The Official Organ of The Victorian Locomotive Enginedrivers', Firemen's and Cleaners' Association.
Registered at G.P.O., Melbourne, for transmission by Post as a Newspaper.


THE LOCO THEATRE

Cleanliness Comfort Good Orchestra Perfect Pictures

Our Programs may be equalled but Cannot be Beaten

UNITED WE STAND DIVIDED WE FALL

UNIONISTS, you know what the above means. Whether you are in the Railway Service or any other calling, UNIONISM and all it stands for deserves your UNITED SUPPORT. If you do not give it, then you are helping the other side and all it stands for, i.e., Cheap Labour and Sweated Conditions. The Theatrical Employees' Association have fought hard in the Arbitration Court for what it has got, help them to keep it.

Never in the history of Australia has the necessity for Unity been greater. So pass the word to the boys and your families to

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PROGRAMME CHANGED TWICE WEEKLY

Victoria Street, NORTH MELBOURNE.
"They are slaves who will not dare
All wrongs to right,
All rights to share."

**MANAGERIAL NOTES.**

"The Footplate" is published monthly.

All Branch Secretaries and Executive officers are empowered to act as agents for this journal. Hand your contributions, name and address to them. We do the rest. All matter intended for publication must be sent to the Editor, Mr. A. S. Drakeford, and should be addressed to Editor, Footplate, 20 Victoria-street, North Melbourne.

Phone, Central 10230.

Correspondents must attach their names and addresses, not necessarily for publication. No matter of a personal character will be published.

**EDITORIAL.**

**FORMING AN AUSTRALIAN BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEMEN.**

The Adelaide Conference of representatives of the Division of the Federation definitely and unreservedly declared for the formation of a Brotherhood of Locomotive running men, and in deciding upon this step they have taken the course of action best calculated to promote the interests of all those engaged in the handling of locomotives and its power, whether it be derived from steam, electricity or internal combustion.

That all three sources will play an important part in railroad development in the years to come goes without saying, but development in the immediate future will no doubt progress largely on electrical lines.

That the Brotherhood will embrace within its ranks men engaged in the various States who are employed in similar occupations which are called by different names; that they receive rates of pay for similar work which vary in a large or small degree; that their working conditions are not quite the same in each State, and that each division has a differently constituted industrial tribunal for the purpose of adjusting wages and conditions present no real difficulties in the way of making the Brotherhood an assured success, and the "Footplate" believes that the decision will prove one from which the Enginemens of the present day will benefit largely, and for which the "Footplate" fraternity of the future will be grateful.

As the word Engineman bears a local application in some of the Divisions, it may be as well to state here that the word is intended to embrace all men engaged in any way related to train running operations from the head end, and will cover those who are eligible under the rules at present applicable to each Division of the Federation.

Carrying a resolution that a Brotherhood be formed, and putting that resolution into effect, however, is entirely different matters, although the first is the essential foundation, but the unanimity of ideas and purpose displayed at the Conference should be an augury of a bright future towards the attainment of which the Divisions themselves will lend hearty support and co-operation.

To attempt to make it appear that there are no difficulties in the way would be to mislead the members, but that they can be overcome by a spirit of resolution and co-operation is just as sure.

The Conference in Queensland in 1920 will have the task of placing the Brotherhood on the path of industrial progress from which, if launched with a definite plan and purpose as its machinery, and the spirit of good will and strength of the locomotive man of Australia as its power of propulsion, it need never look back.

For nineteen years past the Federation has attempted to solidify the rank and encourage a feeling of Brotherhood amongst men of our calling, and that it has succeeded in preserving an excellent understanding and feeling of good fellowship between the members of the various Divisions cannot be denied, and that it has lent moral assistance and advice of a valuable character in times of stress is frankly admitted, but that it had any real power or that it was likely to answer the needs of the present day or blaze a track into the wilderness of the all too uncertain industrial times that are to come, no member of the Divisions believed.

Enough, then, of what has passed. Let our intelligence and energies be devoted to what the future holds.

What has been in America and England by the Locomotive Brotherhood of Enginemens and Firemen and the Associated Society of Locomotive Enginemens should act as a beacon light to us here in Australia, which a few years ago it was our boast to say led the world in its industrial legislation and regulation. The status of locomotive running men in U.S.A., Canada, and Great Britain has been improved, and their material wants catered for by laying down and fighting for a national programme with the full force of the strength and spirit of the men organised, on a nation wide basis behind it, bringing results that are at once the envy and admiration of their fellow-unionists in other countries.

There is much yet for them to achieve in those countries, but it is safe to say that along with the first was the locomotive men were the first to secure the eight hours day and standardisation of wages, and afterwards joined in the struggle for the same thing for their fellow-unionists of the N.U.R. it is safe to say that their voice will be heard with some effect on the Board of Railway Management, on which those railways have representatives of their fellow-unionists on the management of the railroad.

In America and Canada equal representation has been in existence for some time past for the locomotive men on the Boards created by the respective Governments of those countries to handle their railways during the war, and those Boards remain in existence to-day.

