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The
Indian Labour Journal

Official organ of the B. N. Railway
Indian Labour Union.

EDITOR—V. V. GIRI.

Bar-at-Law.

Vol. II **July & August 1925.** No. 10 & 11

"Millions of Newspapers definitely hostile to Labour circulate everyday, because they are bought by the working men who have not yet acquired the habit of spending their money on a friend instead of an enemy."

J. R. CLYNES M. P.

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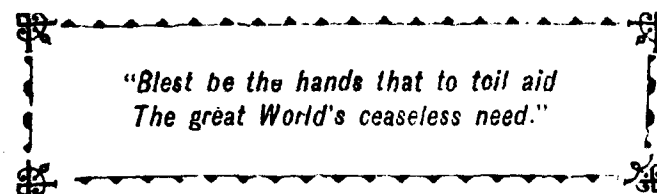
All literary communications such as contributions, reports of events, etc.,
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Berhampur, B. N. Ry., (Ganjam District)

Business communications of every kind such as subscriptions, advertisements
complaints, changes of address etc, should be addressed to the General Secretary,
B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union, Khargpur.

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The attention of the subscribers is drawn to the fact that their subscriptions
expire with the September 1924 number. The Indian Labour Journal commences
its second year from October 1924. Present as well as all other intending
subscribers are therefore requested to send by money order Rs. 2 as subscription for
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Union, Khargpur. Present subscribers wishing to discontinue the Journal should
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The Indian Labour Journal.

July & August 1925.

Brief survey of the General working of the
B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union
for the year 1924-25.

THE B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union
has successfully terminated the
fourth year of its existence. The annual
General meeting held on the 21st June 25
was considered a great success, both on
account of the representative gathering that
assembled there and the interest and
enthusiasm evinced by the members during
the course of the proceedings. The speeches
of the President on behalf of the Union &
the reply of Mr. Cole C. M. E. on behalf of
the administration are published elsewhere
for the information of the readers of
this Journal.

The President had to perform the

most sacred & solemn duty of placing on
record the great loss which the country
in General and Indian Labour in particular
sustained at the untimely demise of one of
the greatest and noblest patriots of our
country Deshabandhu C. R. Das. It was
indeed a sight to see distinguished
representatives of the administration as
well as of labour rising to a man to carry
the resolution in profound silence. The
respect shown to the memory of
Deshabandhu both by Europeans &
Indians without distinction of caste colour
or creed only reveals the worth of the
patriot we have lost.

The President in the course of his speech thanked the administration for the grant of 14 holidays with pay to the daily rated staff after a good deal of constitutional and persistent agitation on the part of the Union. It may not be out of place to state here once again that the attitude of the B. N. Ry. Labour Union has always been to be grateful to the administration for the concessions shown & continue to fight with-out fear or favour for the complete & legitimate amelioration of the condition of the worker on the railway.

The President drew pointed attention to the unhappy attitude of some of the officers towards the Union and it is hoped hereafter that there will be few complaints against such officers regarding their antipathy towards Union and its representatives.

Reference was also made to the withdrawal of the few card passes for the Union which were handed over to the work of its organisation and request made to the administration to see their way to grant them immediately more passes if they want the labour organisation to be a safe side both to the employer and employee.

The Union, as the readers are aware has been agitating for the grant of the casual leave to the employees which was long over due and the President hoped the same would be granted at an early date.

Reference was also made to the necessity of having tried outside public men of merit as Vice Presidents of Branches for some time to come till at least the organisation of the employees on a sound basis is complete.

It is hoped also that the work shop committee which is a source of menace to the workmen at Khargpur would soon be mended suitably if not ended.

We are particularly thankful to Mr. Cole the C. M. E. who gave out his views regarding our Labour organisations. We admire his frankness and sincerity though we differ with him in many of the sentiments expressed. At the same time we will be wanting in our duty if we don't recognise his qualities of head and heart, his love for his employee. His reference to the Boarding arrangements for the Indian apprentices, housing problem and sanitation were appreciated by his hearers.

Mr. Eaglesome C. T. M. came from Calcutta specially to attend the meeting and for want of time we had not the pleasure of having a long discourse from him. His presence was a source of encouragement to the traffic staff who hold him in esteem.

Mr. Carroll Ag. Agent could not be present but he requested Messrs Cole and Eaglesome to express his hearty wish for the success of the gathering.

The survey of the report will not be complete unless misconceptions on the part of some, are removed in the matter of the utility and the work done by the organisation.

It has been often questioned by certain persons interested in its progress and by others in its destruction about the work done by the Union during the year or two past. Without the least hesitation and without fear of contradiction we might be permitted to state that this Union has justified its existence. If it could not do much more than was expected the cause was due to good workers who doubted both their own ability on the one hand and their suspicions about the work done by others, also due to the fact that the employees considered the success or failure of these organisations from the results they personally obtained for themselves (say higher grade or leave or some other privileges). If they failed they proclaim that the Union has not done anything. These two are the causes that undermine the power of any good organisation much more a body like ours in its infant stage. We are however glad to fortify ourselves by stating that there are yet some good men and true who are patriots among employees who are optimistic enough to feel that work they have taken up is a noble one deserving any sacrifice.

Even under such limitations as above the Union could proudly feel that it has done a good deal during the year under review. Employees are aware all along the line that the Union has created a public opinion, which cannot be measured in any way but which can be felt by those who have been connected with the Union. The Union has been commanding the respect both of the men and the employers.

The organisation of the Station Committee at Khargpur, the power that our Union possess in carrying the deliberations of the said committee should be enough to set at rest the doubts of our doubting patriots.

The grant of 14 days holidays to the work men after a good deal of agitation is proof positive that the Union has not been a sleepy hallow as supposed by certain comrades of ours.

The fight for the casual leave for the employees that has been going on between the administration and the Union must make the employee realize how the body has been trying its best for what they consider as precious. It will not be long when it will attain some good results in the matter.

Their Union was mainly responsible for

the organisation of the All India Railways federation and great results are expected from the same.

This Union has a proud place in the deliberations of the Trade Union Congress and its activities are greatly controlled by the views of the members of this organisation.

The counsel given by our Union to the members of the assembly and the information supplied to them by us when the Railway question was mooted is of recent origin and every body knows how useful has been the information sent by us.

Our continued agitation for the Trade Union legislation has produced two Government bills and we have yet to use their passing with suitable amendments into law.

