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An Appeal to my Comrades.

The Railway Board has at last decided that no pusses are to be granted to our Association to conduct our business and in response to our representation the Agent E. B. Ry has refused to renew our passes.

I have been appealing to the members year in and year out to take upon themselves the responsibilities of collecting their subscriptions remitting the same to their respective branch offices or Read office which would not only save the expenses of maintaing collecting staff, which in fact cost the Association purse over 50% but would help them in utilising the amount thus saved in other improvements viz BUILDING UP OF A STRONG RESERVED FUND & PUBLICATION OF THE MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION Fre.

If you look to the activities of the Postal & R. M. S. and Telegraph Associations you will be surprised to find that they have been able to collect a big sum as they have adopted the system of collecting subscriptions themselves.

The time has come when the members should not any more sit idle but exert their best to do the collection works and improve the condition. THE MORE THEY CAN SAVE THE MORE THEY WILL BE BENEFITTED BY THEM.

It is desirable that at all stations there should be one or two Honorary Collectors who should volunteer for the purpose and take the charge of collection of a group of stations on the line, collect subscriptions every month and remit to their respective branches at once.

Any delay in devising means to collect subscriptions will not only hamper our progress but will also bring a dead-lock in our activities.

In view of the above fact, the leading members are requested to take immediate steps at their respective centres for regular collection of subscriptions.

Office of the E B. Ry Employees' Association.

2. Huzgrimull Lane, Calcutta.

J. N. GUPTA.

General Secretary.

CONTENTS.

(1) UNITE, WORKERS UNITE.	1
(2) PEEP INTO PARLOUR.	1
(a) Co-operative Credit Society.	1
(b) Long desired Circular.	1
(c) Non-payment of salary for the Sick period.	2
(d) Economy with a Vengeance.	2
(e) 'Importation' & 'Efficiency' are not Synonyms.	2
(f) A Sample of Sympathy.	3
(g) An official stunt.	i],
(h) A Sympathetic official head indeed.	4,
(i) Water tap at Narcoldanga.	5
(j) Administration makes rules and responsibe officials	
break them.	15
(k) Our Grievances and nature of their redresses.	ō
(1) Final stage towards the Complete realisation of	
Administrative Efficiency.	7
(3) PULSATION IN LABOUR LIFE.	9
(a) Ourselves.	9
(b) Comrades-inland.	17
(c) Comrades in land far off.	18
(4) RAILWAYMENS TOPICS IN INDIAN LEGISLATUR	RE. 18
(5) CONTEMPORARY OPINION.	28
(6) IN NESTOR'S NOOK.	k- 30

No 44.

E. B. Ry. Labour Review.

An Organ of the E. B. Ry. Indian Employees' Association.

VOL. II.

JANUARY, 1929.

NO. I.

A Labourer's Fortune.

Work-work
My Labour never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread and rags,
That shattered roof, and its naked floor,
A table, a broken chair,
And a wall so blank my shadow I thank
For sometimes failing there."

Work for the Noble Ideal.

(By I. B. Sen, Esqr. Bar-at-Law,)

It is true we are far off yet from our ideal of democracy in the transport industry of railwaymen in Nothern and Eastern Bengal But industrial swaraj in E. B. Railway system is not quite so distant or hazy a vision that it is incapable of rousing interest and enthusiasm in the present generation of

workers. Our rapid success in organisation of workers has been due to the interest kindled by that vision in a group, however small at present, of workers who find pleasure in expending their time, energy and wealth to make our Association strong and respected. We began but a few years ago and were

either ignored by the many or patted on our back by the few representatives of the power controlling the management of the railway transport industry on this side of Hooghly and the Ganges. Their attitude towards our Association has already changed and though in the annual administration report we are not expressly referred to, we can no longer be ignored in the daily administration of the railway system. We have no desire to earn short-lived notoriety. But our enthusiasm for the vision of industrial Swarai is deep and abiding and can and does induce our workers "to scorn delight and live aborious days" to make the glorious vision a living reality.

If our Association demands security of employment and minimum living wages, if it insists upon hygienic housing for the lowest of the workers, if it presses for educational facilities for the children even of the illiterate workers, if it aims at insurance against sickness and at maternity benefits, it is because the Association wants the workers to be fullgrown-men and women who should control and manage their own railway transport industry. We believe and believe in all seriousness that the humblest railway worker has as much of the Divine in him potentially as the Agent of the E. B. Railway adminstration. And social and industrial environment must be so shaped in the near

future that, that latent possibility may become a reality in every sphere of earthly activity. We shall not permit enforced poverty and enslaving exploitation to deprive the poorest Indian worker of his or her legitimat right to take part in the control and management of the industry in which he or she is employed.

It is a long process, we know. The harnessed energy of all our workers and the workers of other railways must be directed towards compelling the present controllers of the industry to acknowledge this fundamental right to industrial swaraj. 'Our organisation must be numerous and steadily strong before even the right is conceded. We shall have to work hard and suffer persecution and sacrifice individual interests to extort even an acknowledgment of the right of Labour to control its industry. Already new weapons of repression are being forged and old weapons are being brought into use, But if we are men, we shall persevere in our idealism and though we may not see in our life time the vision made a reality, we shall leave the work easier of accomplishment by the next generation. Meanwhile let us not lose sight of the ideal even for a day, DREAM! AND DREAM II AND DREAM!!! And work ceasilessly to make the noble dream a reality!

Peep into Parlour.

Selection Board's Selections: - We have received numerous complaints from the registered candidates to the effect that new hands are being appointed in preserence to In matters of appointments certain them community is getting specially privileged preference over others. We have no grudge against any community so as to object to a fair share in appointments if this is being done on principle of capabilities, but we do strongly disapprove the selection on any communal basis. What we demand is fair field of competency and not favouritism qualified by meaningless and unreasonable white-washing. We hope better procedure will be adopted in this respect in luture.