The President of the Loco. Firemen and Enginemens, Mr. W. S. Carter, who has held that office since, was loaned to the U.S. Government, which appointed him Director of the Division of Labor on the railways under its control, and he was given a further period of leave of absence by the Triennial Convention of the Brotherhood, held at Denver in June last, to carry on in that position.

His term of office as the Government Director of the Division of Labor has proved beneficial alike to employees and the Government, as has been shown by the Government's desire to retain his services and the Brotherhood's willingness to grant leave.

The "concerted" wage movement has meant material advances to loco. men in U.S.A., and the eight hours day was attained by a national movement after repeated failures from a series of spasmodic efforts on a company or State basis.

The issue of supplement No. 15 to General Order 27, lays down 100 miles or less, five hours or less, for passenger service, and 100 miles or less eight hours or less for goods or freight service. As long as a man's work over all the railroads of U.S.A. except where better conditions prevail.
Early Days in the Victorian Railways.

Any injustice done, even to a single individual, either in the Government employ, private firm, or private home, will create a discontent that will fester and spread. This Peter Woods had been an engine driver on a ballast train for Cornish and Bruce, contractors for the making of the railway from Melbourne to Bendigo. He had tried his luck at the diggings, and, not being successful, now wanted to get back to the footplate again. I had been cleaning, and sparring fireman for some years, and it was my turn for constant firing. Now I had to go back cleaning again. It was evident that something had to be done. Up to that time the old enginemen had a kind of union or understanding amongst themselves. We could now see we would have to start a united association. The old drivers could look after themselves very well. There were a very straightforward and independent class of men. But the junior drivers and firemen were in a different position. So the movement was at once started to form a combined union. We soon found that a majority of the drivers and firemen were prepared to help us. We as cleaners and spare firemen in Bendigo started a secret correspondence with our own class in Melbourne. This correspondence was carried on the evening passenger train in a secret place on the engines. Of course the driver and fireman were not aware of this. Thus we were in constant touch with our mates in Melbourne, such as Ted Fewster, Alex Crocket, and others. So we soon came to a general understanding. We could not get into such close touch with Ballarat, as at that time the engines did not run through.

And so, through the Department breaking their agreement with us as laid down for our guidance, and posted in each loco. shed, the present Enginedrivers, Firemen, and Cleaners’ Association was formed for mutual protection. Up to this time we had worked contentedly under the system of turn by turn. If one man entered the service one hour before another, he claimed all rights and privileges before the other, and every one of us was satisfied. My experience is that at any time this system is departed from, dissatisfaction at once takes place. It was with the help of many of the old drivers, such as Wm. Crawford, H. Sager, H. Lewis, Tom Purvis, Tom Danks, Jim Craig, Math Doherty, and many others, the beginning of the Association was formed.

I had made up my mind that cleaners should be allowed to join.
USE YOUR VOTE ON DECEMBER 13 FOR LABOUR.

THINGS YOU MUST NOT FORGET.

That the National (?) Government, under the leadership of W. M. Hughes, refused to allow the people to say whether or not they believed that Railway men should have the same industrial rights as all other citizens.

That Mr. Hughes in 1913 and 1915 was in favor of Railway men having the right of access to the Federal Arbitration Court.

That when Attorney-General of the Fisher Government in 1913 he was responsible for the preparation and presentation of the great case in favor of Railway men's rights, which was sent to the electors, asking them to vote for the referenda proposals.

That on page 22 of the Case For and Against the Referendum Proposals, issued by the Chief Electoral Officer on the 12th February, 1913,—under heading "Objections answered"—the following appeared:

"What reason is there why Parliament should not have this power? The principle of settling the wages and condition of labor by impartial legal tribunals is the accepted policy of the country. Why should there be an exception made with railway servants? Why should not they be able to go to the Federal Court like other employees? . . . A Federal Court is necessary to preserve industrial peace. . . ."

In 1913, according to the case put forward by the Labor Party, of which Mr. W. M. Hughes was then a leading member, "A Federal Court was necessary to preserve industrial peace on the railways," and in 1919, when we read everywhere that "Labor is no longer a commodity," "a New world for Labor," "Labor's New Charter," etc., etc., we are ignored by one of the most ardent advocates of our rights in 1913. Our rights are handed over to the safekeeping of the State Premiers.

In 1913 right of access to the Federal Arbitration Court was necessary to preserve industrial peace, according to Mr. Hughes. In 1919 the matter of the people settling the question of right of access to the Arbitration Court for Railway men is denied, to preserve political power for the same man.

That in 1919, when written to by the Association on the matter, forwarding resolution carried by the Grand Council asking that provision be made in the Bills for the question to be referred to the PEOPLE for decision, a copy of which was read in the House during the debate by Mr. F. Tudor, M.H.R., who moved for it to be done, only the Labor Party voted for it.

That Mr. Hughes replied on 9th October, after voting against it, that he would again approach the Premiers of the several States on the matter!!! And on the same day the Senate passed the Bill through all stages, our request being ignored.

That this letter was received on the 14th October and replied to and posted next day, asking for an answer by the following Saturday, and though Mr. Hughes was, according to press reports, in Melbourne, the letter was not replied to until October 23rd, saying that the letter would be referred to the Prime Minister on his return to Melbourne. Apparently it was not worth while attending to it on the 16th and 17th prior to him leaving Melbourne.