The organisation of the D. B. Fund is indeed a proud achievement and those who doubt themselves should feel happy at the results obtained during last year regarding this organisation though there were temporary storms which threatened to drive the ship directly against the rocks.

Nor is this all, the Journal, the official organisation of the B. N. Ry. Union in spite of difficulties over which sometimes we have no control, has made a mark and every officer reads the Journal to see what

the employee has been thinking of his administration. Many an evil has been righted by this organ of the Union.

We need not repeat what the Union has done in the matter of the individual cases, and the work done in this respect by the central Committee, Santragachi and Khargpur Union should be patent to the employees the good that is being done for them by our Labour Union.

There is nothing for which either the union or its executive need feel a shamed off. We only fervently hope that if the doubters in the utility of our organisation as well as those friends who have not much love for the work realize that the time has come when they should all work and unite for the common good we need hardly assure the reader that our work is half done and success is imminent. Then alone we will command the full confidence of the employer and the employee. Till then every one who has the interest of the Union at heart should not rest but continue to work. We do sincerely hope that all workers would really round the banner of the Union and justify their existence.

Notes taken on the occasion of the fourth Annual General Meeting of the B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union, Khargpur held in the Indian Institute on the 21st June 1925.

THE President Mr. V. V. Giri, in his opening remarks said, "Gentlemen and Members of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union, it is my sad and profound, but none the less a very sacred duty I have to perform this evening by placing before you our sense of deep and profound sorrow at the demise of one of the greatest sons of India, Deshbandhu C. R. Das. Deshbandhu Das is a Prince among men. With him self-sacrifice for his Country is a part of his being. With him Patriotism is not a virtue, but a necessity. With him the spirit of Charity for his fellow beings, for the poor and especially, the younger population viz. the student population of India is proverbial. Such a man has been taken away by the command of providence and we are here to-day under the shadow of a great calamity. The best way to commemorate the memory of Deshbandhu C. R. Das is not only by speaking about him, but by following that noble example of love that he bore towards his fellow Brothers and his countrymen. Many words are not necessary to commend the greatness of that great patriot. I would only read the resolution that has been put forth in the agenda by the Central Executive

Committee, and I want you after I read the resolution, to stand and pass it in profound silence".

"That this meeting of B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union places on record the profound sorrow at the sudden and untimely death of Deshbandhu C. R. Das whose untold services rendered for the freedom of his Motherland and for the cause of Indian Labour and the sympathy in particular for this Union, has endeared him to all the Members of the Union".

Amidst a hushed silence, the audience, as one man, rose and passed the resolution in deep and heartfelt silence.

"Gentlemen, it is now my proud privilege and honour, once again this year to welcome you to the Fourth Annual Meeting of the B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union, on behalf of the Central Executive Committee, and on behalf of myself I tender the heartfelt thanks of this Committee to the responsible officers of the administration and to the Leaders of Labour in this Country who have come here at a good deal of inconvenience and trouble to themselves, giving up perhaps

more important engagements, and graced this occasion with their presence. The fact that the responsible officers of the Administration are present here with us this evening proves conclusively the fact that the officers of the Administration want to sympathise with the aspirations of the employees of the B. N. Railway and that they try to meet the men half-way. We, on behalf of the Indian Labour Union, assure the Administration of our cordiality towards them and we assure them that in our dealings we shall in a constitutional manner put forth fearlessly, without expecting any favour from the Administration, the case that we have to put on the side of the employees. The fact that public in this Country have been taking some interest in the Labour Movement especially, for the Labour on this railways, shows that they are alive to the sense of responsibility towards the Labour cause.

It is my pleasant duty in the first instance to thank the Administration for recently granting 14 holidays in a year with pay to the workmen of B. N. Railway daily rated staff. Of course, we do maintain that the concession given is inadequate and unsatisfactory, and I can assure Mr. Cole and Mr. Eaglesome that we would press for more and more concessions. It is said amongst us that even a mother would not give milk to her child unless the child cries for it. So also, the employees of the B. N. Railway, as represented by this

Union, continually, strenuously and persistently, would put forward before the Administration the demands in no unequivocal terms. We say that we are not for direct action and that we are for constitutional representation and settlement by means of arbitrations of dispute. However, I will not be doing justice either to myself or to the members of the Union, or to the employees of the B. N. Railway, if I do not mention the fact before all concerned that the attitude of some of the officers of the Administration is not satisfactory. We do hope, and we sincerely hope that they would show the sympathetic attention due to the office-bearers of the Union in the way the men representing the employees are entitled. It has been stated by no less a person than Sir George Godfrey for whom the Union has profound respect, and whose retirement the Union regrets, that the organisation of the B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union for which he had done a lot was splendid. He also stated that if any trouble were to arise either in Nagpur or in some other place, he would like to rely on a responsible body like a representative Union rather than a Mass of disorganised employees (who represented nobody but themselves). In this connection, I will be failing in my duty if I do not mention the fact that in spite of the fact that the Union is recognised by the Administration, it has not been giving the facilities that the Union deserves in the matter of organisation

The withdrawal of the very few card passes given to the Branches has greatly handicapped the real work of the Union. Unless a Railway Union like this is organised on a sound and substantial basis as I have stated before, it would be dangerous both to the employer and to the employee. I therefore again from this platform repeat that the Administration should see their way to the granting of more passes.

Another fact that I have to mention before you is that the recognition rules are not very satisfactory and we are now trying to represent the matter to the Administration that some more tried outsiders should be allowed to guide the Union. Such workers as have been tried already should be given an opportunity for being Vice Presidents of the Branches for some more time. We can assure the Administration in this matter that the outsiders should only help the Union to work on a constitutional basis.

I must also mention another fact, that is attracting the serious attention of the Labour on the B. N. Railway. Unfortunately the existence of the Workshop Committee which was perhaps intended by the organisers to be a safety valve for preserving peace has become, whatever the case may be, a source of menace to the employees. It has been admitted on all hands that was not at all popular. To this I invite the attention Mr. Cole for whom I have the greatest respect, and who, I

believe, will consider the matter in conjunction with the representatives of the Union and see that a settlement, equitable and liked by the employees, is arrived at in the matter.

