or the earnings of younger members of the family in the towns.

It is certain, however, that in this comparatively small section of the Natal Indian population there is much hardship, and welfare workers state that near starvation levels are fairly common. The Indian grower does not enjoy the benefits of the European organisation, but no amount

FIGURE 6

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION EXPRESSED AS PERCENTAGE OF THOSE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED

| OCCUPATION | 1936 | 1946 | (ESTIMATE) 1951 |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| Other | 1.9% | 13.8% | 14.5% |
| Transport | 4% | 5.5% | 5.8% |
| Personal Service & Domestic | 11.5% | 9.4% | 8.6% |
| Public Service & Professional | 7.7% | 3% | 3.7% |
| Commerce | 15.4% | 13.8% | 14.4% |
| Mining | 1.9% | .1% | .1% |
| Industry | 23.1% | 30% | 30% |
| Agriculture | 34.5% | 24.4% | 22.9% |

of organisation can make economic a sugar holding so small as to produce as little as nine tons of sucrose, while even 50 tons can obviously leave only a bare subsistence unless augmented by other sources of income.

Translated into terms of income, the net income of a representative family of two full-time workers and other members of the family working occasionally in the field would be approximately £1 or £1 10s. a week, not a large income on which to maintain seven or eight persons. Their home would probably consist of scrap material for which no rent is, or could be, paid. They would probably own their land, but on mortgage.

The lack of cash resources and the absence of educational facilities and of opportunities of alternative employment seriously discount the pleasures of living close to Nature! The natural result is a drift to the towns of the younger Indians, where this is possible, or a growing dependence on other forms of agriculture. In particular, bananas, pineapples, avocado pears, citrus and other fruits; beans and vegetables; and even maize and tobacco are beginning to replace, or at any rate supplement, cane planting. Unfortunately, however, this tendency towards mixed

agriculture is not likely to help the small grower in the preferential schemes of a specialised sugar industry. On the other hand, the change to varied crops may afford slightly more protection to soil resources and provide the family with some of its food requirements.

The future of this section of the Indian community is uncertain. No official recognition of the need for its protection seems likely and the emigration of young members of the community will no doubt tend to make the small sugar farm a relic of the past. Successful Indian growers—some are model employers—or contiguous European planters seem likely to absorb most of the land involved, where this is a payable proposition.

MARKET GARDENING

From the earliest days of immigration many employers allowed their labourers the use of small plots of land on which to grow fruit and vegetables, and this practice was frequently commended in Protector's Reports. From 1860 onwards Indians began to buy or rent land for cultivation. An 1882 Report states that they almost monopolised the maize, tobacco and garden produce in the coastal belt. Three years later 2,000 free Indians were occupying land within two miles of Durban, free from rates, taxes and the borough by-laws, yet with a large market at hand for their produce. In many parts of Natal they converted waste and unproductive land into well-kept gardens planted with vegetables, tobacco, maize and fruit trees. To quote from the Indian Immigrants' Commission Report of 1885-7: "From an early hour in the morning Indian hawkers, male and female, adults and children, go busily with heavy baskets on their heads from house to house and the citizens can daily, at their own doors, and at low rates, purchase wholesome vegetables and fruit which, not many years ago, they could not, with certainty, procure even in public markets and at exorbitant prices." It was only to be expected that this competition by free Indians cut into the livelihood of the white colonists who once controlled this market.

The tendency today in Durban, which has been by far the biggest outlet for garden produce, is for the hawker to be replaced by the motor-van, though this is often Indian-owned.

Yet these market gardeners are still an important part of the economic life of Natal. A visit to the Durban Indian squatters' markets would confirm this fact, and it would seem that this Indian market is the principal source of Durban's vegetables.

The typical Indian market garden family of today cultivates a small plot of low-lying alluvial ground on an intensive but primitive basis, and on a monthly or yearly lease with no security of tenure. Insecurity is increased by the encroaching industrial or residential urban areas. Largely illiterate, and with a low standard of living, such a

family lives congested in a poor sort of temporary shanty without adequate water supply, lighting or sanitation—a favourable breeding-ground for diseases such as dysentery.

The encroachment of industrialisation is clearly typified in the reduction of the number of Indians in certain peri-urban areas, e.g. Southern Umlazi (Durban) where the Indian population was reduced from 2,144 in 1936 to only 191 in 1946.

It is only too obvious that these sources of supply of green vegetables and tropical fruit for the urban Europeans should merit more attention by way of education, supervision, and the normal amenities of civilised life, in the interests of both Indians and Europeans; while a greater security of tenure, better selection of seeds, a greater use of organic fertilisers, and more guidance would stimulate a much needed increase in food production.

RAILWAYS

Railway contractors were among the first to avail themselves of the opportunity of obtaining indentured "coolie" labour, and later employed an increasing amount of free labour. Indian workers even followed the extending railway system into the Orange Free State. In 1886 the Natal Government Railways employed over 800 Indians on work of a wide range. In fact the General Manager once remarked: "It is not easy to see, from my point of view, how we could get on without the Indians." But in time African labour in Natal became increasingly available, the Natal Railways were merged into the S.A. Railways and Harbours, and Indians were unable to compete in the field of heavy manual labour. Since the year 1910, in which some 6,000 Indians were employed on the Natal System, there has been a rapid decline. In 1950 only some 550 Indians were employed on the Railways in Natal, mainly as cleaners. Wage rates which ranged from 30s. to 50s. a month with rations and accommodation in the early 1940s now stand at £14 per month to £19 (inclusive of cost of living allowance).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Durban Corporation was also one of the earliest employers of Indian labour, and the number of Indian workers grew with the town. In 1939, Indian municipal employees numbered 3,000, their work being mainly in the cleansing department. In 1951, the total number of Indians employed by the Durban Corporation had decreased to approximately 2,000. A 1940 determination of the Wage Board raised their average earnings to over £3 a month plus rations and quarters. Later figures are £6 4s. 7d. for ungraded workers (of whom there are 1,200 or 1,300) and from £6 10s. to £16 for those who are graded. As in the case of the sugar estates and the railways, the contract of service

concerns only the male worker's wage and food ration. At the same time, accommodation is often provided on a family basis but not for large families. One result has been that when there is no room in the municipal barracks for an Indian employee, he must secure outside accommodation for himself and his family without receiving rent allowance.

Though the old barracks are still a matter needing attention, the brighter side of the picture is seen in family housing at the Springfield Estate.

MINING

The Natal coalfields are not very extensive, the coal reserves in the Province being estimated at less than four per cent. of the Union's total. In the initial stages of large-scale coal mining most of the Indian labour was brought direct from India, though later more was recruited from local free labour. In time, however, more remunerative and less arduous employment was available in other fields and Africans gradually took over most of the unskilled work in coal mining. In 1921, Indians constituted only a little over 13 per cent. of the total labour force of 18,000 and in recent years the proportion has fallen even lower. The fall in employment was partly due to a fall in coal output, itself partly caused by a fall in the demand for bunker coal. On the other hand, the provision of married quarters is helping to stabilise the position of the remaining Indian workers, who are concerned in operating machines, pumps, lifting gear, etc. But with the better utilisation of African labour it is hardly likely that Indian employment in mining can recover its former importance.

Latest information (1951) confirms that numerically Indian labour is now a very small factor in coal mining in Natal, total numbers being not more than 500.

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

The main feature in this field has been an enormous though by no means uniform, expansion since indenture days. The plantation labourers and the handicraftsmen have been changing over to factory hands and machine operatives.

Yet, in 1933, "there has been no increase (in Indian employment in secondary production) during the past twelve years, but on the contrary, a relative decrease in comparison with European labour." (Indian Colonisation Enquiry Committee). Since that date, however, a number of factors have increased industrial and commercial activity in the Union and hence indirectly the employment of Indians in factory work.

Excluding the food and drink industry, Indian industrial employment was doubled between 1915 and 1937, while the total population

increased only by 50 per cent. This is remarkable in view of several obstacles to such progress. The Indian is excluded very largely from skilled trades, he is not always admitted to the membership and protection of trade unions, fixed wage rates prevent him from undercutting the European labour, and he nearly always lacks the minimum educational background or the educational qualifications which are necessary for apprenticeship training. In 1942, there were only 18 properly indentured Indian workers under the Apprenticeship Act.

The position had not materially altered in 1951, the total of Indian apprentices being hardly changed. However new possibilities arising from the Technical College for Indians, which now seems to have reached the practical stage, may alter the position. There should now be wider opportunity in printing, furniture, building and other skilled trades, possibly mainly with the co-operation of Indian employers.

In the field of unskilled work the Indian is subject to the competition of the African, not only in agriculture and mining, but also in industry. In the period from 1932 to 1937 it is of interest to note that in the majority of industrial groups in the Union the incomes of African workers rose more steeply than those of Europeans or Indians. At the same time, the total incomes of Indian employees in the textile and furniture industry exceeds the total received by either of the other two racial groups. Increased employment and earnings have been obtained in food production, textiles, power, furniture, leather, printing, metal, wood, chemicals, stone and clay, rubber, vehicles and boat-building. The Indian has established a position in the semi-skilled group where his intelligence, dexterity and stability are best used. In view of the tendency of industrial mechanisation to replace not only skilled operatives (European) by routine machine operatives, the supply of Indian labour with appropriate qualifications and aptitudes is a highly important fact for the future of Natal. Certain political tendencies, however, have had the effect in some instances of substituting African unskilled labour where Indian labour was formerly used.

Average annual wages for 1929-37, 1946 and 1951 in the more important avenues of increasing Indian employment are as follows:

| | 1929-37 | 1946 | 1951 |
|--|---------|------|------|
| WOOD—mostly saw-milling and making brooms and boxes | £45 | £112 | £150 |
| METALS—mostly in engineering shops, foundries and sheet metal works ... | £68 | £145 | £175 |
| TEXTILES — This includes tailoring, clothing, laundering, textiles, cordage. Probably more than half the labour in these industries is Indian | £74 | £148 | £182 |

PRINTING — Indian labour is almost entirely semi-skilled. The decision of the Appellate Division giving recognition to the Indian Master Printers Association (approximately 20 members) may lead to more Indian apprenticeships in conjunction with the new Technical College. In 1951 there were already two Indian apprentices

£110 £187 £250

VEHICLES—Approximately six per cent. of Natal Indian labour is employed in driving vehicles. Some of this labour is fairly well organised in trade unions

£71 £161 £190

FURNITURE—This industry has a large well-organised Indian labour force— at time of publication there were 16 Indian apprentices

£136 £235 £250

LEATHER—There is a fairly strong trade union with a large Indian membership

£75 £193 £250

In 1948 a careful and comprehensive survey of Indian trade unions revealed a total of just under 22,000 Indian workers controlled by trade, craft or house unions.

By 1951 the membership had lessened somewhat and it is safer to think in terms of some 15,000 under union control. A loose agricultural union no longer functions and several small unions (totalling some 2,000 workers) had not stood the strain of recent political tendencies or were so small in numbers as to make efficient control impossible.

On the whole the effect of trade unions has been beneficial to the Indian worker in the years following World War II, during which time strong development of secondary industry had taken place, much of it based on the dexterity and regularity of Indian semi-skilled labour.

The apprenticeship position among Indian workers is still very weak, but, as recorded elsewhere, the new Technical College in Durban may have an effect on that position, though it still remains true that few Indian manufacturers seem to be capable of satisfactorily training apprentices.

SUGAR MILLING

The original labour problems of the Natal sugar industry were on the agricultural side, but obviously employment in the mills had to increase in line with the expansion of cane growing. To begin with, small extraction plants employed European and African labour. A

certain proportion of indentured labourers began to be absorbed in the mills, and on the cessation of Indian immigration mill employment was mainly Indian. Since then, however, the labour structure of the sugar industry has changed considerably, though not to so great an extent as on the agricultural side. At the same time, though losing relatively against the African, Indian labourers are still an important element in the industry.

At the present time there are seventeen sugar mills and two refineries in Natal, and sugar milling constitutes an important outlet for Indian employment. This position is steadily altering, the better paid positions being given to Europeans, and the semi-skilled and unskilled to Africans.

The Non-European mill workers are housed and fed by the Estates, but a lack of schools keeps them largely illiterate, and ignorance of employment opportunities elsewhere, together with the absence of savings, confines them to the same occupation. The standard of living of the field workers in the sugar industry has been extremely low, and that of the mill worker only slightly better. Wage regulations have effected some improvement, and on some estates better housing conditions have been achieved. The effect of wage regulation, while it has benefited the Indian individual in a particular job, has inevitably had the effect of reducing the number of Indians employed. In addition, the large family set-up makes the employer look with disfavour on the growing demand for better housing.

On the whole, the question resolves itself into a fixed tendency on the part of employers to dispense with Indians in favour of African labour. The number of Indians now employed on sugar fields or mills constitutes barely a tenth of the total Indian labour force and is still in a low wage/income state.

It is safe to say that the day of Indian labour in the sugar industry is drawing to a close, and migrant African labour is fast taking its place.

While it would be unfair to suggest that wages and conditions have not improved at all, there has been no possibility of group pressure from the Indian field worker, and the attraction of less arduous work at higher rates of pay has drawn away the second and third generations of Indians from sugar growing and production. In addition to this, there would seem to have been no real desire on the part of the grower and producer to maintain an Indian labour force.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

COMMERCE AND FINANCE

Commercial enterprise continues to be almost the sole employment of the Mohammedan section, but they are not alone in this field; for in 1932 the Indian Colonisation Enquiry Committee estimated that some 2,000 former indentured Indians and their descendants had taken up commercial activities. In 1936 a total of 7,581 in commerce and finance indicated that the commercial function is absorbing a greater proportion of the increase in population. This tendency is continued in the 1946 figures which give a total of nearly 9,000 in commerce and finance.