That Senator Russell, in reply to a deputation of trades unionists which laid the case for the Railway men before him as representative of the Government in the Senate on October the 8th, before the Bill was passed, said:

"I grant the principle. But I think this is a question of tactics. The omission of Railway servants from the industrial proposal was not a question of principle, but of political expediency."

Remember that you are being sacrificed on the altar of political expediency by a Government which claims to be National, but whose leader confesses that he will consult the State Premiers before agreeing to our request that the matter be settled by a vote of the Nation.

That the day before the request was officially replied to Senator Russell, receiving a deputation on behalf of the Government, said, referring to the requests for the question to be decided by the people:

"I am not going to tell you that I think they will be agreed to, for I don’t! The decision of the Government was deliberately arrived at."

You were deliberately sold in exchange for the support that was required from the Premiers of the States. Wake up to the fact that you rights are curtailed. That you have been wronged. That you can remedy those wrongs with your vote on December the 13th.

The matter was dealt with by the Federal Conference at Adelaide on Tuesday, November 29th, and the following resolution was unanimously agreed to by delegates representing all States of Australia—

"That this Conference resents the omission by the Hughes Ministry from its referenda proposal the question of Railway men of Australia having the right of access to the Federal Arbitration Court, and recommends the members of the Federation to support Parliamentary candidates who will vote for Railway men being given the same industrial rights as all other citizens of the Commonwealth, and to that end invites the co-operation of all other organised bodies of workers in Australia."

Comrades! If you want to be as other men, vote Labor on December 13th.

Work for Labor and its representatives and ensure the election of men who will stand for freedom and democracy for all.

ARTHUR S. DRAKEFORD.
Railways Classification Bill.

BEFORE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Frank Admission of Underpayment of Railway Employees by Minister of Lands.

Bill Passes without Amendment.

The passing of the Railways Classification Bill through the Legislative Council without amendment was a settlement of the matter that will remain something of a curiosity, in view of its hitherto pronounced habit of "putting in the boot" in all political differences that are likely to result in progress. The field is now clear for action, and some arbitration can be given a trial as a means of giving Railwaymen justice.

Whether or not the experiment will prove a success only the future can determine, but it is certain that the programme for the Loco. Enginemen must be standardisation of rates and conditions for the whole of Australia. The full report of the debate is given, and the admission made that the "Commissioner only recommended increases when the claims of the men were undeniable." That the working conditions in some States are much inferior in some respects to those in Victoria, and the general tone of his speech, as representative of the Government, and that of other speakers from the Government side, indicates that they have, by the public agitations which have absorbed the energies of the officials of the Unions in recent years, aided by the continuous and capable ventilation of the employees' position and grievances by the members of the Labor Party, been at last educated to the necessity for doing justice.

The decision is a tardy one, and the experiment remains to be tried. There is hope of receiving improvement, but a voice in the management of the Railways is necessary for us to secure the open road to full justice being done.