I do not want to say much about this. We have also grievances such as the want of casual leave for employees. We have represented insistently in and out of season the necessity thereof, and we have been asked, in the first instance, to give information as to which of the Railways have been granting such concessions and so on. The Administration replied that they were considering the matter and we now believe that the matter is before the Railway Board. If the rumour is true that the privilege leave granted to the employees would be divided into 15 days' casual leave and 15 days' privilege leave, it would amount to giving a man two pieces of loaf when he asked for two loaves. I hope that such a course will not be adopted and I am sure that we will have the benefit of having casual leave in addition to the privilege leave which we are now enjoying.

Of course, we have grievances and very serious grievances, viz. about the sanitation, & the housing problem in some of these Railway colonies and we respectfully urge the Administration to look into the matter along with the Indian representatives and see that better accommodation is provided to the employees.

I do not want to take up the time of this House any more as I expect your responsible officers of the administration and other Labour Leaders will give us the benefit of their advice to you.

I now request the General Secretary to read the Annual Report for the year.

Before reading the Annual Report, the General Secretary read several letters he received from officers and Gentlemen who were unable to attend the meeting. Some of the important personages that wrote were Messrs C. Carroll Ag. Agent A. B. George, C. Kildale, Babu Hiyush Kanti Ghosh of A. B. Patrika Mr. N. C. Sen Bar-at-law, M. L. C. and others.

Then the Annual Report for the year 1924-25 was read and was adopted unanimously.

Mr. A. Eaglesome, as he had to leave the meeting said, "Gentlemen, I am in a hurry. I have to catch the Madras Mail and go to Puri. I wish every success to the Union and hope the cordial relations between the officers and the Union will continue. It is to let you know of this sentiment that I have come down here.

The President rose and said, "I have now great pleasure in requesting our Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr. Cole, to give us some advice.

Then Mr. Cole began, "Gentlemen and Members of the B. N. Railway Indian Labour Union! The Agent has asked Mr. Eaglesome and myself to attend this meeting to-day and to tell you on his behalf that he is very sorry that he is unable to be present at the meeting this evening as he has to be present at a very important meeting in Calcutta. I am personally very sorry that he was not able to be present on this occasion, so that he could have addressed you himself with greater authority.

It was with a great purpose that Sir George Godfrey spoke at this meeting last year and I am able to assure your President on behalf of the present Administration that the sympathetic attitude maintained by Sir George remains the same under the present Agent. Mr. Giri in his address mentions a number of grievances some of which are distinctly controversial. There are however one or two points to which I would like to refer.

Mr. Giri referred to the sympathy of the officers in the Administration but regretted that that attitude was not taken by all officers. I would venture to say on behalf of some of us that Mr. Giri might reserve some sympathy for people fitted for a temperate climate that have had to spend many years in a hot climate. It is possible sometimes that some of us may under these conditions develop a troublesome liver.

I can assure you however that it is not the wish of any officer under this Administration, at any time, to be either partial or unjust but in individual cases, you know as well as I do, it is often extraordinarily difficult in this Country to judge exactly what is just and what is unjust or to obtain the real truth of any situation: but we do our best.

In the matter of the granting of 14 holidays on full pay to workshop staff we are indebted to the Managing Director and I trust that the Union will not jeopardise its reputation for good sense by asking too much. If this grant of 14 paid holidays is not enough, I very much question how much would be. If we pile on holidays more and more, the logical conclusion would be ultimately to ask for 365 days' leave on full pay in an ordinary year and 366 days in leap year. We must however keep the Railway running. That is a point that the running men will never lose sight of, and the workshop men also must see that the real business of the Railway is to transport people and to serve the commerce of this Country and that this must go on and I ask you all not to forget that.

It is the money thus earned by the Railway that pays you and me and all of us. The money that is paid to us has got to be earned by what this Railway carries.

Mr. Giri referred to the Recognition Rules and in particular to the matter of

choosing persons from outside on the Committee as active officers of the Union. I must tell you that this is not a matter which exclusively affects the Bengal Nagpur Railway, but it is a matter of policy affecting the whole of India and all the Railway Unions in particular. The attitude of the Government towards this question was in the beginning that in the then unorganised condition of Indian Labour, it was reasonable to permit, for a certain limited period, that is until Labour became properly organised, well-educated and broad minded gentlemen from outside non-railway men, to assist in the organisation and even in the direction of the Unions.

I may say that the period of probation should by now have been over, but the rate of development has been disappointingly slow.

At the present time, we cannot always or in every place rely upon securing broad and open-minded gentlemen who are bent purely upon bringing about a better understanding between the workmen and the employers.

And I may add that if you look through the history of Indian Labour Unions, you will note for yourselves that it has not been every Railway Union that has been so fortunate as the Bengal Nagpur Railway Union in the non-Railway men who have volunteered to Assist them

I could tell you of affairs on other Railways which would assist you to understand better why we object, as a principle, to outsiders coming in and interfering with Railways, i.e., between the Railway employees, Drivers, Guards, Shunters, and other grades and their officers. The Railway Administrations too are striving for the same object and it should no longer be necessary for outsiders to come in. We are however very fortunate here in having for the President of the Union, a man like Mr. Giri who is extraordinarily well educated and I can assure you that I certainly shall not object to Mr. Giri helping you with wise advice, which he is well capable of giving, to avoid troubles and mis-understandings.

I have one word to say about the difficulties which confront the Presidents of many, perhaps all Indian Labour Unions. It is this. It used, I believe, to occur in England when Unions were young. I hope it will not long be so in this Country. There are a vast number of members in a Union who think that unless a great commotion is going on and resolutions are being passed, and letters being written to the authorities, the Union is not a success and that the President of the Union is not doing his duty. I must tell you that it is an entirely wrong impression. Much of the very best work which the Union Committee does is by personal discussion with the officers and

more real work is done in this way than by passing resolutions on subjects which the Mass of the members of the Union are often not at all well informed upon.

Members of the Indian Labour Union, I give you my own opinion on this matter, which is known; and it is I believe scarcely possible to disagree with it. I would ask you to press the members of your Committee and settle as much as you can through personal discussion rather than to pass resolution on subjects which do not concern this Railway and upon which you are not always in possession of the facts.

I would like to mention that in your last meeting you passed a resolution on the subject of the strike on the North western Railway. That strike has nothing to do with us. The information available here was defective and inaccurate. That was therefore not a subject that the B. N. Railway Union could discuss usefully.