There are probably some 2,500 Indian commercial establishments in Natal in which approximately an equal number of Indian owners and employees are engaged. About 2,000 employees are covered by the wage determination for the commercial distributive trade. Under Determination No. 70 of 1939 the minimum wage for qualified male shop assistants in the Durban areas (Pinetown excepted) was raised to £21 per month, later to £23 10s. plus cost of living. For Pinetown the rate was fixed at £15 and later raised to £18 16s., plus cost of living. The increase in the rate has, on occasions, made adjustment difficult and has perhaps led to evasion, which is very difficult to establish and check, but which is reputed to be fairly widespread. Although wage rates in the commercial distributive trade have been a matter of negotiation between the National Union of Distributive Workers and certain employers, with a resultant higher wage agreement for employees in those firms, it is well to note that there are no Indian members of the Union.

In the rural areas and in the smaller towns there has been an increase in Indian traders and a fall in the number of European traders. It is difficult to say to what extent Indians have ousted Europeans, if at all. The tendency in all countries to centralise trade in the larger centres is generally accompanied by a reduction in the number of small businesses, with the exception that in Natal the small Indian trader is prepared to continue the struggle longer than others and for a smaller reward.

During the fiscal year 1936-7, 2,440 pedlars took out licences, but as most of these were to sell market garden produce, some of them might be better classified as agriculturists. Up-to-date figures indicate very little change in their position, though motor lorry delivery has certainly helped to lessen the number of vegetable hawkers in Durban suburbs.

TRANSPORT

Approximately 1,000 Indians earn a livelihood by driving motor vehicles, in addition to some 250 Indian taxi-drivers catering almost

exclusively for their own community. The fall in railway employment for Indians has already been noted.

PERSONAL SERVICES

From the earliest days of Indian employment in Natal, domestic service has been prominent and has expanded fairly proportionately with the growth of European population. In 1936, out of 5,200 personal service workers there were 2,200 male and 930 female domestic servants. The figures had increased to 5,600 in 1946. Apart from agriculture, this is the main occupation in which Indian women are to any appreciable extent engaged, though perhaps as many as 1,000 women are now employed in the textile and other light industries.

Indians occupy an important position in the Natal liquor and catering trade. Working conditions are governed by an industrial agreement and are favourable in comparison with other avenues of employment, the average earnings of a waiter, for example, being some £11 a month, plus cost of living allowance and sometimes some food.

Until recently a strong trade union had covered the interests of all races in the catering trade. Recent political tendencies, however, appear likely to hive off European interests by the formation of a European union in this industry.

PROFESSIONS

In 1936 there were some 850 professional persons, of whom about 70 per cent. were teachers, 12 per cent. police, and 12 per cent. priests. In 1951, the number of teachers had grown to 1,600 and new rates of pay and training facilities will no doubt increase the numbers recruited for this profession.

INDIAN TRADE UNIONISM

During the last few years, the general industrial expansion, war activity super-imposed on a period of cyclical activity, labour shortage and the increasingly important part Indians have taken in factory work have encouraged a rapid growth in trade unionism. Official policy in the immediate post-war years encouraged the principle of industrial self-government and organisation while some modification of the trade union colour bar was in evidence.

It is probably true to say that fear of competition may lead either to an intensification of the colour bar and exclusion from trade-union privileges or to encouragement of Indian membership within a European union. In the latter case the Indian worker obtains some of the benefits of collective bargaining at the cost of losing possible opportunities of undercutting Europeans and thus securing greater total employment and

incomes. Where the European trade union is strongly entrenched behind privileges, apprenticeship, and educational qualifications, Indian membership is often barred while separate Indian trade unionism is not generally welcomed.

This is not to say that a certain amount of genuine co-operation between workers of different races and colour does not exist, particularly in certain unions where Indians have actually held office, for instance, in the Natal Liquor and Catering Trade and Furniture Workers' Industrial Union, or where the employees are only a loosely united body. There has been little evidence that inter-racial co-operation will go to the length of joint action—in fact the evidence is to the contrary.

In spite of the newness of industrialism and the illiteracy of many workers, Indian trade unionism has not lagged behind in the general development of trade union power and scope. Doubtless, some Indian trade unionism had a definite political bias and basis, but those unions which depended solely or mainly on political drive are, for the most part, no longer in existence.

Indians, however, can rarely rise to higher posts, mainly because of deficiencies of education and training. Also, some European employers are often subject to colour prejudice. Moreover, a policy of "equal pay for equal work" would condemn many, who would be glad to do the equal work for less pay, to unemployment or to swell the ranks of unskilled labour.

Evidence regarding wage evasion is always extremely difficult to obtain and verify. The suggestion that wage regulations are only adhered to by Europeans and the better class Indian employers is repeatedly heard. It may be more true of the commercial distributive trade in which there are some 2,000 unorganised Indian employees.

Trade union organisation has no doubt contributed to the relatively high weekly wage rates of a few Indian workers, e.g. some furniture workers £12, printers £11. Sometimes, these higher rates are more on paper than in practice, since it is not unknown for Indians to be dismissed when high wage rates become applicable to them.

One or two examples of trade unionism may be of interest. In 1943 the Natal Liquor and Catering Trade Employees Union included 2,115 Indian, 392 European and 35 Coloured members. An agreement of the Industrial Council covered all hotel employees and fixed the wages of qualified workers at the basic rate of £7 10s. a month. The relative figures for 1951 were £11 plus cost of living allowance for a waiter, while a qualified Indian barman's wage was £19 10s. plus cost of living allowance. The membership of this union in 1951 was 2,665 of which 2,367 were Indian.

Indians were first admitted into the South African Typographical Union in 1929. Increased wages led to dismissals and the establishment

of a number of small Indian printing firms. Until recently these Indian printers (approximately 20) were unorganised and unrecognised, but an Appellate Division judgment gave them recognition and the right to a seat on the National Industrial Council of the Printing Industry. The average basic wage in the industry for skilled journeymen is £11 per week and for assistants £5 10s. In December 1951 the Indian membership of the S.A.T.U. in Natal totalled approximately 950, of whom by far the largest number were unskilled assistants. A fairly typical wage-sheet showed 25 Indians earning a total of £132 per week.

The difficulties are that the required educational qualifications are high (at least Standard VII), and apprentices must attend technical classes which have not been available for Indians, though in certain instances exemption is granted where facilities are not available. The position has been somewhat altered recently and there are now two Indians apprenticed to Indian printers. The great improvement in some Indian printing plants since 1945 has been notable. The new Indian Technical College will do much to solve the problem of providing the necessary technical classes.

In the case of the Natal Furniture Workers' Industrial Union, the membership in May 1940 constituted 98 per cent. of the total workers, half of whom were Indians. In 1942, membership in the Natal branch consisted of 53 Europeans, 340 Indians and 35 Coloureds. Apprenticeship is open to all races, and the Union has several benefit funds in operation. Membership of this Union in 1951 consisted of 169 European males, 791 Indian males and 47 other races. There were 16 Indian and 20 European apprentices.

It is of interest to note that the Amalgamated Engineering Union had claimed to be responsible for tin workers, although it did not cater in any way for Non-Europeans. Various industries (e.g. biscuit making) also wished to maintain control over their employees, but after many difficulties, the South African Tin Workers' Union was established, but at the present time it is not really functioning. Although the work of manufacturing tins and metal boxes is largely semi-skilled, wages have been very low from 30s. to 85s. a week plus cost of living allowance, the higher figure being reached in five years.

In the commercial and distributive trades wages were raised from £18 a month under Determination No. 28 of 1931 to £21 under Determination No. 70 of 1939, and more recently to £23 10s. These rates were far beyond the capacity of small establishments. Evasion of such rates is almost inevitable and is strengthened by family employment in shops. An Indian Distributive and Clerical Employees' Union was established early in 1940, and its membership in 1942 was 162. This union, however, has not functioned for several years and no Indians are members of the European union.

Another new union, the Natal Sugar Industry Employees' Union, with some 3,000 members, played a prominent part in securing the investigation by the Wage Board resulting in the Determination of May 1942. 1951 membership was some 2,300 out of a total Indian labour force of little more than 3,000. Other unions with large Indian membership include Garment Workers (1946—952 in the Durban branch—1951, 2,518), Durban Indian Municipal Employees' Society (1946—2,450 members, 1951—1,700), Textile Workers (1946—535 in the Durban branch, 1951—976), Twine and Bag Workers (1946—340), Natal Biscuit Workers (1946—398), Natal Union of Leather Workers (1946—1,017 in the Durban branch, 1951—2,156).

Some 15,000 Indian employees are members of effective recognised unions. It may, therefore, be suggested that the principles of trade unionism have made progress among Natal Indians, especially in Durban, where the expansion of factory technique has facilitated co-operation and labour organisation. It seems also clear that organised labour is meeting with some success in this period of man power shortage and rising wages.

Membership of trade unions is on a very varied basis. Some unions are racially exclusive; a few are inclusive, while others include all racial groups in their membership but with effective power, skilled positions and pay controlled by the European.

Recent *apartheid* legislation has already caused racial cleavage. On the other hand the fear of low wage competition has undoubtedly strengthened the Indian position in the building trade where there is almost parallel unionism, but under a branch system.

The position of the Indian teacher has been greatly improved. Though the Natal Indian Teachers Society is not a trade union in the accepted sense, it has undoubtedly done much to raise the status and pay of its members. Its membership is very representative, 1,500 out of a possible 1,600.

In the semi-skilled occupations Indians fare relatively well, but they do not enjoy the same opportunities for reaching higher ranks. They form an efficient and stable working force and should therefore benefit by trade-union organisation. In the lower grades of labourers and unskilled workers they have to meet the competition of Africans, who are now themselves taking an increasing part in semi-skilled, or at any rate, repetitive work, in which they have often replaced Indians, e.g., in rubber and rope-making. Some municipal employment has also passed from the Indian to the African.

UNEMPLOYMENT

SEASONAL unemployment is not an important factor. Moreover, as there have been few opportunities for workers to specialise in skilled manual work, Indians have suffered little from the type of unemployment which results from the displacement of human labour by mechanised devices. It is true that power-operated machinery displaced a certain number of Indian manual workers in match-manufacturing and printing, but some handicraftsmen, such as jewellers, continue as of old.

Instead, the general effect of mechanisation and of technological development has been to increase employment opportunities for Indians, especially as semi-skilled machine operatives, and particularly in the light factory work of the textile, leather and garment industries.

There is, however, a type of Indian unemployment which is due to legislative, trade union, industrial council, or local authority control over the qualifications and status of workers. This exclusion sometimes leads to unauthorised employment and at less than determined rates of wages, and the crime of seeking employment at all costs is thus inevitable.

There is, too, a preference for European workers if the same wage must be paid irrespective of the race of the worker, and this tendency is particularly strong in the higher paid posts. It has been noted elsewhere that in the lowest grades of unskilled and even in semi-skilled grades there is a decided tendency among employers to transfer employment from Indian to African workers.

Probably, the main type of Indian unemployment has been cyclical and the severest unemployment for all types of Natal labour was in the depression period 1931-32. Some firms closed down and others reduced their staffs.

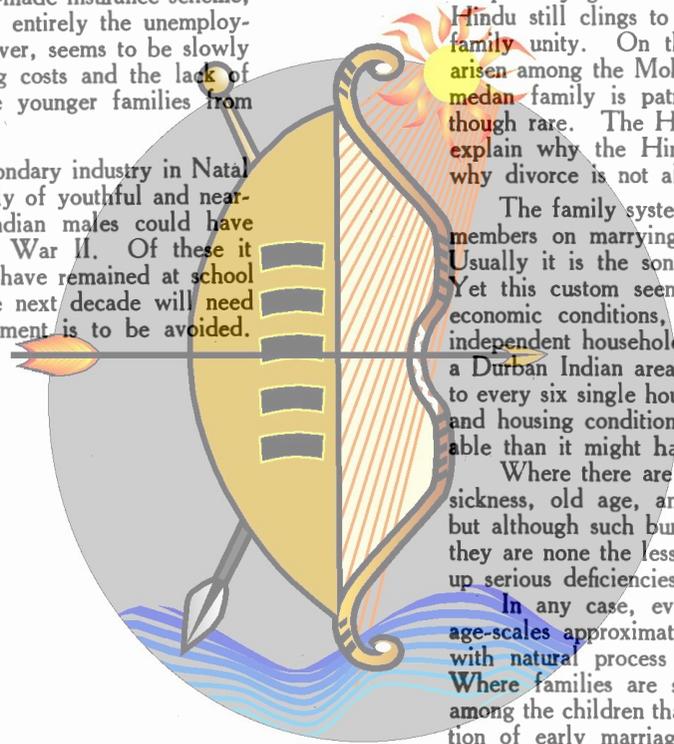
During the year ending 30 April 1936, out of 60,000 gainfully occupied Indians in South Africa, the average number of days lost equalled 13.3 per worker, with an unemployment rate of 3.6 per cent. as against a European rate of 3.1 per cent. and Coloured rate of 3.8 per cent. In Natal there were 2,456 Indians unemployed for at least part of the year, the average period of unemployment being six months. However, a careful study of the 1936 figures of employment showed that Indians compared favourably with other racial groups. Less than six per cent. normally occupied workers suffered from unemployment.