The Hon. Frank Clarke (Minister of Lands) moved the second reading of this Bill. He said—This measure practically provides for a Wages Board for the employees of the Victorian railways, and it may be interesting to honorable members to shortly run through the course of events which has led to its introduction by the Government. Prior to 1917, as honorable members are, no doubt, aware, there was no tribunal in Victoria to consider the wages and working conditions of the Department. Supernumeraries employed as artisans and in a few other vocations, representing only a small section of the service, were, however, paid Wages Board rates from 1907 to 1917. In New South Wales the Railways Commissioners have, not for a number of years past, but before 1907, had power to fix the rates of their staff except for the higher officers. For a considerable time the rates and conditions for the railway staff there were determined by Boards under the Industrial Arbitration Act, with a right of appeal to the Arbitration Court. Since 1916 such matters have been dealt with by the Arbitration Court direct. In Western Australia also the Arbitration Court has dealt with the wages and working conditions of railway employees for a number of years. The absence of any similar authority in this State, coupled with the payment of higher wages elsewhere, led to continued agitation from the Victorian employees for an independent tribunal, and, as a compromise, the Government in 1916 decided to appoint a Classification Board, consisting of a departmental officer as chairman, and two other representatives of the Commissioners, and two of the employees, to investigate the rates of salaries and wages, and such other matters as might be referred to it from time to time. When that decision was arrived at, the basic wage in the Victorian Railways was 8s. a day, but owing to war conditions an additional allowance was paid to men receiving less than 10s. a day. In New South Wales the basic wage was 9s. 3d., a day. About the same time as the Classification Board was appointed, the Queensland railway employees were given recourse to the Arbitration Court, and, as a result, the basic wage in the South-Eastern division, where the cost of living was somewhat less than in Melbourne, was fixed at 9s. 6d. It will be clear from those facts that practically every State in Australia allows its railway employees access to the Arbitration Court or to a Wages Board, with the exception of Victoria, and that it was only after considerable pressure, and in the face of strong precedents, that the system was abolished under which the Victorian Commissioners dealt at first hand with their employees. It may also be remarked that the Victorian Commissioners did not deal with the employees in an industrial manner, and only recommended increases when the claims of the men were undeniable. The Classification Board was appointed in 1916, and its recommendations the service was reclassified on a basis of 9s. per day, still subject to allowances for war conditions to men receiving less than 10s. a day. The adoption of that Classification Board figure resulted in an expenditure of approximately £200,000 per annum, but it will be noticed that the basic wage was still less than in New South Wales (then 9s. 3d.), or in the South-Eastern division of Queensland (9s. 6d.). The basic wage in the Commonwealth Public Service was 21s. per annum, or equal to 9s. 7d. per day, as fixed by the Federal Arbitration Court. It will also be clear that although the Board consisted wholly of railway officers and employees, the interests of the Department were carefully protected. The whole history of industrial matters in the Department shows that there is absolutely no justification for any charge or suspicion that any community of interest between the Commissioners and responsible officers and the balance of the staff has led, or will lead, to undue concessions of privileges. The Board now proposed is really a continuation of the Classification Board. Honorable members will recollect that this Government on receiving the report of the Classification Board last year adopted it, and proposed to abolish the Board. That did not satisfy the railway employees, many classes of whom had not been brought under its survey. The railway employees generally felt that there should be a permanent Board which might from time to time revise its own decisions, increase wages, and give better conditions according as the standard of living was raised in this State. As I have said, the Board now proposed is really an extension of the Classification Board. It is to have a judge as chairman, two of its members are to be nominated by the Railways
Commissioners, and the other two members are to be elected by the employees, every employee whose conditions of employment are affected by the determinations of the Board having a vote. That allows for equal representation of masters and men, which is in accordance with the basic principle of Wages Boards, and the control by an independent chairman of experience and knowledge is appointed. Under clause 14, which was amended elsewhere, the Commissioners will have a statutory duty to review the Board's awards, and the Government will also have a duty to review the Board's determination to state its views and intentions. I may state that the basic wage in New South Wales has been raised from 9s. 3d. to 9s. 6d. It may be noted that the railway employees are being given access to the Court. As 9s. 6d. has been said, the basic wage in the Victorian railways is 9s. plus an allowance of 5d. to men receiving that rate, and of 5d. to men receiving 9s. 6d. It may be added that the working conditions in the other States are much superior in some respects to those in Victoria. For example, the Transportation Branch employees in New South Wales and Queensland have an average eight-hour day. In Victoria the broad practice is that men like stationmasters, clerks, and porters have an eight-hour day at the metropolitan stations; a nine-hour day in the suburbs and provincial centres, while at country stations their hours are ten or more, according to conditions. To summarize briefly, the Victorian railway employees as a whole are receiving lower rates and less liberal working conditions than those in other States; the principle of determining wages and conditions of railway employees by means of an independent tribunal, as is done in the case of other workers, has long been recognised in the other States; and there is no reason for suspecting that the decisions of a Board constituted of a judge as chairman, and two representatives of the Commissioners and of the employees, will not be other than equitable, or will be unduly favourable to the staff.

The Hon. W. H. Edgar.—Why do you limit it to officers receiving up to £400 a year?

The Hon. Frank Clarke.—It is felt that officers receiving higher salaries than that ought to come under the immediate control of the Commissioners. Now let me briefly run through the clauses of the Bill. I have already described the composition of the Board as set forth in clause 3. As will be seen from clause 4, the Board is elected upon a three years' tenure, and the usual arrangements are made for re-election or reappointment and for the substitution of a new member in the event of a death occurring. Clause 5 sets forth, as I have already mentioned, that every man who is affected by the Bill shall have a right to vote for the two representatives of the men. Clause 8 sets forth that the cost of the Board shall be a charge on the railway administration funds. Clause 9 may, I think, be described as the main clause of the Bill. As Mr. Edgar interjected, it sets forth that the determinations of the Board shall only apply to officers whose salaries are under £400 a year. Honorable members will see that the Board will determine the rates of salary or wages of officers up to the limit of £400 a year. Sub-clause (1) sets forth that they may determine—

(i) the maximum number of hours to be worked daily or in any period;

(ii) the maximum number of hours over which a shift may extend;

(iii) the minimum interval for rest between shifts;

(iv) the maximum number of shifts to be worked weekly or in any period;

(v) what payment or allowance (if any) shall be made by reason of any condition of employment affecting remuneration (but not including payments or allowances for travelling or waiting in respect of accident) such as the payment or allowance to be made for overtime or emergency work;

for Sunday holiday or night work;

for travelling or waiting time;

for relieving expenses:

for travelling or incidental expenses:

for expenses incurred and time occupied in transfer:

for relieving in higher positions:

for work performed under special conditions:

in lieu of quarters:

to enginemen, guards and other officers and employees for the conditions associated with the running of trains:

to youths living away from home:

and may make awards with respect to any of the matters referred to in this subsection. It will be seen from sub-clause (2) that—

Where by any determination (whether of a special Board or of the Court of Industrial Appeals under the Factories and Shops Acts) in force in respect of any trade within the meaning of the said Acts the lowest wages rates for a specified maximum number of hours per week have been fixed (whether before or after commencement of this Act) for any person or persons or classes of persons, the Commissioners, as on and after the first day of July, One thousand nine hundred and nineteen—

(a) shall pay to every employee performing substantially the same class of work in the same area or locality not less than the lowest wages rates so fixed for work performed under ordinary conditions; and

(b) shall, in respect of every such employee, fix as a standard week's work not more than the number of hours specified in such determination as the maximum number of hours to be worked for the said lowest wages rates—

but the provisions of any such determination shall remain in force in respect of any of the matters referred to in paragraph (b) of sub-section (1) of this section.