Compensatory Allowances:—The answers to the questions put by Mr. Amarnath Dutt on the Compensatory allowances furnished by the Railway Board are vague from the start to the finish. The Board contended that the Compensatory allowances are given to the officers attached to the Calcutta Offices. We can not, however find any reasons as to why the other staff should be debarred from the benefit of such privileges when they breathe in the same atmosphere with the fortunate

recepients sharing equally with them "the toils and hardships" of the services. trustees always do well-justice to the "Sacred Trusts" by bartering amongst themselves the allowances under various "suitable and handy" items of expenditure. But what is there to debar the other poorfolks working equally with them to even receive "Contemptible Crumbs" out of the "Sacred Trust" in the safe possession of our self-constituted masters | Are they so many "pariabs" to be looked down as such even in the matters of pecuniary wants to keep their flesh and blood together though they shed profuse "sweat from their brow" along with their comrades in the highest ladder of service! They are as human as their fortunate brothers in service and must have necessities to meet with. Let us hope the authorities will look into the matter and allow proportionate compensatory allowances to these unhappy and down-trodden workers.

Grievances That are Never Redressed :-

The Indian Employees' at Saidpur, especially the residents of Mistripara have been labouring since long under a series of inconveniences. These are 1—

- (1) Absence of street lighting.
- (2) Scarcity of water supply.
- (3) Need of an overbridge.

The attention of the authorities to this effect was drawn on numerous occasions, but

these were mere cries in the wilderness. On 9th June last a letter was addressed by the Joint General Secretary of the Association to the President, Station Committee at Saidpur deeply impressing on him as to the genuineness of their demands to which the President not earlier than 22nd August, last replied with the remarks that the "matter was receiving attention."

It is now nearly 4 months since the reply from the President was received, but it appears that authorities do not seem to add any importance to the matter even when the lives of so many poor Indian employees (who have had often to cross the lines for medical aid and to fetch articles from stores etc.) are at stake specially for want of an over-bridge.

The streets on the western side of the station have all been adequately lighted. The Ashford tube well which was sunk more than 2 year ago for the purpose of providing taps from quarters to quarters has had its desired effect only on the swimming bath. Will the authorities now very sympathetically turn their attention towards the poor Indian souls and take remedial measures to remove their long felt wants without delay?

Facilities granted for Secondary Education of Indian Emplyees' Children in the E. B. Ry:—The E. I. Rly. authorities have established High English Schools at Asansol, Jamalpur, & Sahebganj. These schools are being maintained and managed by the Railway with monthly Govt grants-in aid and are specially meant for the education of the Railway employees' children. Efficient staffs are maintained in these schools on handsome salaries and privileges of free Railway passes, provident funds etc, are

allowed to them equally with Railway servants. In fact, the teachers of these school are treated as Railway servants.

The E. B. Railway authorities, on principle as they say, do not start nor maintain schools for the education of their employees' children. They only contribute towards the maintenance of such schools as are started by the Railway employees themselves. There are such schools at Kanchrapara, Saidpur, Lalmonirhat and Paksey. These schools owe their existence to the untiring zeal of the employees who have started them out of sheer necessity. The Railway authorities contribute towards the maintenance of these schools at the rate of Re, 1/- per Railway school-going child on 50 per cent attendance in the school proportionate deduction being made from that on less than 50 per cent attendance of each Railway child.

As for the school sites and buildings-they belong to the private managing committee of these schools, the Ry. contribution being only towards the construction of the school buildings amounting to one-third of the total expenditure for the same. At Kanchrahowever, the school building belongs to the Railway.

Sufficient staff cannot be maintained in these schools for want of sufficient funds. Besides there is no attraction of free Railway passes etc for the teachers. Only one set of P. T. O.s (up and down) for self per year is allowed to them after one year's service.

It may be noted here that a few primary Night schools are being maintained at some of the Railway Head quarters at the expense of the Railway. But those are meant only for the adult inferior staff of the Railway and not for the children of the employees.

Suggestions for improvement.

The following improvements may be very easily effected by the E. B. Railway at a moderate cost.

- (i) The schools already started by the employees may be taken over and managed and maintained by the Railway authorities with efficient staff and equipments.
- (ii) Attached hostels for the children of the employees; who live away from the head quarters, may be built by the Railway and a monthly grant for the establishment expenditure may be sanctioned to those hostels ?
- (iii) The District officers should also be instructed to be a little more considerate when transferring the parents of school going children for a transfer during the middle of a School Session of the children, means not only loss on the part of the parents or and mental anxieties but also a discourage ment for the children against the progressive realisation of their cherished aim they aspire at.

What is sauce for gander is not sauce for the goose.

We are informed that some of our Officers (both at Sealdah & Koilaghat) are fond of working after office hours. There would have been no occasion for raising any objection to this had not hundreds of ill-paid, and underfed clerks been made to suffer thereby. These poor souls are being

datained till late nours at night day after day and year after year only to satisfy the whims of their earthly gods. This state of things exists because the officers do not realise how do they inconvenience the clerks by their working late hours. Superintendents or Head Clerks do not represent this to the officers for fear of running the risk of incurring their displeasure and thereby losing their patronage and the poor under clerks cannot protest apprehending loss of their jobs.

Amongst the elerical staff the number of daily passengers is by no means small and their difficulties under such circumstances can better be imagined than described. The clerks do not enjoy the privilege of Ry. Quarters so in most cases they have to live at a great distance from their offices they therefore cannot reach home earlier enough to refresh themselves after the guardians of the children in respect of money day's drudgery; like the 'ploughman' of Gray's immortal "Elegy" they "homeward plod their weary way".

The result is that due to over work coupled with lack of nourishing food in the absence of proportionately fair remuneration the clerks naturally fall victims to various fell diseases.

From the administrative point of view also this state of things should at once be put a stop to in as much as the administration is, by this means, sure to loose efficient service which cannot at all be expected of this sort of overworked staff

We refrain from exposing the officers concerned (although full materials are in our possession) in this issue as we hope this will have the desired effect.

Toll to New Year's day festivity :-An up countryman of Saidpur was over and killed by a shunting Engine near the Saidpur Railway Station on the 1st of January, 1929. The life of this poor man might have probably been saved had there been any over-bridge connecting the public roads at the both ends. There being a big shunting yard by the side of the station without having any over-bridge such accidents are likely to occur at any moment (and are actually taking place). There was another case of a similar nature when an oilman was knocked down in the same yard, That was in the month of Grace April 1928! It must be a point here that the President of the Station Committee at Saidpur was repeatedly reminded of this standing disability against the safety of the life of those who are required to work in that area and was requested to make necessary arrangements for the construction of an over-bridge at an early date. But nothing has up till now been done in this respect. Will the Agent kindly look into the matter and see his way to take immediate steps to remove the cause of grievances? Need we tell him that the sooner the better for the duty bound passers by?