Unemployment figures for 1951 indicate no real alteration in the position. The average number of registrations of unemployed for the period 1949/51 was 1,573 of which 126 were females. The figures would have been much lower but for shortage of materials in the textile and garment trades, which at one period, were seriously affected by import control.

It would seem, therefore, that the difficulties of the Indian in Natal's economic system are not so much a lack of employment as the result of certain avenues of employment being closed, especially in the skilled trades. It is true that since June 1939 a Coloured and Indian Labour Exchange has been in operation in Durban, but no statutory juvenile affairs board supervises the employment of young Indians, though an advisory committee of the Labour Exchange interests itself in the placement of juveniles. The existing unemployment among youths and the growing number in this group suggest that early attention should be given to this situation.

The family system certainly acts as a home-made insurance scheme, and it was the family group which bore almost entirely the unemployment burden of 1932. The joint family, however, seems to be slowly breaking down, though the serious rise in living costs and the lack of housing is slowing down the movement of the younger families from the parental and grand-parental roof.

It is suggested that the rapid growth of secondary industry in Natal is undoubtedly due in some measure to the supply of youthful and near-adult Indian labour. Some 15,000 young Indian males could have reached working age since the end of World War II. Of these it would be reasonable to say approximately half have remained at school owing to the better educational facilities. The next decade will need further industrial expansion if Indian unemployment is to be avoided.



INDIAN SOCIETY

Religion separates the Indian community in South Africa into two main groups—Hindu and Mohammedan. In 1936, Hindus formed 81 per cent. of the 183,341 Indians in Natal, Mohammedans 14 per cent., Christians 4 per cent., and others one per cent. The Hindus are almost entirely the descendants of the indentured immigrants, except for the Gujerati section who are traders. The trading element is largely Mohammedan.

Both sections have strong family cohesion and traditions, which are possibly greater among the Hindu. Unlike the Mohammedan, the Hindu still clings to remnants of the old caste system with its link of family unity. On the other hand, an economic class distinction has arisen among the Mohammedans on the basis of wealth. The Mohammedan family is patriarchal, and more than one wife is permissible, though rare. The Hindu family is matriarchal. This may or may not explain why the Hindu husband must be content with one wife and why divorce is not allowed.

The family system has been strengthened by the fact that the young members on marrying remain under one or other of the family roofs. Usually it is the son who stays, being joined by the daughter-in-law. Yet this custom seems to be threatened with new factors. Improved economic conditions, for example, tend to tempt the sons to set up independent households, to the sorrow of the old people. A survey of a Durban Indian area in 1940 indicated that there was one joint family to every six single households. Enquiries in 1951 indicate that economic and housing conditions have made joint family disintegration less noticeable than it might have been, if accommodation were easier to obtain.

Where there are several income earners in a family, the burdens of sickness, old age, and temporary unemployment can often be carried, but although such burdens are thereby less obvious to the outside world they are none the less heavy and real. No amount of pooling can make up serious deficiencies in total income.

In any case, even single households tend to be fairly large and age-scales approximate closely to maximum fertility. Any interference with natural process is frowned upon by religious and social views. Where families are small the cause is often more likely to be death among the children than successful prevention of their arrival. The tradition of early marriage is still of importance and although the normal marriage age is rising, it is still much below that of Europeans. Among 400 family units surveyed in 1940 every woman over 25 years and every male over 30 years was married.

It is fairly safe to suggest that any improvement in incomes would result in a higher survival rate and hence larger families. At the same time, the recently acquired European custom of race suicide through too large a degree of contraception will no doubt be disseminated among the higher income groups of Indians, and may eventually overcome the effects of habit and tradition.

THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

IT was mentioned above that before the end of the nineteenth century attempts had been made to prevent the Indian immigrants from exercising parliamentary franchise. It was not, however, until 1896 that the Natal Government disfranchised the Indians.

In 1896, the further immigration of free Indians was restricted, the subsidy of £10,000 towards the cost of bringing indentured workers was withdrawn, and an annual tax of £3 was imposed on all indentured workers who entered the country after 1895 and who did not return to India at the end of their contract. This tax also fell on the wives and children of such Indians.

Under the Immigrants Regulation Act of 1913, Asiatics, with the exception of the wives and children of Indians already domiciled in the Union, are prohibited from entering the Union. The movement of Asiatics to different Provinces is also restricted. Ultimately the £3 tax was abolished and promises were made to remedy other grievances. There is a Commonwealth aspect of such matters. The Imperial Conference of 1917 supported the principle of reciprocity of treatment between India and the Dominions in the matter of immigration. At the 1923 Conference the suggestion was made that the Union Government should agree to the appointment of a representative of the Government of India to protect the interests of Indians in South Africa.

In 1923, two bills were drawn up, the Class Areas Bill and the Areas Reservation Bill. It was held that it was necessary to reduce the numbers of the Indians, an alien element in South Africa. Those who remained were to trade or own property in certain areas only. The attempt to give Parliament the power to enforce a type of segregation was dropped owing to the dissolution of the House in May, 1924. In 1926, the Minister of the Interior introduced the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provisions) Bill. Following the visit of a delegation from India which gave evidence before a select committee, further consideration of the bill was postponed. This was followed by a visit to India of a parliamentary deputation from the Union Government.

There was a further conference held in Cape Town to explore ways and means of solving the Indian question in the Union, and early in 1927 certain recommendations were agreed to, which were afterwards approved by both governments. The main points of this "Cape Town Agreement" were as follows:—

Both Governments reaffirmed their recognition of the right of the Union to use all just and legitimate means to maintain Western standards

of life. The Union Government recognised that Indians who are prepared to conform to Western standards of life should do so, and they also undertook to organise a scheme of assisted voluntary emigration to India or other countries.

The Union Government further agreed to withdraw the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration Bill, which also included the substance of an earlier Class Areas Bill. The Union invited the Government of India to appoint an agent to facilitate continuous and effective co-operation between the two Governments.

In referring to "the considerable number of Indians who will remain part of the permanent population", the Indian 'Magna Charta' recognised their security of tenure and tended to allay uneasiness concerning earlier proposals of compulsory segregation.

Post-war political developments include the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, the repeal of the latter part of that Act, and later still the Group Areas Act, which, while it is racially all-embracing, must have a profound effect on the densely urbanised Indian communities in Natal.

MILITARY SERVICE

Following an announcement by the Prime Minister that he proposed to enlist Coloureds as non-combatants in the U.D.F., the Committee of the Natal Indian Association, on 4 June 1940, passed a resolution offering the services of Indians to co-operate with the authorities. On 22 June an official announcement was made that an Indian Service Corps consisting of a mechanical transport drivers' section, a medical, hygiene and ambulance section, and a section for mess servants, cooks, waiters, etc. was to be raised.

The first company of the Corps, composed entirely of Indians, left for active service in North Africa early in September. During the first few months both the rate of recruitment and the standard of recruits were all that could be desired. More than 500 Indians, many of them educated men of good position, had joined by the end of October. Many tributes were paid for the excellent work which they did during the Abyssinian campaign.

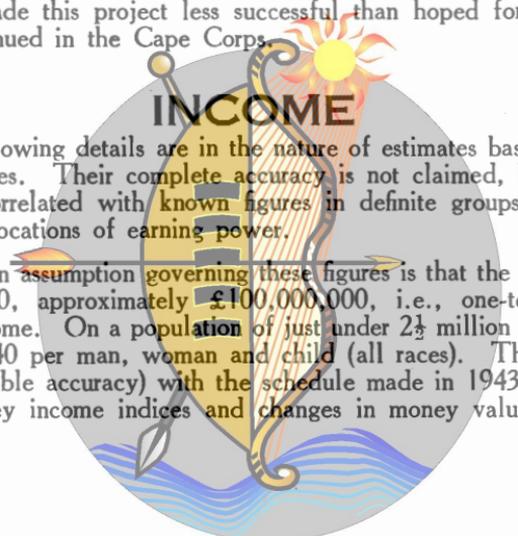
As recruitment to the Corps in the Cape Province had been thrown open to Cape Malays as well as Indians, and as the response of the Cape Malays' community had been excellent, it was decided in October 1940 to change the name of the Corps to the Indian and Malay Service Corps.

From November onwards both the rate of recruitment and the quality of the Indians coming forward showed a very marked falling off. Probably the main reason was the progress of events in India, where the

Government and the popular leaders became progressively estranged, culminating in the failure of the Cripps Mission and the arrest of a number of leaders including Mr. Gandhi.

Another reason for the poor response after the first few months was that the Indians from Natal and Cape Malays were not altogether a happy combination. Their dietary and other habits were so different that it was difficult to cater for both sections satisfactorily. Recruitment among Cape Malays, many of whom were actually Cape Coloureds, continued to be excellent, so that the Indian recruits tended to be swamped in the joint training camp.

In an attempt to remove this latter difficulty and to give Indians an opportunity to raise a unit of their own, it was decided in August 1942 to raise an Indian battalion entirely separate from the Indian and Malay Corps, and recruiting started in Durban in October, 1942. Sectional difficulties made this project less successful than hoped for, but many Indians continued in the Cape Corps.



INCOME

The following details are in the nature of estimates based on fairly accurate figures. Their complete accuracy is not claimed, but they are sufficiently correlated with known figures in definite groups to indicate the broad allocations of earning power.

The main assumption governing these figures is that the total income was, in 1950, approximately £100,000,000, i.e., one-tenth of the National Income. On a population of just under 2½ million this gives an income of £40 per man, woman and child (all races). This correlates (with acceptable accuracy) with the schedule made in 1943 of £23 per unit, if money income indices and changes in money values are taken into account.

The probable total income of Natal is £100,000,000.

NATAL INDIAN INCOME

| | 1940 (1) | | 1946 (2) | | 1951 (3) | |
|--|----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Farming (including sugar) | 18,000 | 720,000 | 16,000 | 960,000 | 16,000 | 960,000 |
| Secondary Industry | 12,000 | 830,000 | 19,000 | 2,458,000 | 20,000 | 4,000,000 |
| Building | 300 | 60,000 | 700 | 175,000 | 1,000 | 400,000 |
| Mining | 700 | 35,000 | 500 | 50,000 | 500 | 60,000 |
| Commerce and Finance | 7,600 | 2,400,000 | 9,000 | 3,600,000 | 10,000 | 4,500,000 |
| Public Service and Professional | 3,800 | 190,000 | 2,000 | 400,000 | 2,500 | 950,000 |
| Domestic and Personal | 5,900 | 295,000 | 6,000 | 450,000 | 6,000 | 480,000 |
| Transport | 1,500 | 60,000 | 3,600 | 360,000 | 4,000 | 600,000 |
| Other | 4,000 | 200,000 | 9,000 | 540,000 | 10,000 | 600,000 |
| | 53,800 | 4,790,000 | 65,800* | 8,993,000 | 70,000 | 12,550,000 |
| Average per working unit | | £90 | | £137 | | £179 |
| Average per population unit | | £24 | | £38 | | £42 |
| | | | | (approx. 232,000) | | (approx. 298,000) |

* These figures correlate fairly closely with some figures given in "Meet the Indian in South Africa" published by the State Information Office, Pretoria, which gives an earning total of some £6,000,000 to £7,000,000 to an earning group of some 53,000. There is fair ground for the assumption that—

- (a) One out of 2½ European units is an earning unit
- (b) One out of 4½ Indian units is an earning unit
- (c) One out of 6 African units is an earning unit

In addition, one out of three African units is an agricultural unit.

Based on this the following figures are obtained:—

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|--------|------------|
| (a) European population | 270,000 | — income per unit | £179 | 48,330,000 |
| (b) Indian population | 298,000 | — income per unit | £42 | 12,500,000 |
| (c) African population | 1,800,000 | — income per unit | £22(4) | 39,600,000 |

£100,430,000

The Indian population of Natal is not by any means a homogeneous social unit, though major interests and main outlook are along the same lines.

(1) As given in "Life and Labour in Natal", 1943, correlates Race Relations Handbook, p. 321.

(2) Mainly from Census of Industrial Statistics 1945/51 and "Population of Natal" by M. Alsop.

(3) Estimates based on wage rates and other known factors, e.g. Trade Union Membership.

(4) It must be remembered that this average is considerably affected by the vast number of agricultural workers included among the African population.

The prime cause of the lack of complete unity is doubtless religious and the resultant religio-political division between Moslem and Hindu. Also among the latter there are sectional divisions which tend to the emergence of cliques and often a lack of sympathy and tolerance not unknown in other racial groups.

These divisions have certain repercussions in the economic sphere, most prominently in the predominance of wealth among the Moslem trading community, and less noticeably, but nevertheless effectively, in the advance of sections of the Hindu population which have achieved creditable educational, commercial and industrial standards.

The net result is that the Indian community in Natal can be divided into three broad economic sections:

- (a) Commercial and professional;
- (b) Industrial; and
- (c) Labourers.

On the figures given it is reasonable to assume average economic levels for these three classes as follows—

| Earning units | Represent population | Total earnings | Earning unit average | Income for family of five |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| (a) 13,500 | 58,000 | £5,850,000 | 433 | £500 |
| (b) 20,000 | 85,000 | £4,000,000 | 200 | £235 |
| (c) 36,500 | 155,000 | £2,700,000 | 74 | £85 |
| 70,000 | 298,000 | £12,550,000 | | |

It should, however, be noted that in Group (a) there will be many whose earnings would only approximate to those of Group (b).

Also it must be remembered that many in Group (c) receive, in addition to money wages, some form of rations (but for the worker only) and often will be given some form of simple accommodation.