Clause 10 sets forth that the Board shall sit in public unless it unani-
mosly decides to sit in private, and goes on to give the obvious right of access to the Court. The Government will also have a statutory duty to report on the railway administration funds. Clause 11 provides that the Board shall invite claims in regard to each item to be investigated and shall unless it otherwise determines recognize any claim made under any item—

(a) on behalf of at least one-half of the number of officers or employees in any grade affected by such item; or

(b) on behalf of less than one-half of the number of officers or employees in any grade affected by such item if such claim is the only one received in respect of such grade.

Clause 14 provides that the Ministry of the day—the Governor in Council—shall approve of the rate which is to be paid. I may remind honorable members that there has been considerable controversy as to whether Parliament should have laid before it the determination of this Board, and should be asked to approve of the determination. The point taken, and finally adopted, was that the Ministry of the day should be responsible for adopting the determinations, and that principle has been embodied in the Bill. The only other clause to which I think I need direct attention at this stage is clause 18, which says that the direction may there remain in force for three years only, when it shall come up again for revision. That was put in at the last moment. Opposition has got abroad that the Bill is a new departure; that it is an extremely complex measure containing...
hardest to get anything out of.

The Hon. W. L. Baillieu.—Paradoxically, Parliament is the hardest and the easiest tribunal. I venture to say that the tribunal provided under this Bill is a fairer one in the public interest than Parliament, and that it cannot be pulled unfairly by sets of people appealing to members to do the things that they are now doing. It should have greater confidence in the judge appointed in this case as the arbiter, as regards doing justice to the public cause, than, I should have in a reference to Parliament, which might be on the eve of an election. The views expressed by the measure, so far as I am concerned, are not new. I tried, but I was certainly never able to convince my late colleagues in the Ministry, that they were good enough to adopt. It will therefore be seen that in accepting this Bill and recom-}
The Dominion was 9s., just as it is in Victoria. In this State the Government gave certain employees a war bonus of 6d. per day, and honorable members will see that that is very small compared with the rate which was paid in New Zealand. It is proposed to make the first award under this Bill retrospective to the 1st July last; but, even with that relief, the men will have suffered great hardships, owing to the high cost of living during the past two or three years. The Bill provides rather a poor recompense, in view of the time the railway employees have had to put up with the ever-increasing cost of living. Many a householder has gone into debt with all the grievances the men labour under. An opinion seems to prevail amongst some members of this House, and of another place, that to a great extent, the rate of wages of railway employees must depend upon the paying or non-paying results of the railway operations. If there is a deficit it is felt by some that the employees must make good the loss. There is another opinion which feels that the loss must be made up by the producers. We found that idea given effect to two or three years ago, when the Commissioners recommended the Government to increase the fares and freights. The effect of this idea is to place a special tax upon the railway employers or upon the producers. We ought to do everything we can to encourage the producers, and I have never understood why a falling-off in revenue should be made good by imposing a special tax upon these two sections of the community.

The Hon. E. L. Kiernan.—Accord- ing to the Minister, the conditions in Queensland are not so severe as in Victoria.

The Hon. W. Kendell.—They have nothing to do with the organisation. If this Bill will bring about a better state of organisation in the Department, I shall be pleased that it has passed this House. The Hon. W. J. Beckett.—Men who are in receipt of less than £400 a year have nothing to do with the organisation of the Department.

The Hon. W. Kendell.—They do not. If we had fifty Commissioners, they could not control the service from one end of the State to the other. It will be impossible to have satisfactory conditions unless the Minister is endeavouring to do its best. The men in the railway service are much better situated than those outside. A man in private employment is not giving satisfaction his services can be dispensed with.

The Hon. W. J. Beckett.—The Board can take all that into consideration.

The Hon. W. Kendell.—That is so. We have to face this position: The Railway Department is the greatest earning and spending department in the State, and we have to be very careful how properly it is treated. I am not opposing this Bill; but I do not want railway men to be under the impression that I think they are terribly neglected. I am not doing this, but I am not willing to leave the department, even if they have another position to go to, unless it is very much better. I do not wish to delay the passage of this Bill. I am not opposing it; but I do not wish to see the railway men under the impression that I think they are terribly neglected, and yet they are. I do not think you will have many of them willing to leave the department, even if they have another position to go to, unless it is very much better.
£400 a year may have just as great a grievance as a man who receives only £200. If anything will restore order and contentment in the service, it is a Bill of this character, order and contentment in the service. It is a Bill of this character, and in regard to the employees at a reasonable decision in regard to the service should continue. It is a distinction without a difference.

Mr. Kernot is a permanent officer of the department. There is no Wages Board to consider. But the fact remains that the Board appointed under the Bill must have regard to such a matter as the rates of pay received by Victorian railway servants with the rates of pay received by other employees. We know that nine-tenths of the employers outside would pay employees who were stricken down by influenza, and were away from their employment for three or four weeks.