Racial favouritism or-Fair Play?—We are reliably informed that one Mr. Macguire a subordinate in the Signal Department, forged a Second class card pass, which was being used by him and his brother-officer one Mr. Lath wood, an Asstt. Public Works Inspector. jointly. One of these subordinates, in course of his journey was caught

red-handed by the Crew-men, and the matter was duly reported to the Agent, who after holding a Departmental enquiry awarded them with punishment resulting in the reduction for a few months for one and a fine of Rs. 50 for the other. We are. rather, surprised to find also why they were not hauled up before the Court on a charge of forgery. We will however, as a contrast here cite the case of comrade S. C. Chakravarty Ex. Assistant Station Master of Garia who was discharged from the service on the alleged offence of taking bribe amounting to a magnificient sum of half-anna only-though the allegation against him could not be proved either by hard facts or by open trial I Is not it an instance of Racial favouritism? If not, is it fair play? We pause for a reply.

Grant of two sets of Passes In a month to Guards:—The Secretary Paksey branch made a representation to the District Traffic Superintendent "C" Paksey on the above subjet, The Officer concerned has been good enough to reply to the effect that "the Guards who are getting Second class passes, if their average monthly emoleuments exceed Rs 150/- may get two sets of passes in a month". We convey our best thanks to the officer for his sympathetic consideration in this particular respect. Let us hope others will follow his example.

Labour Representation:—We are told by the Viceroy that the Government of India with the approval of the Secretary of State in council has finally decided to appoint a Royal Commission for which even the services of Mr. Whitley, the ex: speaker has already been secured? We also gather that the terms of reference will be restricted in

their scope, being confined only to the investigation of the economic conditions of Lobour and to the suggestion for their improvement." If we read aright we find that the members representing Labour will be co-opted from each provinces. Now the questen is asto how this process of 'co-option' will be allowed to be availed of by he authorities concerned. If this goes by omination by the Government which is ossibly to be the intention of the overnment we are afraid, the interest of he Labour will remain unrepresented as yer. The Local Govt will put forward the sames of so called nominated Labour mem-

bers who represent nobody but themselves and are thus quite in the dark as to the real grievances of the Labour. It is very easy to pose as the representative of 'pocket unions' but the same process is not applicable in the case that covers the whole range under its perview, we would therefore suggest that the co-opted members from each province should be elected by the Registered Unions jointly. If this is not possible the co-opted members hould be selected from amoungst the representations of the Registered Union. It is hoped that the sisterunions will also press for such a procedure in selecting the Labour Representatives.

Pulsation in Labour Life.

Comrades, Inland.

All-India Railwaymen's Federation.

At the Annual Convention of All-India Railwaymen's Federation which concluded its Sessions on the 19th December 1928 at Jharia under the presidency of Rai Saheb Chandrika Prasad the following resolutions were passed:—

1. This meeting of the Convention of All-India Railwaymen's Federation solemnly mourns the death of the Great Labour Leader and Patriot Lala Rajpat Rai who was the first President of the All-India Trade Union Congress and Workers Delegate at the 8th Session of the International Labour Conference at Geneva and condemns the cowardly and dastardly police attack which hastened his end,"

2. "This Federation records its emphatic protest against the instructions just issued by the Agent of the Eastern Bengal State Railway and possibly of other Railways in India, for the recruitment of Anglo-Indians to the Subordinate Railway Service on more favourable terms and lower qualifications (educational etc) than those applicable to. or insisted upon, in the case of pure Indians and appeals to the members of the Central Legislature to insist upon this injustice to pure Indians being effectively removed once for all time, as this racial discrimination and favouritism has practically given an undue advantage and domination in the Subordinate grades of State Railway services, and allows the Anglo-Indians and Europeans still to hold 70.42% of the total posts

of his pursuance of the decision of magal council at it into halous MAS and 5-8-1928

carrying monthly salaries of Rs. 250/ and above, while denying equal treatment to the children of the soil—an injustice which has been in force in India for more than three quarters of a Century and is now meant to be perpetuated."

- 3. "In the opinion of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, the minor concessions granted by the N. G. S. Railway Administration, in answer to the Loco & Carriage Workshop men's demands are quite unsatisfactory and partial; and the Federation offers their full support to the men's struggle to get the other demands, important being payment in British currency sanctioned at an early date."
- 4. "This Convention of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation strongly protests against the Trade Disputes Bill as being most reactionary, one-sided and wholly detrimental to the interests of the workers and to the sound growth of the Trade Union movement in India.

This Convention therefore requests the Members of the Legislative Assembly to oppose the Bill."

- 5. "This Federation regrets to have to record that the Government of India have completely ignored to consult the Federation about the working hours of Railwaymen in India as required by the Geneva and Washington Conventions."
- 6. "This Convention accepts the minor additions and alterations proposed by Rai Saheb Chandrika Prasad, to be made to the General Demands of the memorandum submitted to the Government of India."
 - 7. (i) "In view of the facts
- (a) that the repeated resolutions passed in the Legislature demanding the appointments of a Committee to enquire

into the grievances of the Railway Workers in India have been persistently flouted.

- (b) that the Railway Board has been so far systematically trying to evade inprovements of the conditions of service of Railwaymen.
- (b) that the resolutions of the General Demands formulated by the All-India Railwaymen in the Country be prepared for eventualities pending the promised discussion with Hon'ble the Commerce Member.
- (ii) with a view to obtain the above objective and to meet the eventualities, this meeting urges upon the constituted Unions the dsirability of working towards a programme like the following:—
 - (a) 100% Organisation on all Rail ways.
 - (b) Immediate affiliation of all the Unions on all the Railways in Iudia.
 - (c) Regular payments of the quota to the all-India Railwaymen's Federation.
 - (d) Collection of the special strike fund by all the Unions.
 - (e) Collection of facts and figures in support of the various general demands.
 - (f) Intensive propaganda on all Railways.

and

- (g) Enlistment of public sympathy towards the general demands.
- 8. "Resolved that the President, the General Secretary, Rai Saheb Chandrka Prasad and one representative from each of the affiliated Unions do form the personnel of the Deputation to wait upon the Hon'ble Member in charge of commerce and Railways to discuss the general demands in the Memorandum and that the General Secre-

Covernment in regard to the obtaining of passerete, for the Deputationists."