A recent survey of Indian living costs gives a minimum standard expenditure of £16 7s. 6d. per month for food, clothing, cleansing, fuel, light, for a representative family consisting of husband, wife and three children (10 years 6 years and 1½ years); to this must be added the cost of transport to work and rent where these are involved. It is clear, therefore, that half the Indian population has a very low level of subsistence, a fact which is even more significant when it is realised that most of the big families are almost certainly in that half of the population.

A recent survey of 500 families taken at random certainly suggests that the above statement might still be true if it read "two-thirds of the Indian population have a very low level of subsistence, and one-third is merely existing."

Hospital reports indicate that under-nourishment is the foundation cause of much Indian ill-health, and certainly it can be taken for granted that if more income were earned, more food would be bought.

FOOD AND INCOME

A survey carried out in 1941 indicated that of the incomes up to £125 a year in typical Indian households, approximately 55 to 70 per cent. was spent on food and 11 to 15 per cent. on clothing. With higher incomes the percentage spent on food fell steadily, but that on clothing remained fairly constant, near 11 per cent.

In a survey carried out in the following year the average cost of food as a percentage of income for 93 families covered, proved to be 66.6 per cent.

This high proportion was confirmed by later nutrition surveys. In 1944 a study of the diets of 98 families living in a Durban Municipal barracks showed the average expenditure on food to be 62.3% of cash income. But rations were also received for which 13s. was deducted monthly, an amount which was half the actual cost of the goods at ruling prices. A Survey in 1948 of 63 Indian families living at Edendale, near Pietermaritzburg, showed average food expenditure to be 67% of income, but for more than half the households the percentage was over 70.

The percentage so spent is high chiefly because of the large increase in food prices, particularly of rice during the war and post-war years, but partly because the earlier surveys made no inquiry into other expenses. In connection with the first point, the impression gained was that rice would be bought whatever its price so long as it was available. With regard to the second point, so long as the housewife did not have to think of her other expenses she would tend to list the food items at the optimum level, i.e., that level which reigned at the beginning of the month rather than towards the end when money was short. This means that the figures for deficiencies in food constituents shown below for the 93 families, were probably slightly worse than as given.

The average daily cost of food per man unit in 1941 was 11.3d. The lowest figure was 3½d., and the highest 2s. 3d.

| No. of families | Daily cost per man unit |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 8 | Under 6d. |
| 23 | 6d.—9d. |
| 24 | 9d.—1s. |
| 23 | 1s.—1s. 3d. |
| 14 | 1s. 3d.—1s. 6d. |
| 5 | 1s. 6d.—1s. 9d. |
| 3 | 1s. 9d. and over |

In 1944, the average daily expenditure on food bought to supplement rations varied over a two months' period between 8d. and 1s. per person, the difference being explained by the availability during the second month of larger supplies of some foodstuffs after a period of shortages.

In the Edendale households the average daily man-unit expenditure

was 1s 5d., an indication of the rise in food prices since 1942. On a per capita basis the average daily expenditure of seven households varied from 5d. to 8½d.; in ten households the average was 10d. daily. Only five households spent more than 18d. per person daily.

TYPE OF FOODSTUFFS CONSUMED

As a result of the surveys referred to above and carried out between 1941 and 1948, it is possible to give a detailed account of the type of foodstuffs consumed.

All households covered by the earlier surveys bought rice which constituted a very important and cheap article of diet for the poorest section of the community. Yet the consumption of even the commonest and cheapest foodstuffs was often limited by inadequate incomes. The effect of the large increase in the price of rice during the war was serious. For a number of reasons including absence of cooling facilities, 55 to 70 per cent. of the Indians used no fresh milk; condensed milk, in small quantities, was preferred. The principal source of vegetable protein was dholl (lentils) most of which was normally imported. All households consumed vegetables, but half of them did not buy fruit. Excepting the very poorest groups, ghee was commonly used for cooking purposes—with a large range of quality and price. Butter was used by only one family in three. Tea was universally popular, and bread was consumed in all but the poorer households. In the lowest income group the expenditure on food per man unit worked out at less than 5d. per day.

The Edendale survey indicated a similar range of foodstuffs. All households used cereals, dholl, sugar, vegetables, curry powder or chillies, tea or coffee. By 1948, rice was in very short supply and when obtainable was often sold at a price much above the controlled maximum of 8½d. per pound. Only eight families bought rice, but a small number were growing it for home consumption. The majority bought mealie rice at 2d. per pound and made considerable use of "hand made" and bakers' bread. Vegetable ghee, a substitute for the previously imported *porbander*, and oil were the common cooking fats. Fruit and eggs were consumed in only half the households, although a variety of fruit was being grown in the Edendale valley, and a number of households kept fowls.

Thus the food in common use by the Natal Indians and their method of cooking appear to be still similar to that of their forbears in India in spite of economic advantages which might be gained by some change-over to local foodstuffs. There was, for example, some consumption of mealie meal, but very rarely was it used in the early years of the war as a cheap substitute for rice. The war and post-war scarcity of imported rice has, however, made the introduction of some mealie rice into the diet almost universal, but as a substitute for the unpolished,

brown rice previously consumed, the use of mealie rice has impoverished Indian diets particularly in respect of calcium and vitamin B. This deprivation is to some extent offset by the greater use of wheatmeal, an ingredient in "hand-made bread", and bakers' bread. The lack of sufficient and suitable education, particularly among girls, has helped to maintain custom and prejudice against the use of unfamiliar foodstuffs.

As at least 80 per cent. of Natal Indians are Hindu, a good sprinkling of vegetarians is to be expected. The cow is a sacred animal in orthodox Hindu thought, and this belief is still largely held. In only a very few cases has the tradition against the eating of beef broken down. Animal protein consumption is not high, and the South African Indians are certainly not a race of meat eaters. On the other hand, local surveys showed that total abstainers from all meat were very few. Mutton and poultry were consumed when the family could afford meat, often only at the weekend. Among the poorer urban families such meat consisted of sheep's head, trotters and offal.

The general low consumption of meat resulted in a dietary deficiency of good quality fats and proteins. In this Mohammedans suffered less than Hindus, partly because of higher incomes, and partly because, though pork was taboo, beef was added to the available meats, and oils and fats were more freely used in the preparation of foods. Fish was consumed about once a week, even if it consisted only of fish heads and tails prepared in curry. Owing to their high price, eggs were only rarely consumed, and cheese as a rule only as a sandwich filling for the members of the family taking meals to work.

Nearly all foodstuffs in Indian households are cooked in oil or fat. The traditional ghee is a butter-fat made from the milk of cows or buffaloes. In Natal, this was an imported luxury used only by the wealthy. The local product, a 'vegetable ghee' with groundnut oil as its main ingredient, is widely used in cooking. Except in the case of rice, no boiling is done, and there is also little roasting or oven cooking. All families buy the traditional Indian spices and ingredients for curry, and some of these have considerable food value. Curry powder, for example, is rich in minerals, while chillies, betel leaves and nuts contain some of the vitamins.

NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF FOODSTUFFS

The 1942 Survey⁽¹⁾ was carried out among three Indian groups who had children attending school, and was concerned more specifically with the nutritional value of foodstuffs consumed. The question of standard of accuracy had first to be settled. Dr. Aykroyd, formerly of the Nutrition Research Laboratories, Coonoor, South India, stated in a report for the League of Nations Inter-Governmental Conference of Far Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene, 1937: "Caution is necessary in applying Western dietary standards to the East. I have

(1) Nutritional Value of Indian Diets. Phyllis G. Best, Dietitian, Dept. of Public Health.

suggested standards of calorie, protein, fat, mineral and milk intake far below generally accepted Western standards, because there is no point in putting forward standards out of all relation to reality."

On the other hand, Indians living in South Africa are in much greater contact with Western civilisation, and the wealthier section strive to live up to Western standards. For these reasons, the results of the 1942 survey were compared both with Dr. Aykroyd's standard and with the standard for the moderately active man suggested by the South African National Nutrition Council. In order to convert the family, composed as it is of both sexes and varying ages into man units, Bigwood's Scale of Family Coefficients was used to calculate all constituents except the vitamins. The total quantity of each vitamin was calculated per head. Below are given the two standards and the average figure for the 100 families in this survey. The figures quoted are per man unit per day.

The National Nutrition Council also suggests an intake of 2 mg. riboflavin (B₂) and 10 mg. of nicotinic acid daily. The average result of the 1942 survey was 0.6 mg. riboflavin and 6.79 mg. nicotinic acid and therefore less than the amount recommended. It should be noted, however, that figures for these constituents in various foodstuffs were incomplete. As all values were calculated on the uncooked edible portion, the vitamin content absorbed would be lower than the figures given, as most of the foodstuffs were cooked. Thus, on the average figure, according to standard A, calcium and vitamin A are very deficient. According to standard B, calories, calcium, vitamin A and vitamin B₂ are very deficient, vitamin B₁ most probably deficient and nicotinic acid slightly deficient. The average figures, however, tell us very little of the group as a whole.

TABLE I.

| | Protein | Calories | Iron | Calcium | | Vitamin A | Vitamin B ₁ | Vitamin C |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|--------|---------|----------|--------------|------------------------|-----------|
| | | | | Child | Adult | | | |
| Standard A (Aykroyd) | 65 gm. | 2,600 | 20 mg. | 0.68 | 1.0 gm. | 3,000 I.U. | 300 I.U. | 30-50 mg. |
| Standard B (N.N.C.) | 70 gm. | 3,000 | 12 mg. | | 0.8 gm. | 3-4,000 I.U. | 666 I.U. | 30 mg. |
| 1942 Survey average figures | 71.3 gm. | 2,875 | 25 mg. | | 0.41 gm. | 1,321 I.U. | 345 I.U. | 63 mg. |

The 100 families involved 819 persons of all ages of whom 53 per cent. were under 16 years of age. Compared with Standard A, 36 families were receiving less than the quantity of calories required daily and with Standard B, 57 families. This shows a grave position since by either standard a very large percentage were not getting a sufficient quantity of food to maintain health, without considering the quality of the food. The fact that they were perforce changing from the staple

cereal of rice to wheatmeal and mealie rice, which are not so popular, may have had some effect in lowering the total intake. Also, owing to the high price, more money was spent for a smaller quantity of rice.

Forty-two families received less than the protein requirement of Standard A and 49 less than Standard B. It must also be remembered that a large proportion of this protein is derived from vegetable sources and is, therefore, of inferior quality. For the calcium requirement Standard A gives 0.68 gm. for an adult, and 1.0 gm. for a child and as 53 per cent. of persons involved were under 16 years, the standard approximates 0.8 gm. which is the same as Standard B. There was a very serious deficiency in calcium, particularly since it involves so many children. Indians as a whole use very little milk or cheese, which accounts to some extent for these results. Only two families were receiving the standard quantity or more. This shows that ignorance as well as poverty is a factor in malnutrition since, as will be shown later, 22 of the families were spending over 1s. 3d. per man unit daily on food, and eight of these 1s. 6d. or more. These people at least should have been able to provide a diet adequate to meet the calcium need of the body.

The average intake of iron is good, 24.9 mg. This is above both standards, but, it must be remembered, not all the iron found in foodstuffs is available for absorption. However, it is not as a rule a factor which needs to be supplemented, and in only three families was the iron intake below 12 mg. Only five families were receiving 3,000 I.U. or over of Vitamin A, the minimum requirement in both standards. There is, therefore, a serious deficiency of this factor in these diets.

The average intake of vitamin B₁ compared with Standard A is above requirements, but compared with Standard B it is very deficient. The great difference in the recommended amounts is partly accounted for by the fact that since Dr. Aykroyd suggested his standard in 1937, the work of scientists on the vitamin B complex has shown the great importance of this group of nutrients in maintaining health. The aim, therefore, should be rather more than 300 I.U. Thirty-seven families were getting less than 300 units and 96 families less than 600 units, which indicates a widespread deficiency of this food factor.

For vitamin C the average intake was above either standard, being 63 mg. as against a minimum standard of 30 mg. in both scales. But as the figure of 63 mg. was calculated on the raw food, and as a large proportion comes from vegetables that are cooked, there is a considerable loss before ingestion. Twenty-three families received less than 30 mg. per head, the lowest recorded being 11 mg.

Summing up, although the percentage of income spent on food is very high, the figures given show that not only is malnutrition serious among the Indian community in Durban, but also that for large numbers

the quantity of food is insufficient. Even on Dr. Aykroyd's standard, 36 families were receiving less than the recommended allowance, while compared with the National Nutrition Council's standard 57 families were below the requirement. After the actual lack of a sufficient quantity of food, the most serious deficiencies were in calcium and vitamin A. Vitamins B₁ and B₂ were also below standard. The deficiency of calcium, partly due to lack of milk could be relieved by adding calcium fortification to wheat-meal, or by making skimmed milk available at a low price. The latter method would also increase the amount of first-class protein in the diet.

The vitamin A deficiency is largely due to the lack of animal fats in the diet, that is, butter, and the real ghee, *porbander*. The poor families use only vegetable fats and oils deficient in vitamin A. One method of combating this deficiency would be the fortification with South African fish-liver oil or margarine, cooking oil or 'vegetable ghee'.

Using the National Nutrition Council's standard (Standard B in Table I) the 1944 survey of 100 Indian families in Durban in municipal barracks showed the following results:

- 45% of the diets were deficient in calories
- 70% of the diets were deficient in protein
- 57% of the diets were deficient in fats
- 100% of the diets were deficient in vitamins A, B₁, B₂
- 90% of the diets were deficient in vitamin C

For this group comprising 614 persons, half of whom were children under 15 years, diet deficiencies were even more serious than those revealed in the 1942 survey. It is possible that the quantity of food consumed was influenced by the many shortages in supplies as well as high prices, particularly of rice, at this time. Only with reluctance have Indian families substituted some 'mealie rice' for rice and the amount used is small compared with the former quantity of rice used daily.