The Hon. Frank Clarke.—No. But my experience is that the great majority of private employers do give sick pay. If the principle is laid down that railway men who are away for a time through illness are to lose their pay for that time, that will be put forward by the men as a reason why they should receive a higher rate of pay than men doing the same class of work outside. The average period of sickness can be determined by the Wages Board to consider. But the Board have power to consider such matters.

The Hon. W. L. Baillieu.—Is that the average for every case?

The Hon. W. J. Beckett.—I think persons engaged in dangerous trades and mining are included. If the Board is not given the power to consider the question of sick pay, I trust that the Government in their wisdom will take such steps as will insure that railway men who are away through sickness will receive the same rate of pay as previously, though they may only be able to do lighter work. I know that the Minister mentioned last week, and I trust that I shall receive a satisfactory reply from him at the earliest possible moment.

The clause was agreed to.
Clause 10.—(Powers of Board).—The Hon. W. Kendall.—It is provided in the clause (1) —

The Board shall hear all claims in public unless it unanimously decides otherwise. It is not often provided that a Board must be unanimous for its decision on any subject to be effective. There may be one member of the Board who would not allow the Board to hear in private matters that it would be in the interests of all concerned to have dealt with in that way. I would suggest to the Minister that the clause should be amended to provide that the Board shall hear all claims in public unless a four-fifths majority decides otherwise. There may be a "mark" on the Board who will not consent to anything that is reasonable. Some men think it is a sign of honesty on their part to advocate that everything shall be done in public, but there will be times when it will be in the interests of the Railway Department and the community for the Board to inquire into matters in secret.

The Hon. Frank Clarke (Minister of Lands).—Originally the clause provided that a bare majority of the members of the Board should decide whether the Board was to sit in public or in private, but the railway men and their representatives expressed a very keen desire that the Board should sit in public, and the Government, while it did not alter its view that the provision was right, thought that the point was one on which it could meet the men. After all, compromise in legislation of this kind is the essence of the contract, and I think the Committee can very well agree to this provision.

The clause was agreed to, as were the remaining clauses.

The Bill was read to the House without amendment, and the report was adopted.

THE FOOTPLATE.

ARARAT.—The ordinary meeting of the Ararat branch was held in the drivers' room on Saturday, Nov. 9th. Mr. A. Lowerson occupied the chair, and a fair attendance of members present. Complaint was made by the Secretary that some unauthorised person had opened the news letter, and an endeavour is being made to find out the individual who was contemptible enough to stoop so low. If anyone desires to possess the knowledge it contains, come to the meetings and hear it read, as there are no secrets kept by the General officers and secretary at any time. A resolution was carried protesting against the action of the Federal Government in excluding firemen from having access to the Federal Arbitration Court. It was also decided to send the congratulations of the branch to our President, Mr. Deveney, on his election to a seat on the Melbourne Council. We are sure that he will be well able to give a good account of himself. All nominations were received for the positions of branch officers, and an election will be necessary to decide same. One item to be sent on to the executive regarding the running of an engine that should be in the shops, and has been recommended for same by our foreman. Other items of a local nature were dealt with in the committee.

BENALLA.—The ordinary monthly meeting was held in the Daily News Office on Sunday, Nov. 9th. Owing to the absence of the President, Mr. Baker, in Melbourne, caused by the illness of his wife, Mr. Pevitt occupied the chair. The attendance was fair, but, considering the importance of the meeting, a larger attendance would have been welcome. The minutes of the recent Grand Council meeting were read and discussed to some length. Satisfaction was expressed on all sides at the good work done by our representatives: also by the large amount of business transacted in the short space of time. One member stating that he would consider at least a week a fair time allowance for the amount of work. The results of the dinner and dance which were voted a great success, were discussed, and an amendment in the varying grade in a fairer proportion than that has been the case at any previous election. A resolution was unanimously carried unanimously recommending the betterment of this Branch at the failure of the present Federal Government to make provision for inclusion in the Referendum Bill of the Railway employees of Australia, thus debarring them from stating a case for consideration before the Federal Arbitration Court, and advising our fellow members, and pledging ourselves as a work and vote only for candidates who will give a fair deal in this question. Comrades, be up and doing and by solidarity on Dec 13th next and at the forthcoming State Elections, record your votes in favor of the men pledged to grant our just and reasonable claim. The question of kits for enginemen, especially firemen, is becoming the burning question of the day at this depot. If a fireman sees his kit here once a week he is considered lucky. We have told our foreman the articles that are appearing daily in the "Age," and the articles supplied in the kits, especially the coal hammers. They would do very well for a blacksmith's striker, but a fireman would want to be strong in arm and intellect to use one. No doubt the conditions under which we work are becoming unbearable. A collector, Mr. Lord, will be in attendance on every pay day at the shed; so now we will hear no more complaints from members who can't manage to move the secretary when they have the amount of their contributions in their pocket. Great interest is taken in the nomination of officers for the forthcoming elections. Nomination of President, President A. J. Baker, and A. Pevitt; vice-president, S. W. Anderson, J. Duffy, J. Ashworth, A. Morgan, and J.
O'Brien; Secretary, F. Corboy, unopposed; committee, 14, Alexander, Baker, Barnes, Carr, Collot, Crouch, Hartley, Mitchell, Morgan, O'Brien, Reynolds, Rivett, Peavitt; G. C. Delegate, 4, A. Baker, F. Hartley, P. Corboy, E. Mitchell; and delegates, 5, Ashworth, Hartley, Mitchell, O'Brien, and meetings.