- 9. "This Convention endorses the demands of the O. I. P. Italiwaymen's Union and in the event of it becoming necessary to strike to gain these points the Pederation will, provided it approves of the strike, give the Union every possible support and further, it will also undertake to use its influence to prevent the work being done on G. I. P. Ry by men of other Railways, as black legs."
 - 10. "This meeting learns with deep resentment the cowardly attack upon Dr. Biswanath Mukherjee, one of the Vice Presidents of the Federation by a band of men in the District of Gorakhpur, while Doctor Mukherjee was addressing a meeting of tenants on the 15th September, 1928 and condemns the assailants for their behaviour."
 - 11. "This Convention elects the following office-bearers for the ensuing year :- President:-- Mr. N. M. Joshi.
 Vice Presidents:-Rai Saheb Chandrika

Prasad.

Mr. Earnest Kirk.
Dr. Biswanath
Mukherjee.

Mr. I. B. Sen. Mr. Fathehulla Khan. Mr. Bradley.

General Secretary: -Mr. V. V. Giri.
Organising Secy: -,, S. H. Jhabwalla.
Treasurer: -, V. R. Kalappa."

12. "Resolved that the General Secretary be authorised to spend Rs 500/- per mensem for running the Office."

grateful thanks to the retiring President, but Salush Chembrides Present for the value able services rendered to the Pederation during his tenure of office."

14. "This meeting expresses its heartfelt thanks to the Members of the Reception Committee of the All India Trade Union Congress, the Volunteers and the owners of Agarwalla Dharmasala for their help in convening the All-India Railwaymen's Federation at Jharia."

Presidential Address.

Brother Delegates,

The year now coming to a close is remarkable for the great economic unrest throughout India,—it has had its effect on the Labour and a quarter lakh of Indian subordinates and workmen employed on the Indian Railways. The unrest among the Railwaymen has been growing for several years, which resulted in the late strikes on the N. W. Ry., B. & N. W. Ry, the Bengal Nagpur Ry, the East Indian Ry, the S. I. Ry and H. E. H. The Nizam's Guaranteed Ry.

Causes of strikes:—The repeated refusal of the Govt of India to order the enquiry into the long-standing grievances of the men even upon successive Resolutions for the same passed by the Legislative Assembly in 1925 and 1926, coupled with the wrong policy of retrenchments among the Lower Staff only, drove the men to direct

mostly to the lowest staff, whilst the numbers were being unduly increased. This the men saw actually taking place on the Raiway8 and is evident even from the statistics published by the Railway Board at page 6 of Vol. 1 of the Annual Administrative Report on the Indian Railways for 1923-27. The total number of Gazetted Officers on the class I Railways rose from 2045 on the 1st April 1926 to 2143 on the 1st April 1927 an increase of 5%. The increase were remarkable on the following Railways:—

A. B. Ry from 63 to 72 officers.
B. N. Ry 63 to 66 ...
E. I. Ry 316 to 562
M. & S. M. Ry 155 to 168 ...
N. W. Ry 318 to 351 ...
S. I. Ry 133 to 153

Any reduction on the wages or numbers of the Staff which may be necessary for the economical working of a Railway should be shared equally by the higher officials as well as by the lower staff, as was lately done in the Railways in England. At the conference of Railway Managers & the Union Leaders of England in July 1928, the Companies Directors also offered to join in the reduction made in the salaries of Railway men. A similar attitude on the part of the supervising staff of Indian Railways is all the more necessary than in England where the workers have their own Government.

Mistakes of officials:—As to the causes of strikes, I am sorry to have to differ from the opinions expressed by one of the highest Ry officials of India. In referring to the Labour movement of India, Mr. N. Pearce, Agent of the E. B. State Railway, in his

treskiencial address at the last (25th) Annual Bession of the Indian Ry Canference Amoretalling it milled looks in the temployees in India-attributed the strikes of the Ry Employees in India to "ineltements of a lew hot heads" to the "lowest paid" workmen and artisans for most part illiterate and generally ill-informed and often ill-advised". He, however, observed that an awakening is taking place in the minds of our fellow workers, helped no doubt by outside influences such as the Union of Labour often officered by men who are not directly employed on or by the Railways. Mr. Pearce is a reasonable gentleman, but if he thinks that the strikes were incited by the Railwaymen's Federation or any other responsible body of labour leaders, he is wrong, for none of the strikes was originally ordered by this Federation or any other responsible body of Ry Unions. He ignores the economic stress and the long standing grievances of the men, which are the real cause of the strikes. The 'incitement' by outsiders is an exploded theory and should not be repeated. I answered it in the Presidential Address of the First Conference of All-India Railwaymen held at Bombay in 1921, when a similar complaint was made by the Chairman of the same Association.

The grievances of the Railway men in India are many and are well known but the authorities do not seem inclined to remove or remedy them. The higher Officials who possess powers look to the interests of their own class and seem to ignore the interests of their poorest workers. The workers have no power to secure their proper dues except that of joint association and combined bargaining, but some of the officials will

not allow the subordinates to combine. The powers of the Officials to Victimize union workers are unlimited and they have full control over the men, more or less on most of the Railways in India. This is the chief reason why the workers of Indian Rys have not been able to freely exercise the right of Association which has been allowed to them for all lawful purposes under the second clause of Article 427 of the Versailles Treaty of Peace between the Nations of the World, which has been accepted by the Government of India.