EDUCATION

THE poverty of the early indentured Indians extended to the educational and cultural aspects of their lives, except for the small amount of religious instruction. In any case little education could have been provided to people earning cash incomes of 10s. a month, and for some years the only schools available to Indian children were run by missionary bodies. This is only one evidence of South Africa's great debt to missions who have provided and who still provide valuable social services in the field of education and health.

Such facilities as were provided were readily taken up, and the Education Commission of 1914 was able to report that "the Natal-born Indian is often fairly well educated and owes this to the self-sacrifice of his lowly indentured parents".

Most of the educational facilities available to Indians were the result of private enterprise. The typical private school began by the acquisition of a site by a local community and the erection of a building. When it had become established as a school, an appeal for recognition would perhaps be made to the Provincial Education Department. In 1927, some 10,000 children out of a total of 55,000 children between 5 and 19 years of age were accommodated in 39 schools. Nine of these were Provincial schools financed and staffed by the Natal Provincial Administration. Many of the private schools depended on various sources of help—Provincial grants, subscriptions from the local community, school fees, gifts and use of mission or other buildings, either at a sub-economic rental, or rent-free.

Education in Natal is in the hands of the Provincial Administration. For European children, education in Provincial schools has been compulsory since 1910, and for Coloured since 1942. It is not compulsory for Indians. Progress has been made in educational facilities for Indians, and it is noteworthy that the 1948 expenditure was near the half-million mark, with an overall cost per student of approximately £10; the comparable European unit cost was £32, and Coloured £21.

Progress has, however, been appreciable though much still remains to be done.

TYPES OF SCHOOLS

In Natal, Indian children are taught in racially separate schools. Twenty-seven Provincial schools cater for approximately one-quarter of the school-going population of some 49,000. Nearly six times as many schools are state-aided and these are often of an unsuitable or inadequate character. Of recent years closer Provincial Council control and inspection has resulted in a raising of the standard, and the fact that the

teachers are paid by the Provincial Council has aided this improvement. Lastly, there are private schools, several of which are anxious to receive recognition and status as aided schools. There are a few schools in which an Indian language is the medium, and some classes are conducted in the Indian tongue, but outside the ordinary time-table in English medium schools.

The following are some of the significant figures :

| | 1927 | 1941 | 1950 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Total number enrolled | 10,000 | 29,000 | 49,000 |
| Percentage of girls to boys | — | 30% | 35% |
| Ratio of Standard VI to Standard I | — | 31% | 42% |

It is clear that the rate of leakage still remains high. Of the 49,000 scholars in 1950 nearly 21,000 were in the sub-standards and Standard I. This compared with European figures of approximately 33½% up to and including Standard I, but at least eight out of 10 European children reach Standard VI.

It still remains true that a majority of Indian school-going children do not complete a primary course. As it is, only about one Indian child in two goes to school at any one time, and it is clear that the majority of the Indian population will not reach accepted educational standards for many years to come.

SYLLABUS

Education follows the same lines as in schools for European children. The medium of instruction is not the mother tongue, one of the many vernacular languages, but English. It should be noted that Non-Europeans generally in the Union resent any suggestion of being given a type of education which savours of racial differences or attempts to train them to remain in that state of life to which God or the Constitution called them. Otherwise, Indian parents seem to take little interest in the content of the education courses. This may be one reason why their children's education has very few links with their history, culture, or future occupations.

Secondary education is provided at Sastri College in Durban, a secondary school for boys and at ten other schools, some of which have long waiting lists. In view of an expanding school population, already referred to, the need to increase the provision of facilities for secondary and technical education is only too obvious. At the same time, a comparatively large proportion of pupils do not go forward to post-primary courses.

The lack of facilities helps to explain the high percentage of attendance of those enrolled—over 90 per cent. in the primary schools. Education, though not compulsory, is now free for most standards, and in 1953 this will be true up to Standard X.

In the age group 5—19 three in every four European children are at school; among the Indian children only two out of four are at school, and as was pointed out previously, the majority of those who do attend do not complete a primary course.

The future pressure from the present 0—4 age group will make Indian school accommodation very inadequate in the next decade.

Unlike European and Coloured children, Indian children in Natal obtain no boarding grants to attend hostels or transport grants to enable them to travel long distances to school. In any case there are no school hostels for them.

Indian scholars up to Standard VI are eligible for the Provincial meals grant of 3d. per attendance. The food value of the meals which can be provided is dependent on local conditions. In schools which have facilities a good meal is the result, but in other cases it would be better described as a snack.

Two typical 1951 urban school menus are given below :

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-----|---------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| (a) | Bread and dhol | Bread pilchards and beans | Bread and vegetable stew | Cheese or jam sandwiches, milk | Fish or mutton with vegetables and bread |
| (b) | Bread, butter, jam, fruit | Bread, butter, cheese, milk or milk cocoa | Bread, butter, milk or milk cocoa, fruit | Bread, butter, milk or milk cocoa | Bread, butter, cheese, milk or milk cocoa, fruit |

A point worth noting is that rice is not available—its place being taken by bread.

TEACHER TRAINING

Provincial authorities are alive to the pressing need for a higher standard of teaching. The lowest acceptable standard of teacher qualifications is Junior Certificate, but today there is little prospect for anyone below Matriculation standard.

In 1950 there were three teacher-training centres, two in Durban and one in Pietermaritzburg. The number of trainees was 181 against a teacher strength of 1,600. One of the serious handicaps to the development of Indian education in Natal is the lack of Indian women teachers, with the result that co-educational methods have been necessary in certain areas, and some European women teachers are still employed in Indian girls' schools.

Salary scales have been improved until they are now relatively attractive. The new teacher-training centre at Springfield, Durban, gives new facilities and attractions to a possible 250 candidates.

It is a reasonable assumption that during the next ten years the teaching strength could double, but this would merely keep pace with the growth of potential scholars, the absorption of whom will depend on increased school accommodation.

The question of the siting of schools, and the high cost of building are barriers to progress in this direction, and the 'platoon' system (double use of school buildings) is a palliative, not a permanent solution.

Though still inadequate, the expansion of Indian education in Natal since 1927, thanks to the Provincial Administration, missions, voluntary organisations, and the Indian community, has been remarkable. For example, within ten years the number of schools and teachers was doubled and the number of pupils much more than doubled. Further progress since World War II has made pre-war figures look very small, but in proportion to the growth in Indian child population, education has barely kept pace.

One of the main problems for the future of Indian education in Natal is to decide the role of aided schools, whose usefulness depends not only on the support of the local Indian communities, but also on sufficient assistance from the Provincial Administration to ensure that the standards of building and of teaching come nearer to the level of the Provincial schools. An assumption of responsibility for some of these schools by the Provincial Administration may be one solution. Indian school education is being gradually made free, but the value of this will be discounted if it merely swells the concentration in infant classes.

The problem, however, will arise of providing accommodation for all those who wish to attend school. Even at the present time this is not available. This difficulty would be increased by the introduction of compulsory education. In any case, if the community is to benefit from free education it will be necessary to provide school buildings. Obviously the financial implications are very considerable, particularly in view of the rapidly growing population of school age to which attention has already been drawn. How this cost could or should be shared between the Union tax-payer and the Provincial tax-payer and between the Europeans and the Indians is another matter.

The recent introduction of a gradually released free education for both primary and secondary pupils affords evidence of a willingness to face a large and costly innovation. At least fifty schools are required in addition to the need to bring the existing ones up to date, while the process of staffing and equipping such schools cannot be rushed.

Another important development may also occur in the education

of girls. At the moment in spite of numerical equality between the sexes, only one in every three children attending school is a girl. Tradition and conservatism play a part, but the relative shortage of girls' schools and women teachers are important factors preventing progress in the education of Indian girls. Moreover, the shortage of schools results in parental preference being given to the boys of a mixed family. In addition, the fact that boys themselves only reach low standards before becoming wage earners makes parents realise that educated daughters may not easily find husbands of their own standard. It is also true that they are often wanted at home to help with the younger ones, and for other domestic duties, in themselves of course a useful form of practical education. Yet more education in schools, particularly if it included domestic science and hygiene, would do much to raise the standard of Indian homes. Already some of the large girls' schools have a well-equipped domestic science department. It must be admitted, however, that it would for various reasons be impossible to make education compulsory for Indian girls at the present time.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

There are no facilities for full-time technical education for Indians in Natal. This deficiency serves to reinforce the various factors which tend to restrict employment opportunities for Indian youths. The lack of classes providing the necessary theoretical training prevents the apprenticeship of Indians even in those trades in which the other requirements (in particular, a willing employer with recognised facilities in his workshop) are present. It is this reason which accounts largely for the small number (in some cases even absence) of apprentices in the building and printing industry, in the motor industry, and to a lesser extent in the furniture industry. Certain part-time classes are held in Durban in general subjects, including commercial subjects. Evening continuation classes for adults range from the sub-standards to Standard VII, the teachers being recruited from the local Indian schools.

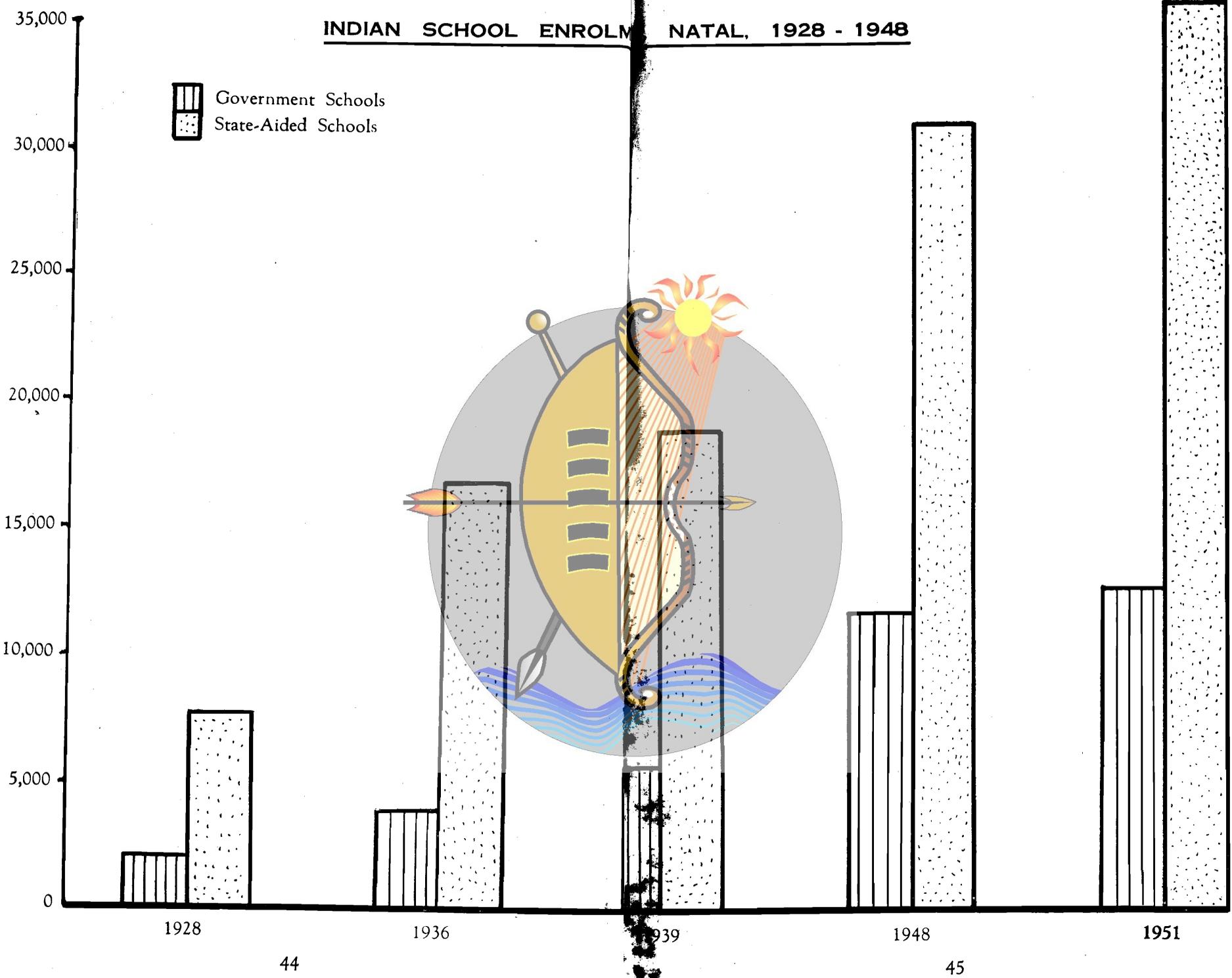
Negotiations have been almost completed for a full Technical College in Durban, which will greatly improve the position. Tentative arrangements have already been made which will increase apprenticeship opportunities in several trades.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Part-time classes for Non-Europeans have been offered in certain degree subjects by the Natal University College since 1936, with an enrolment of 90 in 1942, most of whom were Indians. Figures for 1951 were 106 Indian men and 12 Indian women out of a total of 162 students. The majority of these are already in employment and could not attend full-time courses. Fees are paid, but practically one student in three takes advantage of interest-free loans. There are a few bursaries available, and concessions are made up to 40% on application

INDIAN SCHOOL ENROLMENT NATAL, 1928 - 1948

Government Schools
State-Aided Schools



1928

1936

1939

1948

1951

44

45

in case of need. Indians are admitted in small numbers to certain other South African universities, e.g., Witwatersrand and Cape Town. Meanwhile professional training in law, engineering, etc., must still largely be obtained outside the Union, with an obvious restriction of the numbers who can afford to train overseas.