31 nominations for the 12 positions. This shows a very healthy interest in being taken in the affairs of the Branch by the members. It is to be hoped that there will be more votes recorded than was the case at the recent elections for general officers and executive committee, when less than 60% of the ballot cards were returned by members in this district. Passenger traffic is still very heavy on the North Eastern line. The Sydney express is banked every night. Attention was directed to the shortage of big wheel men at this depot. Two firemen short for the last three months. Wishing the "Footplate" every success.—P. Corboy.

BENDIGO.—Monthly meeting held Sunday, Nov. 9th. Good number of members present. Mr. F. Keenan, received from Federal Government Committee asking that two delegates be sent to attend meetings. Members appointed and J. J. McKail were appointed. The tunnel was again the topic of much discussion, and a petition is to be drawn up, protesting against the condition. General regret was expressed at the General Secretary suffering a bereavement through the death of his mother. The Secretary's action in sending a telegram of condolence, was endorsed. A motion, congratulating the President on being elected a member of the Melbourne City Council, was carried. It was decided to give a send-off to two members, retired, Messrs. B. Lee and C. Flight. Mr. W. H. Brown is about to leave Bendigo, and his transfer will be much regretted. He has been secretary to the Self-denial Fund since last Nov., and are shown for their meanness. However, as it is only the same few who give, they must be getting fed up with collections. I intend to get this class of thing placed on a better footing, as I think this is totally unsatisfactory. The President declared the results of the Executive elections, which contained several surprises. T. G. Robinson brought forward a list of motor men's grievances, many of which are in hand. The packing of donkeys, and the men in the cab are being dealt with by the Executive, in addition to a number of other troubles of the enginemen. Too many grievances, many grievances and pin pricks, many caused by unsympathetic officers. The enginemen have carried the Department since last Nov., and are shown no consideration in return. What with coal "squeezes" and "please explain" and "call and see the foreman," etc., the job isn't worth having, and it is up to every man to take a stand and make it better. Give away nothing. We have to fight long and hard for a fair deal, while other draw the pay and take the credit. Nominations were taken for branch officers and committee, and keenness is strongly displayed, judging from the turn out. There will be contests for chairman and secretary, and all members are asked to record their vote. Half of the Grand Council minutes were read. A resolution was carried congratulating our President on his election to the City Council, members feeling that Mr. Deveney's honesty and fighting ability will be useful in that trusted conservative home of "City Fathers." The President and the Vice-president reported at length on the Commission which is to inquire into the high cost of living, and the meeting closed at 8 p.m.—H. J. Higgins.

KORUMBURRA.—The correspondece at this month's meeting was provided in many ways. The minutes of the 1919 Grand Council occupied a considerable portion of the sitting, and were well worth the time taken to read them. The proposal of the Hughes Government to exclude railway workers from the industrial section of the Federal Referenda proposals was discussed, and a resolution was carried for publication in the local press, protesting against our Association being denied access to the Federal Arbitration Court. Too much publicity was not given to this matter to demonstrate the insincerity of Mr. Hughes, in the light of recent electioneering speeches on industrial problems. Various local items were listed for deputation to the fitter in charge for adjustment, including the shortage of cleaners. The general scarcity of men is felt even here, and annual leave is a matter of dubious speculation to those who have not already had it. A few more batches of drivers are urgently needed, and the sooner the head office realises it the better it will be for all concerned. No doubt some men are willing to work the close round without relief, but fortunately for the conditions, the Service these men are the small minority. It is noticeable that all the men invariably go back 1903 men are strong stickers for their system of eight hours, and the overtime kings in the Association should hide their faces at this exposition of our great unionistic principle at the hands of the despised blackleg.

LEO DATSON.

MARYBOROUGH.—The ordinary meeting of the above branch was held in general waiting room on November 11, 1919. There was only a small attendance, and Mr. H. O'Reilly occupied the chair. Cleaners and drivers are not attending the meetings as they should, and it is up to them invariably to vote for the resolution was carried against the action of the Hughes Government for omitting railwaymen's access to Arbitration Court in the Referenda Bills. A portion of G.C. minutes were read, and the nomination of branch officers and committee took place, and there is plenty of members to select from for the positions. The system of booking crews off to rest at Donald without giving them notice is causing great inconvenience to members, and it is up to the responsible officers to have this system knocked out. There is a lot of work in this depot, and long hours are making their presence felt, thus making the need of more drivers being made. Ballot cards will be issued to financial members in connection with the branch elections, and members are asked to return cards on date mentioned.

