

the present generation. But, the change is well worth the price and the price to be paid will be at about its minimum in the immediate post-war period. Such an opportunity may not

recur for a very long time to come. Now, therefore, is the time to introduce a decimal coinage system in India.

## INDIAN INDUSTRIALISTS' DELEGATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

A DELEGATION of Indian industrialists, led by Mr. G. D. Birla and Mr. J. R. D. Tata, have just completed a tour of the United Kingdom and are at present in the United States. The objects of these visits are broadly stated to be to explore the possibility, extent and terms on which the co-operation and assistance of British and American Industry could be had in the post-war development of Indian industry.

The influential membership of the delegation, the importance to the country of the subjects they were handling and the elaborate preparatory work for their reception and programme abroad all served to focus public attention in this mission which, however, had had even more than its normal share of spotlight thrown on it due to some critical comments from Mahatma Gandhi. This opportunity was availed of by the members of the delegation in reiterating what they had already stated publicly and unambiguously on the status and scope of the mission. The industrialists were going abroad as private individuals at their own expense and on their own responsibility with no commission or intention of committing any one excepting themselves in their negotiations abroad.

Messages in the daily press have given accounts of the cordiality with which the members have been received and the numerous industrial and technical establishments through which they have been conducted. The press has also recorded the conclusion of some definite agreements as for example, a co-operative enterprise between the Birla and Nuffield interests to start a factory in India, to begin assemblage and ultimately manufacture Morris Cars in India. The following message from the London correspondent of the *Capital* to his paper on the eve of the delegation's departure to the United States well summarises the work of the delegation; says the correspondent, "The Indian industrialists who have been visiting us, are on the verge of departure for the United States. They beam with happiness. They have seen as many of our great industrial works, and as much of them, as they desired . . . . . All this is not saying that no questions of importance, or anxiety, remain unsolved or are still rather perplexing . . . . . The mutual changes of outlook are expressed in some pretty important, newly negotiated, contracts. How many is not to be said here. One seems always hearing something fresh in that line . . . . ."

Apart from these and similar agreements which individual members might have concluded on behalf of the interests they represent, the visit of the delegation seems to have been productive of results of a larger order benefiting the country as a whole. There was an impression abroad, by no means uncommon, that the Indian businessman was usually a

"merchant"—a sort of glorified agent who "represented", for a commission, the foreign manufacturer. While the merchant does continue to play his useful and honourable role in the country even now, it is not appreciated adequately abroad that the Indian businessman to-day is also a progressive and enlightened *manufacturer*—investing capital with its attendant risks, producing goods with the requisite competitive skill, handling labour with its attendant problems and selling them in the open market on his own account and making a profit. Thus, for example, the outstanding fact that one of the largest Iron and Steel plants in the British Empire, is owned and operated by Indians at Jamshedpur is often missed, at least by implication, by many. And quite a few industrialists should have been surprised that the Indian visitors could hold their own in any parleys regarding their particular industry, both in the technical and organisational aspects. And it is on such mutual knowledge that respect and appreciation of the various interests involved are born, and it is on these, in turn, that any stable business relationship can be built. There could be no doubt that the visit of the Indian Industrial Delegation has helped to foster such relationship.

Secondly, the activities of the delegation have made a definite contribution to the more widespread realisation in Britain that the industrial prosperity in India need not be at the expense of any other country. Lord Nuffield has recently given eloquent expression to such sentiment, as follows: "There are people who would lament that this progressive industrialisation of the Empire means a concomitant decline in British Exports. I absolutely disagree. Indeed, I contend that the contrary will be the case. The more Indians who exchange the pittance from the paddy fields for the higher wages of the Motor Car assembly factory and the more Indians who ride in motor cars, bringing the inevitable opening up of new roads and trades in the backward villages, the more tremendous will be India's demands for all manner of British exports goods that in the bad old days of muddy lanes and bullock carts, the bulk of her people could never afford."

In wishing the delegation a pleasant and useful sojourn in the United States also, *Current Science* hopes that these unofficial ambassadors of Indian Industry will not have failed to notice the generous and extensive manner in which industry in these foreign countries have nourished and sustained scientific research from which in turn, industry derives its strength and competitive position. Such appreciation and its translation to action in India might well prove to be the most fruitful by-product of these tours of the delegation abroad.