Your President has on the other hand put up a real grievance that is housing. What I am pleased to see taken up is a complaint of that sort, which is perfectly legitimate. The quarters referred to are of a very old type and we must admit are far from pleasant. We trust that it will be possible to improve matters. We welcome fair and legitimate representations such as this, and I hope we may be able to do something effective to help those concerned.

It is not possible for the officers of the Railway to know everything or what everybody is doing. It is not possible to know everybody's difficulties. If therefore you make representations on these real complaints, the Union is really doing useful work, and helping to preserve harmonious relations between the officers and the workmen.

Last year, Sir, George Godfrey made mention of a Home for Indian apprentices. I am very sorry that I cannot report better progress with this hostel, which I may add is of importance in connection with a comprehensive scheme of course for apprentices that is before the Agent at the present time and has received his general approval. I have instructions to proceed with the scheme in detail. It is a big scheme but I hope by next year that it will be possible to give you more information and to carry this matter a step further.

I thank you very much on behalf of the Agent and officers for your invitation to be present here to-night and trust, as Mr. Eaglesome has already said, that the good relations that at present exist between the Union and the officers of this Railway will continue in the future.

Mr. Oldfield assured the President that he endorses every word that Mr. Cole has said.

The President in thanking Mr. Cole, said "Gentlemen on behalf of this committee, I once more thank Mr. Cole and Mr. Eaglesome for the good advice they have given us, especially Mr. Cole for the lengthy and interesting speech he has made. Of course we differ with him in some matters that he has stated, but we must certainly appreciate the sweet reasonableness with which he has put the point of view of the Administration before us. I thank them very heartily for the kindness which has prompted them come over here.

Mr. Venkataraju Naidu, Branch Secretary, Khargpur explained Mr. Cole's speech to the public in Hindi. He also discussed the pros and cons of having personal discussions in all cases with the officers and respectfully differed with some of the points raised by Mr. Cole so ably. He expatiated upon what the Union has been doing for the members and told the audience that it was only the spending of about fifteen thousand rupees together with the indomitable and sincere zeal of the Union workers courting noble risks that the little bit of concessions which they are now enjoying such as leave with pay to workers etc. has been earned.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Our Agent. —

Our thanks are due to Sir George Godfrey, Agent, B. N. Ry., who is now on leave preparatory to retirement for the help he has rendered to the B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union both in its inauguration and development. Sir George took keen interest in the organisation of the Union and his advice greatly contributed to its growth on sound and progressive lines. The Union will ever remain grateful to him for all the sympathy and support received from him.

Our acting Agent —

We are also glad to note the assurance given by our present acting Agent, Mr. C. Carrot, to continue the policy of Sir George Godfrey in supporting the Union and its aspirations for better conditions of service. We are sure this assurance will be greatly appreciated by the employees of the railway.

Chief Mechanical Engineer's advice —

We thankfully welcome the advice given by Mr. H. L. Cole, Chief Mechanical Engineer, to the Union at its 4th Annual meeting held in the Khargpur Indian Insti-

tute on 21-6-25. We assure him that the employees are quite willing to follow his advice especially in respect of holding officers in the Union and running it independently without the assistance of outsiders (non-employees). But what embarrasses them is to think that some officers do not seem to recognise his sound advice. In spite of the open declaration of the administration of its sympathy for the Union and of its stipulations under the terms of recognition accorded to the Union that the employees should manage the affairs of the Union without the assistance of outside gentlemen *except in the Central Executive*, it is to be deplored that officers of the railway overlook this policy and discourage the staff from taking any active part. What they generally do is, when they hear or find their subordinates taking interest in the Union, to send for them and tell them that their work is not satisfactory. If the employees do not take heed of this subtle warning the reader could imagine what their fate would be. Some of the officers very skilfully add in their admonitions that while they do not object to the participation of the employees in the Union they do not wish to see that their work is interfered with.

Now let us examine what these admonitions imply. It goes without telling that employees should not neglect their

duties or company's work. If the participation of employees in the Union work could mean that their legitimate duties are neglected, the natural Corollary would be that all high placed officers who take active part in an institution like the Calcutta Royal Turf Club and for the matter of that even in a Station Committee or School Committee stand the danger of neglecting their work.

After finishing the day's work one pursues one's own hobby, be it sport, study, photography or gardening. The hobby of an enthusiast in Trade Unionism is the organisation or development of his own Union. As soon as his day's work is over or the job for which he is deputed is completed, he naturally turns his attention to the Union. During his working he thinks of nothing but his work and during his legitimate hours of rest he thinks of nothing but the Union which is his only hobby. This is how most of the employees who are in the executive of the Union are conducting themselves. Otherwise it would not have made the progress it has.

An enthusiast in the union has interest in his own progress. Therefore, as a rule he takes much better interest in his work than one who has no interest in his progress and in the Union. One of the chief objects in Trade Unionism is to impress upon the worker that his progress depends on cultivation of dexterity, skill, and sincerity in his work. A trade Unionist always

keeps this object in view and applies himself accordingly.

Apart from these principles every employee holding some position in the Union is aware at least from the existing conditions that he is spotted and blacklisted. He knows that his work is watched very carefully and the moment he neglects his work, he will lead himself for dismissal. Thus he always remains on the guard and is very mindful about his work. Moreover as an officer of the Union he has to lead the men and command their respect. Unless he is honest in his work and in his dealings to the employer and employee he could not maintain his position and continue as the accredited leader of thousands of men.

From the foregoing facts it should be clear that there is no need what soever for the officers to warn their employees connected with the Union. We draw the attention of the administration especially the heads of departments to see in order to give scope to the employees to abide by the policy laid down in the recognition terms of the Union, that the officers do not interfere with their staff. If this is not possible we suggest that outsiders should be freely allowed to work in the Union even the branches. We respectfully invite the attention of Mr. Cole to this problem.

Neither the employees nor employers are anxious for the presence of non-employees in these branch Unions that

conditions existing as they are, they find the presence necessary till the necessities on the part of the employees are his taking part in the Union affairs & the unnatural suspicions on the part of employer disappear.

We are extremely glad to be assured by Mr. Fisher of the Traffic section Khargpore that hereafter there will not arise any occasion for complaint from the Union that he or anyone of the Traffic staff would interfere with either the enrollment or organisation of the Union work. We do acknowledge our appreciation for this as there is nothing like frankness in altering our constitution and way of thinking according to the changed circumstance. We are particularly pleased to hear from Mr. Ubsdell that he would see that unnecessary influences will not be brought to bear upon employees from becoming members of the Union. We hope other district officers and assistant officers and heads of section will kindly note.