This attitude of Ry Officials is wrong. They are carried away by their zeal to establish what are known as Staff Councils or Local Committees, Mr. Pearce desires to avoid the danger of substituting for the old direct and personal touch between the District Officer and his staff, a system whereby personal interests of the staff were handled by those who had no personal acquaintance with their needs. He did not make this clear but evidently he meant that the Railway men may not be allowed to form their Unions. If so, his direction is directly against the Provisions of the Treaty of Nations, which has been accepted by Sentiments of justice and humanity as well as by the desire to secure the permanent peace of the World, The views expressed by Mr. Pearce were concurred in by the retiring Chairman of the Govt Railway Board, Sir Clement Hindlay and by the Ry Member of the Executive Council of the Govt of India, Sir George Rainey,

(To be continued.)

at 1.13, March 1929

Style

Our own Activities

CENTRALIS

Agency:—Alr. M. Pearce, Agent, is in Railway, granted an Interview to the General Secretary on 20th January, 1920. There was a long discussion on various subjects. The following are the important subjects which formed part of the discussion.

- (1) Grant of passes to Association officers Agent said that he would consider the question of granting further extension to six months and also making it a point to discuss with the Railway Board thequestion of granting passes to the Railway men's Organisations.
- (2) Granting facilities to members to attend Association works. Agent has agreed to issue instructions to Hends of Departments to grant facilities to members of the Executive Councils to attend Association meetings.
- (3) Mr. Pearce on being asked to speak to his successor at the time of his making over charge about this Association and to request him to grant the Association all possible facilities as enjoyed by the Association during his regime and that of his predecessors has agreed to do so.

In reply to our representation regarding the improvement of Indian staff quarters the Agent has replied as under in his letter No. 2017 D/W of 10-12-1928.

"The number of quarters required at various stations and the value of land make it impossible for this administration to consider the construction of each unit as an independent building. Standard designs must be arranged so as to provide for a number of units being built as a single block. This appears to be the general practice on all Railways.

As regards the size of early and sitchens the lens of the Restorn Rengal Railway provide as much accommodation as is usual on other Railways.

The other suggestions made in your letter are being referred to the Engineering Department as to whether improvements on the lines suggested could be arranged without a material enhancement in the cost involving a general raising of rents."

On the Association's representation on the Articles headed (1) "An exemplary Healthy Surroundings of the Indian employees at Rajbari" and (2) Recognition of Merit", as appearing in our issue of November last, the Chief Medical Officer in his letter of the 21st January 1929 has replied as follows:—

"Thank you for sending me the journal.

As regards (1) I shall take an early opportunity to inspect Rajbari. I shall be glad if the date and number of the "Indian Railways Chronicle" from which the extract has been quoted, are sent to me for further investigation. As I had been at Rajbari and arranged about drinking water supply in Babupara, I would like to have a personal discussion with the representative who went there.

As regards (2) I am very glad to hear that Babu Sukumar Chakravarty, B. A., of the Chief Medical Officer's Office is a gifted literary man. He will get every help from me to show his ability & advancement as he proves fit. I am issuing orders that he may

be given inure respondible work than the turn he had been present dates.

DISTRICTS.

Anout the grievances published under the heading 'Precurious fate of the subordinate clerks in the district offices, in our issue of Nov. 1928, the Executive Engineer, Lahmonrihat, has kindly replied as follows in letter of the 18th January, "I have had an enquiry made, and I am satisfied that nothing wrong was done. The clerks of this office are very seldom deprived of the Gazetted Holidays. Arrangements are, of course, made for urgent works during holidays, and it there happen to be any arrears, clerks concerned are required to attend to make up such arrears. Arrangments for making up arrears are made by the Head Clerk or the Clerk in charge of a section in consultation with the Head Clerk.

If there be any real hardship caused to any under-clerks by the action of the Head Clerk or any Senior Clerk in charge of sections, they are at liberty to approach me for the remedy of their grievances. So far, however, I have not received any complaint,"

BRANCHES-

Saidpur Branch-

- (1) A PROPAGANDA MEETING as held at Siliguri on the 9th December, 1928 under the auspices of Saidpur Branch. Mr. Vincent, Station Master, Siliguri presided. There was a good representative gathering the following resolutions were moved and carriedly unanimously
 - a):—Resolved that commades S. N. Banerjee & S. C. Biswas will assist

commade D. M. Ghosal in collecting mouthly anterciptions from the mount bers of the Traine Department from this mouth onsyard.

- (b). Resolved that comrade 5, C. Dutta will assist comrade Khosla to realise subscriptions from the members of the Engineering Department.
- c) Resolved that comrade S. C. Gupta (Malaria Inspector) will assist the Association to realise subscriptions from the members of the Medical Department.
- d) Resolved that comrade Ottman (Shedman-in-charge) with the assistance of comrade S. C. Mitra will realise subscriptions from the Loco & Carr Department.
- e) Resolved that a separate collection book be opened for posting the amount that will be realised towards the Reserve Fund.
- 1) Resolved that a list of staff quarters required for the Electrical, Traffic and other Departments be made out by comrade D. N. Ghosal and submitted to the Secretary Saidpur Branch, for taking necessary action in the matter,
- (2) A PROPAGANDA MEETING was held at Parbatipur on 3, 12, 28 under the auspices of this branch. Comrade S. C. Roy presided and there was a good attendance. It was firmly impressed on the members the utility of the Reserve Fund and the Death Benefit Fund, which they fully appreciated in as much as the majority of the Comrades present expressed their desire to subscribe thereto. It was resolved that

the Station Committee of Participal Ve funnellably mayed of pay that against the attention or the following arteriors of the Indian Raphyeos at Parbatipur

- and staff quarters in the Haklibari locality.
- b) Inadequate lighting arrangement.
- c) Inadigracy of potable water.

Paksey Branch

- 1) Under the auspices of the Paksey Pranch of the Association a mass meeting was held at Ishurdi on the 2nd December, 1928. Comrade H. P., Chatterjee. Head Ticket Collector, took the chair. Comrade J. C. Bhattacharine, Secretary Paksey Branch, in an exhaustive speech exhorted the employees to come under the banner of the Association and to raise adequate money for the Reserve Fund to strengthen the stability of the Association, Comrades H. P. Chatterjee & Suraj Prasad Pathack delivered impressive speeches on the same line and as a result the employees present became eager to enlist themseives on the spot. They also promised to try to enrol members to the best of their abilities
- (2) A Mass meeting of the Association was held at the Cameron Institute, Paksey on the 7th September, 1928. Munshi Golam Mohiuddin, Vice-President of the Branch presided. Over 130 members were present,

Comrade N. C. Sirear read the resolutions of the last Dacca Conference and explained them in vernacular, Comrade

J. C. mattacherjee, Sceretary explained the muliye force that would be commuted in the Assignation by collecting summent hunnee for its Reserve Fund. To make it a really strong body for the protection and promotion of the interests of the employees it is necessary that the contributions at the rate of one day's pay of each employee should be paid to the Reserve Fund. If it is not possible to pay a day's pay in one lump it may be paid in three successive instalments. The Secretary then renewed his appeal for donations to defend Comrade Bhrighunath Pathack's case.