In 1951, a Non-European Medical School was opened at Wentworth, Durban, as part of the University of Natal. After lengthy negotiations the site for the actual Non-European Medical School building has been settled. This is adjacent to the large King Edward VIII hospital, and medical training should start there in 1953.

Quite substantial bursaries have been arranged by the Union Government under conditions which may define to some extent the localities and races in which the new medical men and women will function.

The June 1951 student strength in the pre-medical course was 34 of whom 15 were Indian men and five Indian women.

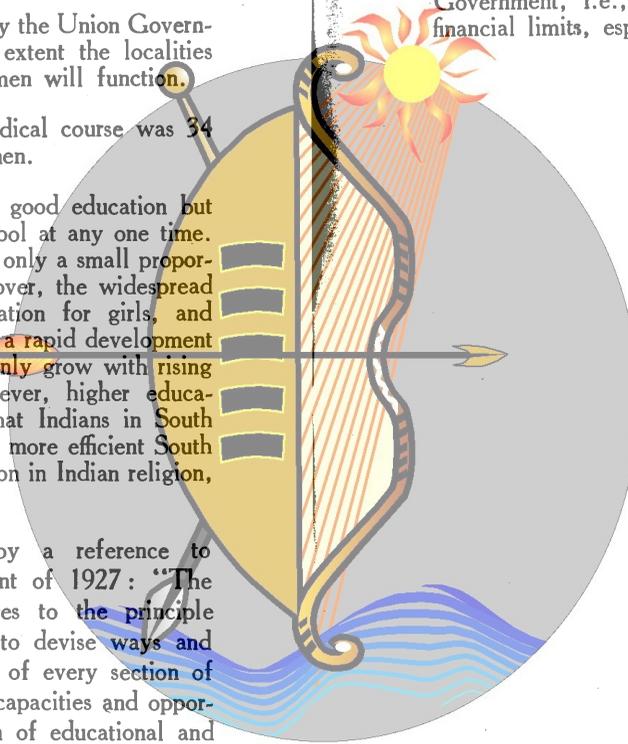
University education needs the background of good education but only 50 per cent. of the Indian children attend school at any one time. Of these only a small number matriculate, of which only a small proportion are likely to want university education. Moreover, the widespread poverty, the traditional objections to higher education for girls, and a meagre choice of professions weigh heavily against a rapid development of Indian university education. Such progress can only grow with rising opportunities, incomes and standards, which, however, higher education can assist. Again, it is of interest to note that Indians in South Africa want an education to enable them to become more efficient South Africans, and there is no known demand for instruction in Indian religion, history or philosophy.

This section can be suitably concluded by a reference to the 'Uplift Clause' of the Cape Town Agreement of 1927: "The Union Government firmly believes in and adheres to the principle that it is the duty of every civilised Government to devise ways and means and to take all possible steps for the uplift of every section of the permanent population to the full extent of their capacities and opportunities, and accepts the view that in the provision of educational and other facilities the considerable number of Indians who remain part of the permanent population should not be allowed to lag behind the other sections of the people."

In the following ten years (during which school attendance increased by 150 per cent.) the Province of Natal sought seriously to implement the undertaking made by the Union Government, considerable assistance being given by missions and other voluntary bodies. The exigencies of war stayed progress, but since 1946 much progress has

been made in Indian education under active departmental encouragement.

It must, however, be remembered that in Natal only one in every ten is a European. Moreover, as has already been pointed out, the rate of increase in Non-Europeans is much larger than that of Europeans. The 1951 preliminary Census figures show that Indians outnumber Europeans not only in Durban, but in the whole of Natal. Moreover, the percentage of the Indian population of school-going age is at the present time 60 per cent. greater than in the case of Europeans. Consequently, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the Provincial Administration to launch out into grandiose schemes of educational facilities for its impoverished majority without the assistance of the Union Government, i.e., of the Union tax-payer, and even then there are financial limits, especially in the short-run.



HEALTH AND HOSPITALS

THE general physique and health of the stock of Indian immigrants could not have been of a very high average, although the newcomers were supposed to have been selected, and, moreover, any who were found on reaching Natal to be suffering from disease were sent back. The primitive conditions under which the immigrants lived, though probably little different from those to which they had been accustomed, and under which many of the rural and peri-urban Indians in Natal still live, would no doubt have accounted for a higher incidence of disease, had it not been for the mild climate of the coastal belt. In a climate more rigorous than that of Natal, life in many of the Indian homes, often merely shacks, and sometimes with a family in each room, would have been unbearable. As it is, their dwellings provide mainly sleeping-quarters from which in daylight, except in wet weather, the family escape.

Conditions have been aggravated by the prevalence of 'squatting' on land temporarily leased. The insecurity of tenure has encouraged a tendency to make shift with temporary shelters lacking sanitation with the inevitable harmful repercussions on hygiene and health.

The original rations for Indian workers consisted of rice, dhol, dried fish and oil. After four generations the staple foodstuffs today consist of rice, dhol, with a little oil, some vegetables and occasionally meat and fruit. The stamina of the Indian population, therefore, can hardly be expected to be very high. Children are often under-nourished and under-weight. Many of them attend school with little more than a cup of tea and perhaps a little rice or 'hand-made bread' for breakfast. The Provincial Administration is spending many thousands a year to provide some supplementary food at midday to school children. But thousands of children are not attending school, and in any case meals are only provided during 180 school-days a year. Moreover, it is during the pre-school period that good food is of the greatest importance.

There has always been a significant difference between the Indian and the European birth and death rates in Natal:

| | Birth-rate | | Death-rate | |
|----------|------------|--------|------------|--------|
| | European | Indian | European | Indian |
| 1939 ... | 20.4 | 39.4 | 9.9 | 14.5 |
| 1945 ... | 20.8 | 39.4 | 10.0 | 15.0 |
| 1947 ... | 23.3 | 40.8 | 9.9 | 13.1 |

During 1947, the Indian death-rate of 13.1 per thousand was the lowest yet recorded for this group.

Bronchitis, pneumonia and tuberculosis are among the most serious diseases affecting Indians. The factors involved are largely due to poverty and ignorance: lack of protective elements in the daily diet and of warm clothing, working in wet clothing, sleeping in day-time clothes. The overcrowding of sleeping-quarters or damp and draughty homes add to the hazards.

Intestinal infections are common, but with improvement in sanitation and public health measures since the beginning of the century, they have been a declining factor in the death rate. The incidence of venereal diseases is also falling in contrast with the increase found in the African community. Enteric fever remains an important public health problem, its control depending mainly on the cleanliness of food and of those who handle it. The incidence rate among Indians in Natal is high.

Malaria in the Northern coastal districts has, in the past, been a serious problem. In 1929-30 it was responsible for no less than 1,188 deaths. Since then, successful preventive measures have been instituted, and the number of cases has fallen considerably during the last few years.

Child-deaths, however, still remain high, and in recent years one in every three deaths has been that of a child under fifteen years of age. During the year 1949/50, 42% of Indian deaths in Durban were of children in the 0-5 age range; 27% were of infants under one year, the main causes being gastro-enteritis, pneumonia and prematurity, in that order. According to the Medical Officer's Report (1949/50) most Asiatic infants are artificially fed from a very early age, although those mothers attending the clinics are taught the importance of breast feeding. Moreover, the milk mixtures given are, as a rule, too weak, and insufficient in quantity. Indian children in Durban appeared to be generally under-fed although their diet is more varied and less starchy than that of the African child.

A number of reasons account for this tragic loss. Among them are the ignorance of many mothers and the lack of adequate training of most Indian mid-wives. This is particularly true of the rural areas. At the same time the standard of child-care has undoubtedly risen. Attendances at the Municipal Child Health Clinics are increasing. Given improved living conditions and nutrition, together with better medical facilities, the high child death rate could be substantially reduced.

It is of interest to note that a survey of the conditions of the teeth of Indian school children in Durban showed a remarkable freedom from caries. The state of the gums was generally healthy and indicated a sufficiency of vitamin C in the diet. The usual method of cleaning was an early-morning use of charcoal and salt mixture and a rinsing of the mouth after meals, or the use of the 'bitter stick', a twig from the guava or peach tree.

The Coolie Commission of 1872 submitted a favourable report on the health of the immigrant community in Natal. At the same time the Commission recommended that some system of inspection of the estates and of medical attention for the indentured labourers should be provided. Previously, medical attention for the immigrants had been arranged privately between employers and doctors. As a result of the Commission's Report and at the suggestion of the Protector of Indian Immigrants, a medical fund was formed by a monthly levy on employers of 1s. 3d. per labourer.

Medical officers were engaged whose duties were to visit the estates, to attend all urgent cases, and make a monthly return to the Protector of Indian Immigrants, based on a register which each employer was required to keep. Estates were grouped into five medical circles, each in charge of a medical officer.

Although several attempts were made to have the medical tax reduced, the Natal Government decided in 1884 that in view of the growing number of 'free' Indians it would be unwise to reduce the levy. In 1891, employers were released from their obligation to provide a medical officer if they joined the schemes of the Indian Immigration Trust Board. For a quarterly fee of 1s. 6d. per adult, medical attention was given by the Board's doctors to both indentured and 'free' Indians. It was also ruled that the medical tax was payable on 'free' as well as indentured Indians. In 1893, there were 500 employers registered under the scheme and by 1910, there were fourteen hospitals and twenty-two medical circles.

In 1911, the Medical Board decided that its hospitals should be opened to African employees at 1s. 3d. per day if the monthly tax (then 9d.) was paid, and providing Indians were not thereby prejudiced. From that date and largely due to the cessation of immigration and the gradual replacement by Africans of Indians on the estates, the number of Indian patients in these hospitals began to fall. The following figures show that by 1941 Africans had outnumbered Indians as in-patients, but that Indians made considerable use of the out-patients clinics:

| 1941 | | In-patients | Out-patients |
|---------|-----|-------------|--------------|
| Indian | ... | 1,253 | 10,600 |
| African | ... | 1,984 | 3,415 |

'Free' Indians, though eligible for treatment, preferred Government hospitals.

By 1940 only three Indian hospitals and nine medical circles remained and in 1949 the hospitals and the medical fund were transferred to the Provincial Administration, and the medical circles ceased to operate.

Wards are available for Indian patients in the Provincial general hospitals, infectious diseases hospitals and the mental hospitals. The King

Edward VIII Non-European hospital in Durban provides for more than 900 Indian and African patients and a similar large institution is being built at Edendale, near Pietermaritzburg.

St. Aidan's Mission Hospital in Durban caters only for Indian patients. It has 109 beds, including twelve in private wards and a new section accommodating 22 tubercular patients and 22 maternity cases. As a training school it offers opportunities to Indian girls to enter the nursing profession. Unfortunately very few appear to be attracted to this service. Only three Indian girls are in training as probationers against 21 African girls (1951). The hospital is staffed by all four racial groups and includes two Indian, one Coloured and five African staff nurses.

McCord Zulu Hospital has a ward for Indian patients; country mission hospitals also provide beds when necessary.

The founding in 1942 of the F.O.S.A. settlement near Durban, has contributed to the prevention of spread of tuberculosis. Established by the Friends of the Sick Association the Newlands settlement has accommodation for 60 Indian T.B. convalescents and contacts. When necessary the whole family of a T.B. victim can be cared for. No 'positive' cases are admitted.

Provision for convalescent cases other than T.B. cases is an urgent need, particularly for patients in poor economic circumstances who have small chance of recovery in their ill-ventilated, overcrowded homes. There is also, as yet, no chronic sick home for any of the Non-European groups. Lack of specialised accommodation of this type increases the demand made on general hospitals as well as adding to the burden of overcrowded homes where such cases must at present be kept.

The Institute of Family and Community Health is an important new national health service which was first established experimentally in Natal. The service, which caters for all races, functions through Health Centres under the control of the Union Department of Health. The aim is to provide curative, preventive and promotive personal health services integrated into neighbourhood family and medical care service. Health education is also an important aspect of the Institute's Service.

HOUSING

ALL sections of the urban population are increasing not only by natural increase but as a result of drift to the towns. This inflow may be due less to the attractions and amenities offered to Non-Europeans than to the spur of economic necessity. The fall in the number of Indians engaged in the sugar industry, for example, due partly to the swing-over to African labour and partly to the difficulties of the Indian small grower, has contributed to the urban increase. A growing population means increasing pressure on housing accommodation and building space. Business premises, factories, workshops, warehouses, and shops all clamour for room to expand. These growing-pains, even in normal cities, cause friction and loss to some. Slum clearance and expropriation also play a part in adding to the pressure of population, e.g., the clearance of the Bell Street and Orient Lane slums in Durban. The proposed clearance of the Cato Manor area is a typical case.

Occasionally, however, the town invades its outskirts. In 1932, for example, Durban's incorporation of certain outlying suburban areas increased the Indian population of the city by over 50,000 and provided the city with a very big problem of unsatisfactory housing and undeveloped land. It has not yet caught up with its increased responsibilities following that move. In these 'added areas' thousands of shack dwellings with inadequate water supply and few sanitary facilities have sprung up.

Certainly the housing problem to the towns and especially to Durban is a very important one, and any solution is as difficult to find as it is urgent. It is no small matter that between 1921 and 1946 the Indian urban population increased nearly sevenfold, the number of urban Africans nearly fourfold, and the Indian rural population in Natal changed from being nearly four times the urban population to being only half.