We are glad to note that the STATESMAN in its editorial columns appreciated our work regarding the organisation of our Union. We must frankly state we would have grown nervous if the complement came from only one side we are glad to be assured by the progressive Indian section of the press also that they take the same view about the matter. Here we must acknowledge our grateful thanks to the English as well as the Indian press for that assistance they have been giving us in publishing matters regarding our Labour Union and thus encouraging the healthy growth of these organisations.

We are glad to note that a sub-committee of our Union has been formed at Tatanagar. We appreciate the interest evinced by the employees at Tatanagar. We want every big station on the B. N. Ry. to have their own sub-committees so that it will be easy for central to be in communication with all matters affecting their interests. So we hope all big stations on the Railway will copy their example.

All-India Trade Union Congress Executive Council Minutes of the Nagpur Meeting.

An Advanced meeting of the Executive Council of the All-India Trade Union Congress was held at Nagpur, C.P. on Saturday and Sunday, the 6th and 7th June, 1925. Mr. C. F. Andrews, Chairman of the Congress, presided. The meeting was attended by 27 members of the Executive Council representing 24 labour

and trade unions in different parts of the country. Dr. S. K. Datta, M. L. A., and Dr. Rajan Kant Das of South India, were also present. After the business of the last meeting of the Executive Council were signed by the President, the following resolutions were adopted:—

- (1) Resolved that the provisional decisions of the meeting of the Executive Council held in Bombay on 11th April 1925, be confirmed
- 2 Resolved that the General Secretaries' report of the work done by them during the quarter ending 31st May 1925, be adopted
- (3) Resolved that the Bombay Provincial Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress be recognised and its Rules approved
- 4) Resolved that the Bengal Provincial Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress be recognised and its Rules approved
- (5) a) Resolved that a Committee consisting of 1) Dr S. K. Datta M. L. A., 2) Mr. Mukund Lall Sircar, (3) Mr. G. Sethi & (4) Mr. Ramalingam, be appointed for revising the constitution of the All-India Trade Union Congress and that the Assistant Secretary be required to draw a list of defects in the present constitution and send them to the different affiliated unions and request them to send any further suggestions in connection with the same
- (b) Resolved further that the President and the Secretaries be ex-officio members of the Committee and that the following be corresponding members:—(1) Mr. S. H. Jhabwalla (for Bombay); (2) Mr. R. S. Ruikar (for C. P. & Berar); (3) Mr. E. Kirk (for Southern India), and (4) Mr. D. F. Sinha, M. L. A. for Bihar & Orissa)

The President gave an interim interpretation on Articles 4 of the Congress constitution that no branch union can be affiliated to the All-India Trade Union Congress as a separate Union

- (6) Resolved that Mr. C. F. Andrews, as President on the Trade Union Congress, be requested to proceed, as soon as possible, to the Punjab in order to make enquiries of the spot concerning the present strike on the N. W. Railway and that he be empowered to take any steps he may think best towards its conciliation
- (7) Resolved that the Executive Council of the All-India Trade Union Congress, while refraining on account of imperfect and conflicting information from expressing any opinion on the causes which have led to the present strike on the N. W. Railway, desires to express its deepest sympathy with the sufferings of the poor people who have become involved and urges upon the public the need of opening a fund for the support of the families that are enduring the greatest hardship and distress
- (8) Resolved that Messrs. C. F. Andrews and R. R. Bakhale, as President and Assistant Secretary respectively of the T. U. Congress, be authorised to draft a memorandum or note to be forwarded to the Government of India and the Press, expressing regret of the Executive Council for the refusal by the Railway Board of the offer of co-operation made by the Assistant Secretary on behalf of the Council, for the settlement of the N. W.

more important engagements, and graced this occasion with their presence. The fact that the responsible officers of the Administration are present here with us this evening proves conclusively the fact that the officers of the Administration want to sympathise with the aspirations of the employees of the B. N. Railway and that they try to meet the men half-way. We, on behalf of the Indian Labour Union, assure the Administration of our cordiality towards them and we assure them that in our dealings we shall in a constitutional manner put forth fearlessly, without expecting any favour from the Administration, the case that we have to put on the side of the employees. The fact that public in this Country have been taking some interest in the Labour Movement especially, for the Labour on this railways, shows that they are alive to the sense of responsibility towards the Labour cause.

It is my pleasant duty in the first instance to thank the Administration for recently granting 14 holidays in a year with pay to the workmen of B. N. Railway daily rated staff. Of course, we do maintain that the concession given is inadequate and unsatisfactory, and I can assure Mr. Cole and Mr. Eaglesome that we would press for more and more concessions. It is said amongst us that even a mother would not give milk to her child unless the child cries for it. So also, the employees of the B. N. Railway, as represented by this

Union, continually, strenuously and persistently, would put forward before the Administration the demands in no unequivocal terms. We say that we are not for direct action and that we are for constitutional representation and settlement by means of arbitrations of dispute. However, I will not be doing justice either to myself or to the members of the Union, or to the employees of the B. N. Railway, if I do not mention the fact before all concerned that the attitude of some of the officers of the Administration is not satisfactory. We do hope, and we sincerely hope that they would show the sympathetic attention due to the office-bearers of the Union in the way the men representing the employees are entitled. It has been stated by no less a person than Sir George Godfrey for whom the Union has profound respect, and whose retirement the Union regrets, that the organisation of the B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union for which he had done a lot was splendid. He also stated that if any trouble were to arise either in Nagpur or in some other place, he would like to rely on a responsible body like a representative Union rather than a Mass of disorganised employees (who represented nobody but themselves). In this connection, I will be failing in my duty if I do not mention the fact that in spite of the fact that the Union is recognised by the Administration, it has not been giving the facilities that the Union deserves in the matter of organisation

Central Executive Council Mr. P. Ramachandra Rao, Secretary, Central Executive Council, Shriji Mukund Lall Sircar, General Secretary, All India Railway men's Unions Federation, Chairman Reception Committee Mr. B. Dandapany, President Khilafat Committee, Maulana Munir Khan, President Andhra Youngmen's Association Mr. Ch. Jogarao, President Maharatta Mitra Samaj Mr. P. S. Lukhay, President Bengali Association Mr. R. K. Nath, President Ahdhi Natya Samaj Mr. Sidheswar Mukherji, Secretary Oriya Samaj Mr. K. C. Mahapatra, and representatives of several other Associations such as Gurudwara Committee, Deccani, Anjuman, Shistha Karan Samaj, Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj, Railway Market Merchants Association and others were also present on the platform to accord reception to Mahatma Gandhi.