The following resolution was also passed:-

On the question that the ministerial servants are not allowed to leave head quarters on Sundays and holidays without previous permission and that they are made to work extra hours on office days generally and are some times required to work on Sundays and holidays without any allowance or leave in lieu thereof it was and unanimously carried resolved Secretary General that the he move the matter to requested to the higher authorities asking them to use their powers and influence in discouraging the practice of engaging the staff on Sundays & holidays and confining them in Head Quarters on such cases of emergencies days or in granting them double allowance working on such days and for extra hours on office days.

3) A Mass meeting of the E, B. Ry. Indian Employees Association was held under the auspices of the Paksey branch in the Camaron Institute, Paksey on the

7th December, 1933' Countrie B & Pol as the applied to the thirty stone officers playees were present. Comentes 1 C, Bhatlacharice, N. C. Siren and J. C. Chowdlinry and the Charman made impressive speeches on the utility of the Association with a brief history on the working of the branch as well as on the extreme necessity of collecting subscriptions for the Reserve Fund of the Association for its stability and strength with as little delay as possible. The employees present readily agreed to contribute to the Fund.

A MASS meeting of the Association was held at Siraigani on the 9th December, 1928. About 200 Employees were present, Comrade Benode Behavi Dutt presided. The president and others made impressive speeches and exhorted the employees to join the Association at once and contribute to the Reserve Fund for the fulfilment of its aims and objects in promoting and protecting the interests of the employees. All present readily agreed to act accordingly and the meeting dispersed at late hours in the night.

COUNCIL MEETINGS-

Saidour Branch :

- 1) :- At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Saidpur Branch held on 5, 12, 28 under the presidency of Comrade R. N. Ghosal the following proceedings were recorded :--
 - (a) Minutes of the meeting held on 12,11,28 were read and cofirmed.
 - (b) Monthly accounts for October, 28 were discussed and passed.
 - (e) The General Meeting of the Branch which was fixed to be held on the 16.12.28 is to be convened on the 13th January, 29. It has been unanimously

decided to elect turnished, it thinkled jee as President of the Course of Meetings

- (d). Comrade P. K. Dass Gupta, Inte Secretary of this branch, now Station Master, Purneah, be requested to return the sum of Rs. 79-3-3 which has been lying with him since his holding the charge of this Branch.
- (e). It has been suggested that the Branch office should retain 25% of its net income (i.e. the amount collected minus the expenditure, viz Establishment charges, house rent, contiguacies) to meet emergent and unforeseen expenses. This supersedes the resolution passed in the Executive Committee Meeting held on 13 7-28.
- (f) Due to alteration of the date of Iharia Conference, delegates selected from this branch to attend could not be sent as no passes would be allowed by the E. I. Ry on that Railway.
- 2: Comrade R. N. Ghosal presided at the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 14. 11. 28 and altogether five resolations were passed :-

- for thought for the month of the said and they was also deep and and passed,
- (b) It has been ununimously decided in the meeting that the General Meeting should be convened on 16, 12, 28 at 2 P. M. in the New Union Musical Hall. Notice to this effect should be served to all bonafide members of the Branch and others. Necessary arrange ment for the out station members should be made as far as practicable.
- (c) An attempt should be made to collect the usual contribution viz. a day's pay from the employees towards the Reserve Fund.
- (d) It has been decided to elect comrade P. Chakravorty and B. P. Biswas as delegates to attend the Jhariah Conference
- (e) The Committee after due consideration have arrived at the decision that the emolument fixed for the collector should stand as it is, because market value should not be ignored.

Railway Budget Debates,

Sir George Rainy dealt comprehensively and genially with all the points and announced that, if, as he hoped, the House would agree to his proposal for a new member of the Railway Board Mr. Hayman would be appointed to the post and that Mr. P. R. Rau, the present

Director of Finance, will act Financial Commissioner when Mr. A. A. L. Parsons proceeds on leave. In both cases this represents an advance in Indianisation.

Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas is commented on the Railway Budget in the Logislative Assembly.

the Railway Board on the hand tome rould presented and the appreciable funds selected in reserve. He objected to the B and N. W. Railway declaring a dividend of nine teen per cent to its shareholders, while that company had done practically nothing to look after the requirements and convenience of passengers. This was the one railway which has frightened the Indian public from any conception of the company-managed railway system.

Financial Result.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta directed his criticism to the general financial results shown by the working of railways. He requested the Railway Member for information that might explain why in the case of the East Indian Railway the operating ratio had actually gone up when it had been expected that the separation of audit from accounts would show economics in working. The reasons given for the increase in stores balances were, in his opinion not satisfactory.

Mr. Mehta also wanted to know whether the payment to the General revenue of Rs 58 lakhs in respect of some loan was an item which had accumulated over a number of years or was an annual payment.

Mr, A. A. L. Parsons replied that this payment was for the budget year and that there would be another payment in the year following.

Mr. Mehta was surprised at this annual payment of half a crore to general revenues over and above the railways' contribution under the convention, and regretted that

British (a) a sa a sa a sa a sa a sa Ballway (dan Mallaga bina mas Cambillian al alice en Nei atage.

Nationalise Railways.
Able Critician By Pt. Ndle ota.

When the House reassembled after funch Pandit Nil Kanta Das said that he could neither curse nor congratulate the Railway Board on this occasion, as in language and statements the Commerce Member had played his function eleverly. The Railway ought to be a national industry, but the speaker stressed that there was nothing national in the present administration.

With regard to the appointment of a new member on the Board he said that the Government member wanted to kill two birds with one stone as both the cries for Indianisation and merciless exploitation of labour were being attempted to be gagged by the new proposal. Labour, he said was a big problem and he was afraid that it could not be solved by merely appointing an additional member. He suggested liberal provision for technical education and preference for the children of the employees. He thought there was much room for improvement in the sanitary arrangement and housing and suggested remedy for these grievances first before talking of a new appointment.