In the case of Natal Municipalities (excluding Zululand) between 1921 and 1946 the number of Indians under their jurisdiction rose from 30,000 to over 152,000. 1951 urban figures are not yet available but they can hardly be less than 200,000. The growth in population has been accompanied by a growing demand for separate houses, which has not been lessened by the gradual break-up of the joint family system.

Industrial expansion means more than occupying areas which would otherwise be residential sites. It brings with it problems of its own, necessitating the housing of both the displaced community and the new industrial workers.

The demand for shelter is not only a growing one, but it is a variable bundle of demands for different types of houses at different

prices and in different localities. Areas change in relative desirability. Residential fashions change. Flats become popular and people who once lived over their shops move further afield. Certain localities become less attractive in the face of the youthful freshness of the developing country areas made accessible by improvements in transport. As some residents leave, others enter, not always of the same average level of wealth or culture.

In these districts which deteriorate relatively, values fall, new buyers hesitate, and in Natal there has come a time when Non-Europeans are willing to compete for property, and sooner or later a European sells out to an Indian.

Most people, however, suspect or dislike neighbours whose standard of life, perhaps narrowly interpreted, is appreciably lower than their own, more so if they belong to a race or colour which for that time and place, and in their view, is held to be inferior.

The problems of economic and social adjustment in a rapidly growing urban area, which are difficult even in the best-regulated municipality, are not made any easier by racial prejudice, commercial jealousy, or lack of town planning. Yet race and colour prejudices, however illogical they may be, must for some time to come be accepted as a determining factor in planning the economic structure of Natal, and particularly of its Municipalities.

It is evident, therefore, that the Indian housing problem in Natal, especially in the larger urban centres, is complicated in the same way as are most socio-economic problems in South Africa, by the factor of race-prejudice. To many Europeans, town-planning can only be thought of in terms of racial separation, but to the Indian, compulsory segregation in any shape or form is something to be fought with all the means at his disposal.

Yet a high degree of segregation has become an accomplished fact. Throughout Natal, especially in the larger towns, but also in country areas, there are more or less well-defined Indian areas. These have not developed as planned islands of segregation, but have grown naturally from the concentration of industrial employment or of agricultural and market gardening possibilities, or because the area was not favoured by Europeans on account, perhaps, of topography or climate.

Various Acts and Ordinances have limited the areas in which Indians are permitted to own and occupy property. In 1922, Durban secured the right of inserting a clause in the conditions of sale or lease of borough lands, restricting the ownership or occupation thereof to certain racial groups. In the following year the same power was conferred by the Provincial Administration upon all boroughs and townships, and it has been widely exercised but only to restrict ownership and occupation to Europeans.

Some estates accordingly have in their titles an "anti-Asiatic" clause preventing alienation to an Asiatic. Such exclusion is sometimes effective over whole areas, e.g., the Durban North, Morningside, and Stellawood estates in Durban.

In 1943 the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Act prohibited the purchase, sale and occupation of European properties by Asiatics except as otherwise authorised by the Governor-General. The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act No. 28 of 1946 was passed, "to impose restrictions with regard to the acquisition and occupation of fixed property in the Province of Natal . . ." In 1950, the Group Areas Act was passed "to provide for the establishment of group areas, for the control and acquisition of immovable property and the occupation of land and premises and for matters incidental thereto."

Racial differences, however, in Indian residential areas in the towns are not the only ones; there are the rudiments of social and economic differentiation, based on the very wide range of incomes within the Indian population. In Durban, for example, differences are readily seen between such districts as Clairwood, Greyville, Sydenham and Seacow Valley. Yet a closer survey would indicate that the natural tendency for residential differentiation to emerge from economic differentiation has been largely thwarted. Family units with high and low incomes are found near one another and there is an absence of the geographical distribution of families usually associated with income distribution.

But the main characteristics of Indian localities in and near most Natal towns are that they are low-lying or on steep slopes, often lacking in normal services and amenities, and already overcrowded. It is impossible to say to what extent the amount and quality of civic amenities in typically Indian areas is affected by the absence of municipal franchise for Indian owners and tenants. In some areas the standard of housing and urban facilities is deplorably low; with their shacks and primitive sanitation, they are largely slums.

House ownership, though on a very modest scale, is commoner among Indians than it is among Europeans. This is primarily to secure shelter and not for profitable investment. In many cases there is the problem, not unknown among Europeans, of a serious under-spending on food in order to pay mortgage instalments. Land, however, as a visible sign of wealth and status, is held in great respect.

The strain of penetration has not been all on one side. For example, the European suburb of Durban North was formerly occupied mainly by Indians, and the industrial development of the Rossburgh-Wentworth areas has been carried out partly at the expense of an Indian market-gardening area.

Municipal economic housing and private enterprise provide reasonable housing for a certain section of the Indian community. The wealthy

Indian buys or builds his own house, and lets houses or rooms to Indians, Europeans or Coloureds. However, the Pegging Act, the Asiatic Land Tenure Act and the Group Areas Act preclude Indians from occupying their own houses if they fall within certain controlled areas. Yet Indians who can afford to buy or build houses must generally go to areas offering very slender civic amenities. The middle income groups look to the provision of municipal houses, as yet inadequate, but it is for the low income group that conditions are worst. They live in shacks on the hillsides, or in flats, huts or outbuildings in the yards of the houses of the wealthier section. In the absence of alternative accommodation, the Slums Act cannot be applied.

A third of the Indian employees in Durban work in the central and one-quarter in the Maydon Wharf-Congella area. Of the flats which have been built, some of those in the business area housing Indians and Coloured families are above shops or offices, but the rents are too high for most Indian families.

A number of firms provide housing for their Indian employees, the sugar refineries within the Durban Borough, in particular, seem to have made adequate provision.

The railways have provided barracks for their Indian employees, and many families are housed in the neat brick and tile barracks at Somtseu Road. These are provided with a communal water supply and water-borne sewerage.

The Magazine Barracks in Somtseu Road accommodate nearly half the Indians and their families employed by the Municipality of Durban, a total of some 4,460 persons. A programme of reconstruction is under way here, and several new blocks of tenements providing married and single quarters have been erected. It is hoped that the older section of the barracks which was condemned many years ago, will soon be replaced by similar modern flats.

Other municipal barracks are those at the foot of the Botanic Gardens and at Congella, but further barrack accommodation for Indian municipal employees is required, though separate housing will be preferable.

Between 1 December, 1945, and 31 March, 1950, an estimated total of 1,110 houses and 392 flats for Indians were built in Durban. To the credit of the local authority approximately six out of every ten houses were built under Municipal housing schemes.

During this period of five years the Indian population of Durban increased by some 28,340 persons (i.e. nearly 30%). This is in marked contrast with the 1,502 increase in units of accommodation which would cater for only some 9,000 persons, i.e., for about one-third of the increase in population. Consequently, the previous very serious shortage of adequate accommodation has become considerably worse.

There is certainly ample scope for far-sighted town-planning, based on understanding, sympathy and justice. Thousands of sites and houses are urgently needed for all classes of the urban communities.

INVESTMENT

Investment opportunities in existing Indian areas are restricted largely because of their poverty, while the opening up of an entirely new Indian locality by private investment has not yet been proved financially attractive. Many Indians are rising in the economic and social scale, but the Indian has only limited opportunities of acquiring or renting a respectable home. Wealthy and cultured Indians would also like respectable neighbours. They, too, wish to improve their social standing and enjoy better housing and the civilised amenities of good roads, lighting, and sanitation. Occasionally there may be an urge to prove equality with Europeans, offer a challenge, or even a gesture of defiance, but anti-Asiatic clauses in the sale of municipal land, of certain other land, and of particular properties, have confined purchases by Indians to restricted areas with only a very occasional opportunity to acquire property in a European area.

The fact that the nature of Indian areas and properties gave little opportunity for remunerative investment prompted Indian investors to seek an outlet for their funds in European areas. Such purchases may be followed by Indian occupation. It is probable that the statutory prohibition of Indian ownership of land in the Transvaal increased the Indian demand for property in Natal.

A new development has been the founding of a new township at Umhlatuzana just outside the Durban borough for Indian ownership and occupation. The venture is too young to have established itself, but plots of land have been fairly eagerly bought. The sites cannot be described as first class, but the desire to own land and the insistent pressure for residences are factors which are uppermost in this situation.

In the Springfield area Indians have fought against reeds and swamp to make the valley productive. Then came the threat to acquire such land for the training of race-horses. Another large area on the Bluff which has also been slowly reclaimed by long and patient labour will no doubt in due course be taken over for industrial purposes. This last change is inevitable and on the whole desirable, but progress should not be allowed to shatter livelihoods and break up homes without an enlightened attempt to make such changes useful to all and not only to privileged groups.

At the present time the whole matter of Indian housing is in so fluid a state that no prophecy, apart from the obvious one of continual pressure of population against accommodation, is worth making.

Certainly there is no greater tendency among wealthy Indians to provide sub-economic housing for poor Indians than there is among Europeans to do it for poor Europeans. At the same time, the general low average of earning power is a bar to ordinary investment.

In consequence, the only solution seems to be public sub-economic housing schemes which are not likely to be greatly favoured by a purely European electorate.

There is certainly ample scope for far-sighted town-planning, based on understanding, sympathy and justice. Thousands of sites and houses are urgently needed for all classes of the urban communities. Given ample breathing-space, all Indians, with few exceptions, would prefer to live in the midst of their own race, religion and culture. Consequently, given the underlying foundation of adequate housing facilities and urban amenities, so-called segregation would be natural, desirable, and friendly. At the moment, however, segregation seems to imply inferiority and compulsion. It is the fear of segregation which cuts across proposals of Indian housing schemes in Durban and adds to an already serious problem. It is the demand for segregation which makes it difficult to extend Indian housing facilities in the Old Borough.

In any case, the problem of penetration, while it may be serious in individual cases, was relatively small. The first Penetration Commission found that the yearly average of penetration cases was 26 out of the then Indian population in Durban of some 81,000. The total in Natal, outside Durban, of residential or trading penetration since 1927, in a population of some 104,000 was 328, i.e., 23 a year.

At the same time, the problem was becoming acute and was causing growing friction. In the report of the Second Commission on Indian Penetration, which was tabled in the House of Assembly on 6 April, 1943, it is stated that in the first two months of 1943 the number of sites acquired by Indians in predominantly European areas in Durban was two and a half times greater than the highest previous yearly total (in 1939).

This may have been due to speculation accelerated by the fear of new restrictive legislation. It was not known how many of the sites recently purchased were for investment or for present or ultimate occupation by Indians. In the end, however, the fundamental reason will remain the same, i.e., the growing lack of areas and of housing facilities and amenities for Indians in districts which are not predominantly European.

SOCIAL SERVICES

WELFARE work amongst Indians is traditionally a family function: the large joint family created its own recreation, nursed its own sick, cared for its own aged and by an hierarchy of responsibilities ensured that older children undertook much of the care of little brothers, sisters, nieces and even of little uncles and aunts. How long the joint family system can withstand the impact of Western culture and the industrial way of life, no one knows, for no one has yet attempted to define the strains it is facing nor to measure its rate of disintegration in terms of the increase of unmarried motherhood, juvenile delinquency, divorce and desertion. It is, nevertheless, clear that the joint family is less and less able to fulfil all its traditional functions.

The place of the joint family as its own social agency is increasingly being taken by Indian Child Welfare Societies. Of the 22 Indian voluntary agencies registered in Natal under the Welfare Organisations Act, 1947, no less than half are Child Welfare Societies, which provide a generalised family service.

A large number of voluntary organisations serve Indians in addition to the other race groups (e.g. in the fields of cripple care, prisoners aid and mental and general health work). A number of Christian churches are active among Indians, combining social services of various kinds with purely religious work; and organisations such as the Boy Scout movement have also made considerable progress. There are, however, very few specialised voluntary organisations catering exclusively for Indian needs: endeavour is confined to community work, care of the blind, hospital work and youth organisations. The last mentioned is a particularly interesting development represented by a number of societies, *inter alia*, the Young Men's Vedic, the Young Men's Muslim and the Young Men's Hindu Societies respectively, which undertake social, recreational and philanthropic work somewhat on the lines of the Y.M.C.A.

It is not surprising that there should be so few specialised voluntary agencies since proportionately a very much larger number of Indians is in need of assistance than is able to provide it, and community resources therefore must be "spread thin" in an endeavour to cover as wide a field as possible. Even this dispersal of effort does not permit of the agencies concerned reaching all those who need them.

Owing chiefly to the weight of responsibilities within the family, and the relative lack of leisure—and until fairly recently—of education enjoyed by Indian women, Indian social work is, in marked contrast to social work among other races, largely carried out by men even in organisations such as the Child Welfare Societies, but there is a growing

class of Indian women who are devoting themselves to voluntary and professional social services. Another contrast with European social work is provided by the fact that Indian social work has not followed the European tendency to multiply institutions for residential care. In the whole of Durban there is only one such institution conducted by a purely Indian body, namely, the Aryan Benevolent Home (which as a matter of interest is a home both for the aged and for children).

State social services (other than public assistance) chiefly take the form of probation work carried out by the Department of Social Welfare; promotive health work through the Health Centres; and hospitals and Municipal Health Departments undertake health education and provide ante- and pre-natal clinics and district nursing.