The presence of the different Associations, volunteers having their different badges and flags, led by Captain of volunteers Mr. Chuni Lal Molerjee made the occasion quite unique. The volunteer corps that was present on the platform was of the B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union Khargpur Branch welcomed Mahatma Gandhi, with Union flag on the left and Swaraj flag on the right. From the Station up to the Station Gate Deccani Anjuman and Khilafat volunteers formed the line and from the Station Gate to the Indian Institute Gate, volunteers of the Andhra Youngmen's Association, Oriya Samaj and

Shistha Karan Samaj formed a line, and at the Indian Institute where Ladies meeting was arranged, student volunteers and second batch of the B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union volunteers guarded the gates. About 5,000 people assembled at the Station and it was with difficulty that Mahatmaji could be brought out, every one being eager to have a glimpse of that patriot Saint.

Mahatmaji, after arrival, was garlanded and taken to the motor. Thereupon the procession started reaching the Institute at about 6 p. m.

After reaching the Institute, Mahatmaji with other followers, was provided with light refreshments by Messrs Pujara, Sonoo Lal U. Pershad who were all in attendance at the time and then taken to the main Hall of the Indian Institute where a good gathering of ladies was awaiting. Mahatmaji first inspected Charka demonstration of the ladies, and Khargpur Reception Committee presented Rupees ten through Mahatmaji to Mrs. D. V. Kale for the fine yarn she had produced before the show. Then Srimati Binapani Devi, daughter of Mr. S. M. Acharji sung a national song which was very much appreciated. After this, Srimati C. H. Sheshabaiammah (Mrs. C. H. Chandra-moleswar Rao), Secretary Andra Mahila Samaj Khargpur, read the address of welcome in Telugu and presented the same to Mahatma Gandhi. Then Mahatma Gandhi blessed the ladies, advising them

to wear Khaddar and work on Charka and to subscribe to Desh-Bandhu Memorial Fund. About rupees 250 and some jewels were collected on the spot. The meeting terminated at about 6.45 P. M. Then Mahatmaji motored to mass meeting, which was arranged at the Indian Recreation ground where 20,000 people were present, Mr. Rajendra Narayan Santra Assistant Secretary, Khargpur Branch who was in charge of the Pandal and mass meeting, received Mahatmaji on his arrival to the meeting. Near the Dias, there were many Anglo Indians and Europeans present to hear Mahatmaji. At the back of the Dias Charka demonstration was arranged and Babu B. N. Sircar led the demonstration very efficiently himself working on his Charka during the whole time. On the east side of the Dias, a batch of volunteers led by Mr. Madhusudan Gupta were ready and on arrival of Mahatma Gandhi sung a song of welcome and then a national song. Shriji B. Dandapany Chairman Reception Committee read the welcome address on behalf of the Khargpur public and presented to Mahatmaji which was printed beautifully on Khaddar cloth. Mahatmaji then addressed the meeting on the following subjects:—Charka and Khaddar demonstration, untouchability, Hindu Moslem Unity (deplored at the incidents of Hindu Muslim riots at Kadderpore on the Bakrid day, and he said that the blame was entirely on the side of the Hindus. He

very eloquently pleaded for Hindu-Moslem Unity and expected the Hindus not to interfere with the observance of the religious rites by the Mussalmans. He also requested the latter not to wound the feelings of their Hindu brethren by doing anything and further spoke on the vices of the labourers such as:—drinking, gambling, debauchery etc. advising them to abstain from such habits, he outlined the method as to how to conduct the Labour Union, citing example of Mill Association, Ahmedabad, and advised the labourers to join the Labour Union wholesale, and to support the organisation by increasing the Funds and introducing Co-operative Societies, banks, and other independent businesses by which dismissed hands and victimised hands might be helped. Further he said that if there are sufficient Funds at the disposal of the Labour Union derived from the above mentioned sources, many more functions of welfare work in the interests of the labourers such as:—conducting night Schools, opening medical depots, libraries etc. be taken in hand.

At about 8 P. M. the meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to Mahatma Gandhi and his followers. Mahatmaji appealed at the meeting to subscribe to Deshbandhu Memorial Fund and on the spot about rupees 120 was collected, with a promise that they will remit directly further donations. It is to be mentioned

for the information of the public that donations were raised previous to this by the Khargpur Reception Committee for Deshabandhu Memorial Fund with the result that a sum of Rupees 500 was handed over to Mahatma Gandhi at Calcutta through Mr. W. V. R. Naidu, on the first of July 1925. Including the said amount, Khargpur contributed Rupees 1000/ up to 4th July 1925. About 35 volunteers led by the Secretary, B. N. Ry. Indian Labour Union Khargpur Branch attended the Shradha ceremony of Deshbandhu C. R. Das on the 1st July 1925 and helped in the processions on the day and the mass meeting which was held at the Maidan on

the same evening. About 25 volunteers of the Union Khargpur Branch again waited on Mahatma Gandhi at the Railway Station on the evening of 5th July 1925 and seen Mahatmaji off to Midnapur by local Train comfortably. Light refreshments were served at the Station on the occasion to the followers of Mahatma Gandhi. About 25 volunteers led by the Secretary Khargpur Branch joined the reception accorded by the District people of Midnapur at Midnapur on the 7th July 1925.

B. Dandapany,

CHAIRMAN.

Reception Committee.

Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union Death Benefit Fund.

Notice No. 352 of Gazette No. 25, dated 13th July 1925

— 10:—

Owing to the death of Babu Monindra Nath Banerjee, aged 25 Relieving Assistant Station Master, Bilaspur, Registered No A/119, a call of Rs. 2 will be made from the remaining members of the "A" class registered up to 5th March, 1925, through the Salary Bill of July 1925.

In the event of death of a member of the Fund, nominees and Branches concerned are requested to forward to the office of the Fund Death Certificates and other necessary documents *with the least possible delay* in order to enable the Executive Committee to pay up Benefit Money early.

The Executive Committee of the Death Benefit Fund have much pleasure in announcing that at present they are in a position to pay *the maximum benefit of Rs. 2000 in the 'A' Class* to the nominee of a deceased member. The success is due to the sympathetic co-operation of the Railway Authorities towards its healthy growth.