Virtual Stagnation 'Net Results very Disappointing'

Turning to the financial results, he said that superficial satisfaction must be considerably modified on an examination of the figures. There had been virtual stagnation in the railway for the last four or five years, and the figure of 5.85 per cent earning in 1924-25 had not since been reached. Actually the gross receipts were down by Rs. 6 crores and the nett receipts by Rs. 11 crores.

Why have these relains divinified? he asked. We have subted 3.000 miles of new railways. We have assignful many company managed lines whose surplus profits now accrue to us and expenditure on whose London Boards is no longer needed. There is then normal expansion which should have further added to our income. There is also the recent publicity campaign which has cost as Rs. 7 lakhs, though its results seem only superficial.

"There are causes which should have gone to swell our revenues. There are, on the other hand, reasons which should lead us to economise and lower our expenses. The cost of repairs has gone down by Rs. 2000 per locomotive. There is a decrease in the cost of operation on account of extensive marshalling yards, there is a fall in the prices of stores. There is a fuel economy campaign con lucted by a special staff. and you have three al ministrative reforms namely, the institution of the divisional system of administration, establishment of clearing houses and separation of audit from accounts. In spite of these causes making for higher earning and lower cost we find that the return on capital at charge remains stationary or has stagnated. The net result is very disappointing, and we are not getting even up to the level of 1+24 25. Our the other hand, I find lakhs of rupses being wasted on special officers and special committees. I wonder what part of the reduced profits is due to these extraordinary appointments of numerous special officers and special committees."

Continuing, Mr. Jamualas Mehta said that while the depreciation charge on railway earnings was a proper charge, he found problem 30 from a to peneral recently have to a primaria has the strategic mass and put by Ra 224 erores of reserve. These Rado erores had been taken and of the picket of the passenger, trader and merchant. "I hold that as soon as you have pick working expenses, interest charges and depreciation any further claim on railway earnings is a tax on transport. We ought, in fact, to fix the standard revenue from the railways at something like 41 per cent; the rest should go to the reduction of rates and fares."

Concluding, Mr. Juma das Mehta criticized the proposal to create a fifth member for the Railway Board, He said that compared with 1922 the Railway Board superior staff had increased by five per cent., besides, they had delegated powers to railway agents, appointed a coal mining engineer, a director of wagon pool, had the assistance of the India Railway Conference, had a Rates Advisory Committee and in the face of all these no case could be made out for the addition of a new member to the Railway Board.

MONOPOLY OF SERVICES BY ANGLO-INDIANS IN E. B. R.

But it was Pandit Hrilaynath Kunzru who drove the Commerce Member into a corner and Sir George Rainy who otherwise stack to his guns brilliantly, had to admit that the Agent of E. B. Railway had issue I a memoraudum which meant the continuance of monopoly of the Subordinate Railway Service by Anglo-Indians and promised to put the matter right on all railways. Sir George Rainy, won his best

applause when he gave the unqualified pledge to Pundit Kunzen that valaries of all teachers In railway school would henceforth be raised to the level of those in Government Institutions.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru speaking next dwelt mainly with the question of separation of Railway finance from the General finance. He added that the reserve funds of Railways should be atthed to strengthen the position of Railways He then charged the Govt. with racial devrimination in regard to the appointments in the Rullway Departments. He referred to the memorandum of the E. B. Railway and showed how Anglo-Indians predominated there.

Mr. Naidu following Pandit Kunztu said that the Railway administration required modifications in various directions.

Contemporary Opinion

British Labour and India .- The London Divisional Conference and the East Anglican Conference of the Independent Labour Party have, according to the Free Press, unanimously passed a resolution opposing Labour participation in the Simon Commission and welcoming the demand of the Indian people for complete self determination It is good to think that there is at least a section of British Lobour which has not so far trampled upon its own cherished principle. Mr. Fenner Brockway, one of the leaders of this section, is reported to hav: declared at the London Conference mentioned above that "if Labour comes into power in the General Election and does not concede Dominion status to India within a year. Labour will be faced with the biggest revolt in India and will be faced with the duty of suppressing it". Indians will proceed with their programme, whichever party comes to power in England. Mr. Ramsay Mac-Donald had perhaps Mr. Brockway and the Independent Labour Party's attitude towards India in mind when he said: "Monkeying with revolution at a safe distance is not the sort of thing in which we should indulge. Labour policy is altogether different." Aping Imperialism while talking of nationalism is perhaps Mr. MacDonald's way .- Chronicle (Bombay).

Not Procept But Practice :- Why shoud British industrialists in India be so mortally afrail of the alleged spread of communism in India if, as Lord Irwin said, 'it is not likely to succeed unless it can lay its finger on real injustice"? Is it an illustration of the ancient sayingconscience makes cowards of us all? Why again is the Viceroy who is so concerned about industrial peace based on justice more anxious to pass the Trades Disputes Bill than to improve the lot of the factory workers? It is all very nice to ask employees of labour to remember "that the workman is a human being, both before he enters the factory and after he leaves it." but did he himself care to examine the condition of the Railway strikers before he lent his moral and material support to the Railway authorities In coercing the strikers into submission? Has he eared to see with his own eyes the miserable condition of labourers in the Bengal jute mills before he allowed himself to indulge in anti-communistic sermons? An ounce of practice is any day worth more than a ton of precepts, even though they come from the Vicerey.

Forward.

Abstract of Accounts of the Copyll 11 is fit and the factor to the

from October, 1928 to Documber, 1928.

INCOME 1-

EXTENDITURE

GENERAL FUND : -

		Rs.	$-\Lambda_*$	{ '.	Ra.	۸.	{}
1.	Subscription of						
	members	660	13	3			
2.	Readmission fee						
	of members	1	10	0			
					**		
		612	7	3	662	7	4

SPECIAL FUNDS ; -

1	. Reserve Fund	56	1.2	()	
2	Magazine Fund	19	2	0	
3	. Rules & Bye				
	Laws	()	2	()	
4.	. Bhrigu Nath Pa-				
	thak Defence				
	Firmel	- 2	12	0	

79 13 0 79 13 0

COLLECTION CHARGES !-

		215	7	0	2.15	7	()
	Collectors	80	11	()			
3.	Commission to						
	Collectors	15	()	()			
9	tor Allowance of	169	()	()			
- 1.	Salary of Collec-	7.00	0	0			
		Rs.	Δ .	1,"	R3.	Α.	₽.