Indian social services are in general very loosely co-ordinated. Many but not all of the registered Indian agencies in Durban are members of the United Council of Social Agencies; the various Child Welfare Societies are loosely federated in the Natal Indian Child Welfare Council and are affiliated to the South African National Council for Child Welfare; the Durban and District Community Chest finances many of the Agencies mentioned above, and through its financial scrutiny provides some co-ordination; but in general the pattern is very largely one of independent rather than of co-operative work.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Poor Relief

Religious and cultural bodies have traditionally played the major part in providing assistance from outside the family in a culture where alms giving and receiving was an accepted pattern of behaviour. Private philanthropy both organised and unorganised, is still a very powerful force in Indian social service, and has acquired more strength from the creation of a number of family and other trusts established by wealthy Indians. Indian political organisations, trade unions and similar bodies also do a certain amount of charitable or friendly society work.

The beginning of a more formal system of poor relief is seen in the establishment of Indian Benevolent Societies. The Durban Indian Benevolent Society is an agency for distribution of funds provided by the Government, but the amount is so small (£40 per month) that even the most careful husbanding of resources and attempts to relate relief to individual needs is doomed to have little impact on the total problem. Representations have been made to the Secretary for Social Welfare for an increased grant but the outcome is not yet favourable. (Prior to the transfer of Poor Relief from the Province to the Central Government several other organisations—the Indian Child Welfare Society, the Friends of the Sick Association and one or two other associations also undertook the distribution of State poor relief, but since the assumption

of Central Government control all cases requiring this assistance are referred to the Durban Indian Benevolent Society).

Relief, except in special cases, must take the form of rations though cash assistance for rent is permissible in certain circumstances. Eligibility for ordinary poor relief is assessed in accordance with ration scales laid down, and persons who have an income equivalent to the cost of the rations are usually not eligible for poor relief.

Contributory and Non-Contributory State Assistance.

Schemes for public assistance in the Union have been considerably broadened and strengthened since the last war. The Commission of Enquiry into Social Security which was appointed in 1943 recommended a large scale social insurance scheme. Its proposals gave rise eventually to the extension of existing pension schemes and the introduction of a number of new schemes for financial assistance to the needy. Natives and Indians benefited markedly through these changes, and necessary assistance can now be given to clearly defined groups, the aged, the disabled, the unemployed, etc., where previously these groups were forced to rely on poor relief or on the small monthly grants made available for Indians by the Department of the Interior. Much of the burden of care for these persons has in consequence been removed from the poor relief bill, so that poor relief, historically so important in the Union, has now become only an insignificant part of the total care programme.

Indians are included in the provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1946 and contribute to the Unemployment Insurance Fund on a scale according to their earnings. Employers make an additional contribution in respect of each employee. It is of interest that this scheme, the only contributory national social service, is also the only one that does not distinguish between racial groups in so far as rates of contribution and benefits are concerned.

The following table sets out the rates of contribution and benefit under the scheme:

| Group according to rate of contributor's annual earnings | Contributions per week | | Benefits per week | or $\frac{3}{4}$ of weekly earnings whichever is the less |
|--|---|----------------------|-------------------|---|
| | By the employer in respect of every contributor in his employ | By every contributor | | |
| 1. Up to £78 p.a. ... | 9d. | 3d. | 20/- | |
| 2. £78—£130 ... | 1/- | 8d. | 25/- | |
| 3. £130—£182 ... | 1/- | 1/- | 30/- | |
| 4. £182—£234 ... | 1/3 | 1/3 | 36/- | |
| 5. £234—£286 ... | 1/6 | 1/6 | 44/- | |
| 6. £286—£338 ... | 1/9 | 1/9 | 52/- | |
| 7. £338—£390 ... | 1/10 | 1/10 | 60/- | |
| 8. £390—£442 ... | 1/11 | 1/11 | 68/- | |
| 9. £442—£750 ... | 2/- | 2/- | 76/- | |

During 1948 some 4,643 claims were received from Indians in the Union of which only 121 were refused. Female beneficiaries were in the proportion of one to every 6.5 male beneficiaries.

In 1944 the Old Age Pensions Act of 1928 and the Blind Persons Act of 1936 were amended to include Africans and Indians. In 1946 a Disability Grants Act was passed which also included all four racial groups. The pensions and grants payable under each of these schemes are the same. The legislation embodies the principle that the minimum needs for existence vary considerably between the four racial groups. Indians are placed third on the list; they receive more than Africans but a little less than Coloureds, and less than half the amount applicable to Europeans (e.g. maximum pensions for Europeans are £72 p.a.; for Coloured persons, £36 p.a.; for Indians, £30 p.a.; and for Africans £12 p.a.).

Europeans and Africans receive pensions at different rates according as they live in cities, towns or rural areas, but Coloured persons and Indians living in rural areas receive the same rates as town dwellers and less than city dwellers. The three schemes are all non-contributory and subject to a means test; the pension allowed varies with the income of the beneficiary and a maximum is laid down which may not be exceeded when the pension is added to the income.⁽¹⁾

The rates at present applicable to Indians are set out below:

Old Age, Disability and Blind Persons Pension Rates applicable to Indians.

| Area | Maximum income including Pension per annum | Pension per annum |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------|
| City | £66 | £30 |
| Town and rural areas | £30 | £15 |

In recognition of the rising cost of living, the Pension Laws Amendment Act, 1951, permitted a bonus to pensioners living in cities. The bonus was introduced in April, 1951, and will be reviewed after one year. It amounts to £6 per annum for Indians, irrespective of means. This bonus is also applied to beneficiaries in receipt of maintenance grants. In 1949, there were 1,588 Indians in receipt of Disability Grants aggregating £37,525 and 5,005 Indians received Old Age Pensions at a cost of £117,708.

(1) Difficulties in assessing family incomes are constantly a factor in limiting the effectiveness of public assistance for Indians in the South African setting. A basic desideratum in determining who is eligible for state assistance is that family incomes must be clearly and definitely established. In the small western family unit this is fairly simple to do, but in the ramifications of the Indian joint family system it is far from easy especially when it is unknown how many economic units go to make up the total family group, and how the family finance is handled. Until a sufficient number of trained persons familiar with Indian family life are employed to undertake eligibility studies it is difficult to see how this problem can be overcome.

The figures for Blind Persons Pensions were not available at the time of preparing this report.

A maintenance grant scheme administered under the Children's Act of 1937 provides for payment of grants-in-aid towards the maintenance of children who became needy owing to the death or incapacity of the major breadwinner. Family income plus state grant for Indians must not exceed £9 per month. A parents' allowance of £2 10s. per month is granted, plus 25s. for each of the first two children and 15s. each for subsequent children. The total grant must not exceed £6 per month.

The number of families benefiting under this scheme has increased considerably since 1939 among all races. There were 90 Indian families receiving grants in 1939; in 1949 there were 3,132 receiving in all an amount of £138,721.

A scheme for family allowances came into operation in the Union in 1947. One of the major aims of the scheme was to ensure that families in low paid employment should not be in a less favourable position than those in receipt of state grants. Africans were excluded from the scheme, but Indians were initially included and could receive such allowances as would bring their total monthly income to the sum of £9, the same amount as was allowed under the Maintenance Grant Schemes. The Department of Social Welfare commenting on the scheme reports that it "spread like wildfire in Natal where every possible Indian family submitted an application.⁽¹⁾ Experience proved that many of these applications had to be treated with the greatest care. The Government decided that all family allowances to Indians would cease as from 1st January 1949." (Report of the Department of Social Welfare, 1937 to 1949. U.G. 36/1950.)

(1) The same report gives details of the number of beneficiaries. In March 1948, there were 1,604 Indian families receiving allowances, averaging £1 0s. 8d. per family per month.

CONCLUSION

This booklet was originally published in 1943 and its contents, therefore, were based on the known facts at the beginning of the Second World War, together with such developments as the early war years had indicated. The present revision in 1952 has had the further very important years of the war and post-war period as its background.

An attempt has been made to leave as much of the historical, social and economic background as would form a continuous picture of Indian life and labour in Natal, while noting such developments or statistical changes as the years have brought.

It is necessary, however, to stress some of these developments, the most notable being the definite reversal of the position of the Indian from an agricultural helot to an urban worker and dweller. This tendency with its effect on population distribution has continued in the post-war years with the added reactions in matters of labour, earning power, housing, etc.

It can be safely stated that the use of Indian labour in the growth and manufacture of sugar is now relatively unimportant.

Parallel with this—part cause and part effect—has been the rapid growth in the importance to industry of Indian labour and the importance to the Indian community of that industry.

The consequent urbanisation has had its repercussions in the political field, where the clash of interests with the Europeans has been more marked; in the economic field where unskilled and semi-skilled wage rates and conditions (controlled by modern standards of industrial legislation) have been an important factor in Indian life, with trade unionism playing its part, and a slight movement towards Indian female labour taking place; in the social sphere, e.g. in the gradual acceptance of Western European standards and the more gradual departure from communal families; in the educational world, where authority has recognised that an uneducated urban youth could be a very serious danger, with repercussions which would take no count of racial niceties. In this connection it must be remembered that the present under-school-age group is a very large one and will complicate this problem in the next decade.

On the surface it may seem that many Indians are better placed than their forbears. Undoubtedly there has been an upward trend, and such callings as teaching and the well-regulated semi-skilled occupations leave room for little complaint. There is, however, a hard core of Indian workers whose pay is still pitifully small against present-day costs, especially in the case of the old-fashioned large family with only one earning unit. Municipal, railway and sugar labour is still very poorly

paid, market gardening and hawking give a meagre return except to the fortunate few, while even in industry the less regulated trades and unskilled work still have very low wage rates.

It is extremely doubtful if the wage curve is keeping up with the curve of rising costs, and social services for Indians are notable for their deficiency or their absence.

In one very definite sphere of life the Indian position has deteriorated; that is the political sphere. It is much too early to discuss the effects of post-war legislation culminating in the Group Areas Act.

Political thought for an Indian must be occupied by "compulsion", "non-representation", "segregation", "re-patriation" etc., while there is no numerically strong body of European social or political opinion prepared to forego the protection which such policies seem to promise.

The most important development of all is the growth of Indian population, and within that growth more important still is the obvious probability of much greater growth in the next two decades when the present 6 to 15 age group becomes the parental group. Urbanisation may have its effect on birth-rate, as may also the tendency to higher living standards, but there is yet no sign that the tradition of large families has undergone any fundamental change. Without mass repatriation on the one hand or the bursting of the provincial barriers on the other, nothing is likely to prevent a great predominance of Indian population in Natal within the lifetime of the present school-going population. However, neither repatriation nor inter-provincial freedom of movement seems to be practicable at the present time.

For the ordinary Indian man-in-the-street the problem of life is the immediate need for more space, more opportunities, better housing, and more food. Crowding, frustration and mal-nutrition are still the most pressing problems of most Indian Life and Labour in Natal.



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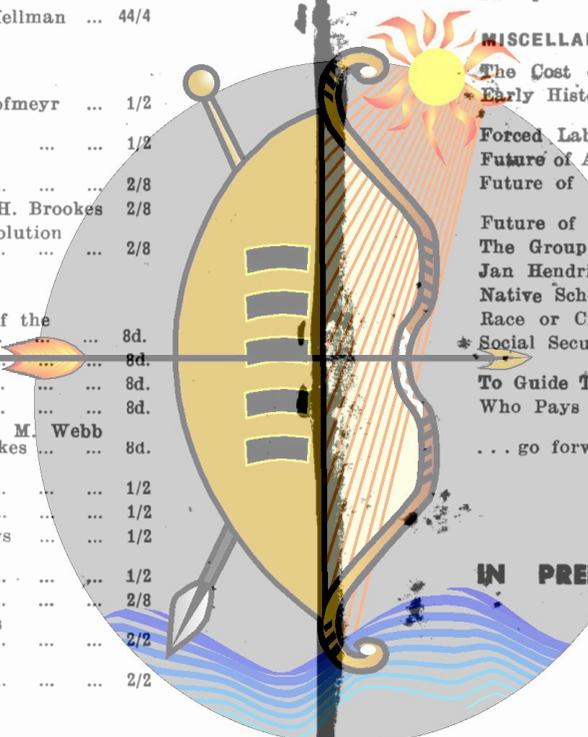
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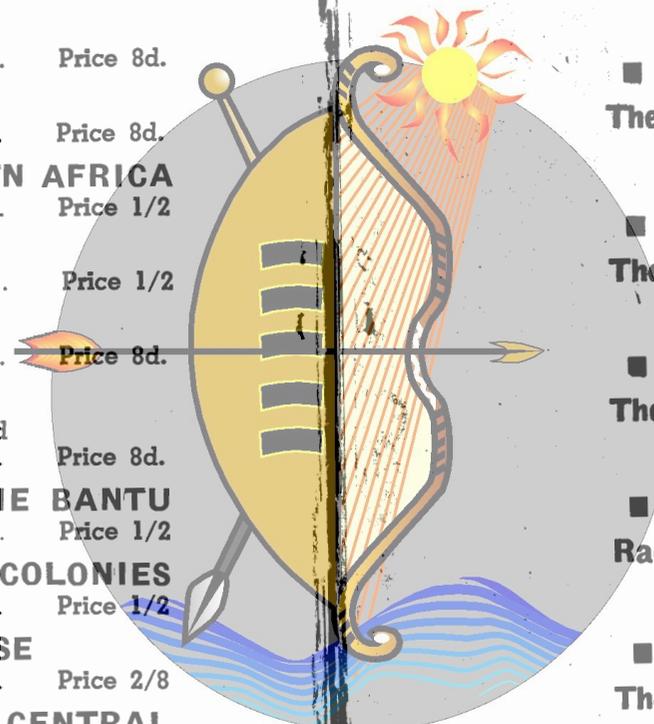
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