Members are hereby reminded to intimate their change of address in the event of transfer from one District to another, to the Head Quarters of the Fund at 2, Ashu Babu Lane, Kidderpore, Calcutta. Much difficulty is being experienced for this not being done as soon as they are transferred.

Members whose wages are drawn on Labour Pay Sheets, are requested to remit their dues whenever notified in the B. N. Railway Gazette to the address given above either in person or by M. O. If necessary due intimation will also be sent to the members concerned.

The Executive Committee of the Death Benefit Fund Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union, Calcutta, have much pleasure to announce the marvellous success the Fund has attained within the short space of time of 16 months only. Through many a vicissitude at the prime of its life and over riding many a retarding force to the tide of its progress the Fund is now growing lustily.

The financial position of the Fund at the present moment is a very sound one and the Executive Committee are in a position to pay the maximum benefit of Rs. 2,000 in A. Class and Rs. 425 in B. Class to the destitute family of a deceased member of the Fund at a time when they require pecuniary help most in a far-off place being left entirely unlooked and uncared for by the irony of Fate and at the cruel hands of Destiny. This decent amount will, no doubt, relieve a distressed family in time of actual need of a member of this Labour Union. It is also necessary to mention here that a member of the Union on payment of Rs. 2 in A. Class and Rs. 1 in B. Class besides the usual Admission Fees and Annual subscriptions, in the event of the death of its member, is entitled to the sum mentioned above. It is no exaggeration, but on the other hand a matter of glory and pride, to say that the success of this Fund is unique in the annals of Labour Unions in India. This is entirely due to the untiring energy and selfless work of the promoters of the Union and the Executive Committee of the Fund itself, and specially of Mr. N. C. Sen, Mr. V. V. Giri, Mr. M. Mukherjee, Prof. W. V. V. B. Rammalingam and other Labour leaders of the B. N. Railway Indian Labour Union. In this connection the name of Sir George Godfrey, Kt. the retiring Agent of the Bengal Nagpur Railway, deserves special mention. As Agent he contributed much towards its success in many ways

and without his sympathetic Co operation, it would not have seen the light of the day.

As a bright instance of the success, the case of one poor employee, named Ganpat Mulchand, aged 32 of Bilaspur Railway Station, may be cited here. This poor man serving the Railway for more than a decade and drawing a very meagre salary, joined the Fund at the very start in 1924 the year of its inauguration and after payment of a very small amount i. e., Rs. 14 only (including Admission Fee, Annual Subscriptions) in about 15 months, he breathed his last at Raipur in the Central Provinces on the 19th March, 1925 leaving behind him a host of family including an old father, old mother (who lost two other major sons also within a very short time), one widow, three minor sons, two minor daughters (age varying from 8 years to 1 year) and one widow

sister to starve and mourn his loss. Just on receiving the information of his demise, the Executive Committee of the Fund authorized the General Secretary to make an advance payment of Rs. 500 equivalent to about one-third of the benefit money payable, to the distressed family at whose face starvation stared. The General Secretary at once proceeded to Raipur in the Central Provinces and helped them with the money on the 11th instant. Due to payment in the hour of real need and distress, the bereaved family embraced the Fund and the Union as true friends of labour and the poor.

It is also gratifying to record here that enthusiasm rose to such a high pitch that many Railway employees of the place who were so long silent on-lookers of the affairs joined the Union and the Fund then and there.

2 Ashu Babu Lane,
Kidderpur, Calcutta,
22nd June 1925.

J. L. GANGULY,
General Secretary,
Death Benefit Fund.

REPRESENTATION GAZETTE.

No. 1 of 1925-26

Babu G. D. Dubey, A. S. M., of Dugda station was served with a month's notice in connection with Dugda Station Master's X Z. C. wire No. M/16 of 7-3-25 regarding an averted collision.

The case was represented to the Supdt. General by the Central office of the Union on 5-7-25 & that officer stated vide his letter No. E 19211/63 dated the 13th July 1925

Extract from B. N. Ry. Gazette No. 28 of 1925
dated 17th July 1925

169 Travelling on foot boards and underframes
of Carriages.

A complaint has recently been made in the Public Press of a Travelling Ticket Inspector or Checker travelling on the foot Board of a train from one carriage to another while the train was in motion. This practice besides being dangerous to the delinquent himself is objectionable from the Passengers point of view for reasons which are obvious.

that the punishment inflicted on the A. S. M. has been mitigated and instead of discharging him from the service he has been transferred to Nagpur District on a reduction in pay from Rs. 44/- to Rs. 40/- per mensem for a period of 12 months.

Our thanks are due to the Superintendent General for the justice done.

2. An offence of this nature in future will necessitate the termination of service of the culprit.

3. The Office-in-charge will see that this order has been noted by all Travelling Ticket Inspectors and Travelling Checkers.

(Chief Auditor's No. B. B. T. 36:67 dated 30th June 1925.

AGENT CANNOT RE-OPEN.

—:0:—

Babu P. Ramamoorthy, Shunting Master, Waltair was summarily dismissed for having been concerned in the irregular despatch of coal from Waltair.

The whole of the trouble arose out of the irregular system of work existing at Waltair.

The Railway cinder Contractor was officially being allowed certain privileges which were unauthorised under a strict application of the rules of the Company. He was always allowed to load his wagons at Loco siding without the knowledge of the Traffic Section.

The practice obtaining at Waltair had been that when the cinder Contractor's wagons were duly loaded and labelled, they were being brought into the Traffic Yard by the Shunting Engines and no further authority was ever demanded. It was this defect in the system of work that brought this illiterate Shunting Master into trouble now.

He spoke the truth when he admitted that he witnessed the two wagons in question being drawn out by the Shunting Engines from the Loco Yard on no further authority than the fact that they were the cinder Contractor's loads. He saw nothing wrong in it, as that was the long prevailing custom with the tacit approval of the station authorities.

It is impossible for a Shunting Master to detect that there was coal below the cinders in wagons apparently loaded with cinders and duly labelled for despatch. And in a case when some high placed officials of the station are involved naturally a custom would be allowed to obtain which would not leave room from an illiterate Shunting Master to suspect there was any fraud being practiced.

For reasons of ill health and domestic troubles he prayed for permission to retire and the sanction of such privilege leave as he was entitled to get. Instead of his prayer being granted he was informed that his resignation was accepted and a few days after, that he was dismissed with loss of Provident Fund bonus. Now imagine how hard this is on a loyal and faithful employee in his old age.