) 1/1/10	CE EXPENSES :				
	Salary of Staff	109	()	()	
	House rent	4.2	()	()	
3,	Stamps	2	5	G	
4.	Stationery	()	11	()	
5.	Miscellaneous				
	Expenses	4.	-1	G	

157 13 0

7 9 0

OTHER EXPENSES :-

- 1. Printing Charges 3 0 0
- 2. Travelling expenses 4 6 ()

3. Meeting expenses 0 3 0

380 18 9

157 13 0

Remittance to Head Office :=

Out of General

Fund 281 9 6 Special Fund 79 13

361 6 6 561

Total ...

742 4 3

Total

742 4 3

Rally the Labourer :- Indian Lab att is pleased to find the following lines in the presidential address of Pundit Motilal Neheru, the President of the Indi un National Congress which indicate that it has the fullest sympathy of the Congress and Congressmen. The venerable President observed--

The Congress has all along identified itself with the cause of labour and Courress. men have uniformly en-operated with the leaders of the Labour movement in India in bringing about an improvement in the conomic and social condition of labour and in supporting its claim for an equal voice with capital or other interests in the solution of our political and economic problems The year that will shortly close has however been marked by acute condition of conflict between Labour and Capital in Bombay and elsewhere and strikes and lock-outs that have arisen in consequence as unfortunate disturbances that have ensued have not helped to secure an early and pacific settlement of the disputes between the employees and the employed. The authorities who have stepped in on behalf of the employees have not only raised Communist bogey as answer to the hung'y labourer who fights for a living wage and for bare decencies of human living but prive resorted to shooting and violence in putting down strikes which must fill our hearts with shame and sorrow. The Congress cap no longer afford to ignore these deplorable happenings and the time has arrived when the Congress should actively intervene an I take steps to secure the just demands of

labour and take it up in itself to alrengthen their organization as a part of the work of national consolidation."

And closely following upon this declaration and in accordance with the section 9 of the resolution No. 14 of the Indian National Congress the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee has undertaken to organise the Labour with the following programme of work.

- (a) I Labourers shall not work for more than 8 hours a day ie, 44 hours per week
- 2. They shall not get less than a mouthly pay of Rs. 30.
- 3. In factories, mills and other industrial concerns, the Sirdur system should be abolished.
- (b) Labour in evene at shall have to be carried irrespective of all questions of Indian or foreign capital. There shall be no distinction of capitalists on the score of nationality.
- (c) Labourers shall have to be roused to the sense of their class interests and for the realisation of this aim, the labour movement shall have to be directed to the path of class war

We congratulate the Congress Committee for their belated decision which if taken seriously will change the entire angle of vision of our employers. They will then and then alone come to realise their own folies and mistakes created by themselves to meet their own selfish ends.

An Kapmplary Latinic Almahar

Mr. K. C. Roy Choudhucy was nominoted by the Government of Bengal to icpresent the Labour interests in the Corporation of Calcutta and most loyally did this friend of Labour discharge his onerous duties when the Trades Dispute Bill came up fordiscussion. He was the only Indian who had the "check" to support this ill-graced and labour-grinding measure and went on so far as to contend that it would advance the cause of Labour in this land where the foreign capitalists merrily went on enjoying huge profits at the expenses of the Indian masses. Those who are aware of the antecedents of this self-styled Labour Leader and his latest activities in connection with the Lilogan and Burria Strikes will surely admit that the right man has been selected by the Govt. in the right place ! But what a pity is the fact that he has already been found out in the Trade Unions circles and no body takes care of him seriously. But Mr. Roy Chowdhury is resourceful enough and so with the help of a band of

simple elithology father as to ear act in a serve of mushroom timous to prove t extetence as a Lahour Louder which clearly assures him his nomination. With t help of such precious leaders on their sic it will not at all be difficult for the Gov to pass as many coercive measures as the can forge out of their armoury to break t back bone of Indian Labour moveme before it has mobilised its scattered streng against the merciless employees to wre from them "their due and legitimate rig to live in a healthy home, and feed upon wholesome food." All glory to Mr. K. C. R-Chowdhury, the redoubtable champion Labour for his sympathetic feat!

Here and there:—The Mayor of Lond begs from door to door to mitigate t sufferings of the mining millions there. By the Mayor (of Calcutta) here joined issuin oppressing the seavenging corps who they prayed for legitimate 'morsel' to like upon from their Employers! What a coplimentary contrast!

E. B. Railway Indian Employees' Association,

CALCUTTA BRANCH.

Abstract of Accounts for January & February, 1929

INCOME :-	FXPENDITURE:
INCOMD E	A. Collection Charges:
A GENERAL FUND :-	Rs. A. P. Rs. A. P.
Rs. A. P. Rs. A. P. 1. Subscription of members 455 8 0 2. Readmission fee of members 111 0	1. Salary of Collectors 80 15 6 2. Allowance of Collectors 20 0 0 3. Commission on Collection 27 8 9 4. Travelling Exp20 ses 2 3 6
	B. OFFICE EXPENSES :-
B. SPECIAL FUNDS:- 1. Reserve Fund 10 12 6 2. Magazine Fund 33 0 0 3. Bhrigunath	1. Salary of Staff 83 H 0 2. House rent 28 0 0 3. Stampa 2 4 6 4. Stationery 2 14 3 5. Light Charges 5 7 0
Pathak Defence	6. Contingencies 0 5 0 122 9 9
Fund 9 13 0	C. OTHER EXPENSES :-
4. Rules & Bye Laws 0 2 0	1. Travelling Expenses 0 1 ()
53 11 6 53 11 6	0 1 0 0 1 0
Grand Total 510 14 6	25366 Remittance to Head Office: Out of General
	Special Funds 58 11 6

Sd. S. O. Mukherjee, Joint Secretary. CALCUTTA BRANCH.

610 11 6

Grand Total ...