If he is at all guilty of any technical carelessness he is the victim of a system prevailing at Waltair, secondly that he had the least chance of detecting the fraud; thirdly that he spoke the truth at the time of the joint enquiry, fourthly that there is no evidence implied or expressed to doubt his bonafides in the matter; and lastly that a loyal and old servant deserves sympathetic consideration at the time of his retirement. The Agent was requested to be pleased to reconsider his case and

permit him to retire after granting him the privilege leave he is entitled to but he stated in his No 12925 of 6-6-25 that he is not prepared to re open the case.

Precis No. 3 of 1925-26

Babu M. N. Chary, A. S. M., Gopalapatnam was reduced by Rs 4/- a month for 12 months due to an averted collision.

His periodical increment fell due on 1st February 1925 but it was not granted by the Supdt. General, who was however willing to reconsider the matter again on 1-8-25.

The case was represented to the Supdt General by the Central Office of the Union

with the result that he was pleased to increase the A. S. M.'s salary from Rs. 63/- to Rs 70/- P. M. the maximum pay of the post, with effect from the 1st April 1925 vide his letter No E 1/2727/54 dated the 20th July 1925.

The Union owes its thanks to the Superintendent General for the justice done in this case

Precis No. 2 for 1925—26

Khargpur Shunting Master Wazirkhan who is classed in the Traffic Circular No. 4 as Shunting Master No. 1 drawing Rs. 75/- P. M. was allotted quarter No. 3 which he occupied for about a year and a half and was subsequently allotted type No. 4. Shortly after he was served with a notice by the District Commercial Officer, Khargpur under pain of suspension, to vacate type No. 4 and shift to type No. 2. This order was communicated to him by the

Station Master, Khargpur, giving him 48 hours time within which he was required to comply with the orders or in default the order of suspension would be brought into force.

He approached the Union and the case was represented by the Central Office to the District Commercial Officer, Khargpur, and the Superintendent General, Kidderpur as a result of which the latter has issued

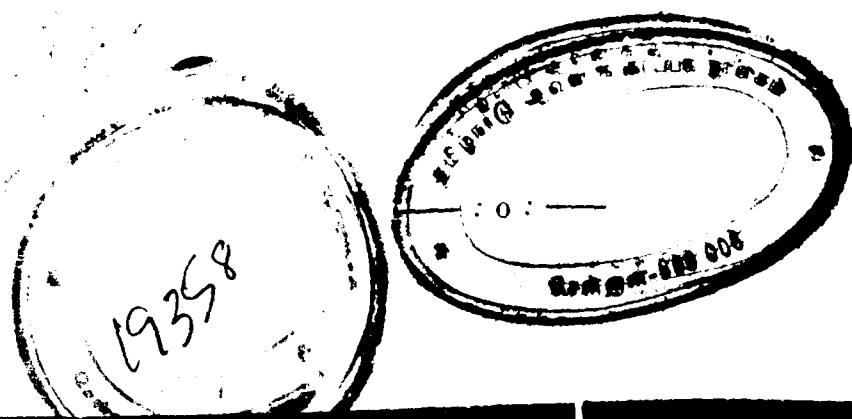
orders vide his letter No. C 1/1017 P/A dated 16-7-25 addressed to the District Commercial Officer, Khargpur, which is reproduced below.—

“The Commercial Traffic Manager has decided that Wazirkhan may remain in occupation of his present quarters on the Distinct understanding that should they be required at any time for any of the staff drawing the pay for which this type of quarters is allotted, he will have to move immediately”

Thanks of the Union are due to the authorities for the justice done in this case but it is still to be learnt whether a number of occupants drawing Rs. 60/- and above and even less who have at present been allotted quarters of type No. 4 will meet the same fate and those drawing pay less than this Shunting Master till come first under the list of eviction when required. This matter is receiving further attention of the Union

Late Mr. T. P. Ranganadham of Shalimar.

We have the painful duty of intimating to the members of our Union, the sad & very untimely demise of Mr. Ranganatham an active member of the executive Council of Shalimar Branch of the B. N. Ry. Labour Union & one of the most sincere workers for the labour cause. The loss of such good souls especially when these labour organisations are in an infant stage is irreparable. We ask our readers to emulate his good qualities & follow his example by working for the Union. We are glad to find he was a member of our D. B. Fund & we note he will be entitled to the maximum amount under the rules. Our Union respectfully convey the heart felt sympathy to his widow, daughter & relations in their great berevment,



The Union's Ten Commandments.

- 1 Pay your subscriptions regularly remembering that your duty to the Union daily begins and not ends with the payment.
- 2 Avoid becoming a defaulter.
- 3 In thought, word and deed be loyal to your Union and its office bearers. It is an evil bird that fouls its own nest.
- 4 Take every opportunity of enhancing the reputation of the Union and increasing its membership. Every non-member is an opponent to your Union, even though he bewails his hardship and hopes for your success.
- 5 Remember that you do not pay your Office-bearers, who work for you in their spare time therefore assist them in every way. Bear in mind that failure of one officer to discharge his duty does not justify neglect on your part.
- 6 Inform your Officers of any new rulings that come to your knowledge.
- 7 Perform your Official duties conscientiously and diligently; interest and pride in your work becomes the enthusiastic unionist.
- 8 Make the Union a real part of your life, talk of it, discuss it and if you have any suggestion for improving it do not fail to make them known.
- 9 Remember that you are legion in number and just conceive what your united efforts can achieve for you.
- 10 Remember that the loyalty of each Railwayman towards the cause of the Union means victory to all.

(Adopted from the South African Postal and Telegraph Herald)

Indian Labour Union Death Benefit Fund.

Join the Union Death Benefit Fund without any further delay. Apply to your Branch Secretary for necessary forms and information.

Truth about Death Benefit Fund.

The uncertainty of life is proverbially true. The strongest and healthiest man may be stricken down in a moment by accident or disease. This uncertainty of life should be a strong inducement to provide against evil day. To do this is a moral and social as well as religious duty.

—“Smiles.”

If a man does not provide for his children, if he does not provide for all who are dependent upon him and if he has not that vision of conditions to come and that care for the days that have not yet dawned then he has not opened his eyes to any adequate conception of human life.

—‘President Wilson’

Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union.

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