F. CHAMBERLAIN.

SEYMOUR.—The monthly meeting was held in the usual place at 2.30 p.m. Mr. Green opened the meeting to a large attendance of members present. The correspondence was listened to and discussed with great
interest. There was great competition for the various branch offices for 1920—four candidates for every office and 18 for committee. We trust the rivalry of interest is a permanent one, not spasmodic. It is very gratifying to retiring officers to see the positions contested in preference to being filled by default. This points clearly to the fact that the good work of our general officers, executive, and officers generally is much appreciated by the members, officers, executive, and officers generally are much appreciated by the members. This branch wishes to congratulate the incoming general officers and executive, also our past President, on his and their success at the ballot box. Mr. E. F. Russell is contesting the Echuca seat in the interest of Labor, and owing to Seymour having two delegates on the Campaign Council, they were able to use their influence and opened the fight at this centre, to a good meeting. From every point of view the candidate easily held his own against all interjectors, with advantage to himself and party. This is the first instance of the candidates opening at Seymour, and we hope it is a good omen of future results. We are reminded that the Seymour branch of the A.L.P. meet every Saturday night at 8 o'clock in the Federal Lodge room, at which meeting all interested are invited to come and assist at the meeting on Sunday:—"That the Seymour branch of the Loco. Engine-drivers, Firemen and Cleaners' Association hereby enter their emphatic protest against the attitude of the Hughes Government in not incorporating the railway servants within the scope of the Federal Arbitration Court. The questions contained in the Referenda Bill are now being submitted to the people for decision, and we pledge our members to stand by the people in the matter of the defeat of the present Federal Government, now occupying the Treasury Benches."—Carried unanimously. The shortage of men is keenly felt at this depot. It is almost a farce wiring for relief engines in a filthy condition. In these days of "economy" it is common to see the loco. foreman and the L.H. fitter on different Sundays putting engines away that have been run into the shed, the crews having worked long hours. We are very pleased to say the roster that we have been fighting for this 11 months came into operation last Monday week, and working satisfactorily, with a large majority of the men, and no doubt to our general officers, who have been battling at the seat of war. There has been a considerable amount of trouble in this district lately, owing to no coal being discharged at various out stations, especially Shepparton, engineers having to coal their engines out of the trucks. The trouble, which was brought about by economy, we hope, is ended for all time. Trusting that Labor will regain its old status. J. S. PEARCE.

STACKELL.—Our last monthly meeting was held on Sunday, 9th, in the Drivers' Room. A good attendance present. Several items of local interest were dealt with and a deputation was appointed to wait upon the Depot foreman re same. A motion congratulating the President on his election to the City Council was carried unanimously, and the opinion was expressed that he was the right man in the right place. A motion was also carried protesting against the action of the Hughes Government in excluding the Railway men's right to approach the Federal Arbitration Court to try the referenda questions. Things are very brisk here at present, owing to the drought conditions prevailing in this district, pittimers and other matters. Stock trains are running nearly every night in the week, and although three of our senior members are constantly pressed for driving, the shed is often short handed. Up to the present very few men have had holidays, and there is a hope of anyone being booked on them before the end of the year. The Federal elections have not created much excitement up till now, but there has been a deal of quiet work done in the Drivers' Room, and the sitting member Mr. Jowett will get the run of his life, and dropping his Nationalist coat to put on the Farmers' Union one, will not save him.—J. Geaney.

TRARALGON.—The ordinary monthly meeting was held in the drivers' room on Sunday, November 9. There was only a moderate attendance, seeing that it was one of the most important meetings of the year nominations for officers for the coming year. It gets very monotonous seeing the same old faces at every meeting. It is very disheartening to the branch officers to see little interest taken in Union matters. The only time that you get a full house is, when there is to be some mention made about an increase, but they take fine care that they do not come along and put their shoulder to the wheel in order to get better wages and conditions. Rather than attend the meetings, any grievances they have they would sooner ventilate them around the "water tap" instead of coming to the right place. Nominations were received for officers. There is to be an election for President and Vice-President. Our Secretary, Mr. Sullivan, was again returned unopposed. Various items of a local nature were listed to go before the depot foreman. A resolution was also passed asking the executive to scratch one of our members off the books. Fireman, J. Henderson, of Warragul. He is about two years in arrears, and I don't think the intention of making himself financial. The report of the Grand Council was listened to with interest by all, and the results achieved by the general officers are a great victory to any union. A motion was passed congratulating our President, Mr. Devaney, on gaining a seat in the City Council, and a great victory for Labor, seeing that this seat has been held by the retiring member for about 12 years. I think the working class are waking up to the fact that to do any good in the industrial world you must also have power in the political sphere. And it is up to us to take an earnest interest in the coming elections to assist to give these so-called National "parasites" their walking ticket. Hoping that we have a glorious victory in the coming elections, and wishing our own little paper every success.

A. C. LEWIS.

Acknowledgment.

The General Secretary wishes to return sincere thanks to the friends, members and branches for the many kind messages, cards, letters and other tributes of sympathy and condolence forwarded on the occasion of the death of his mother, and which have come as an acknowledgment of the kindly spirit and feeling shown, which is gratefully appreciated by himself and members of his family.

Election for the R.C.B.

The figures recorded in the above contest are a striking tribute to the solidarity of the bona fide unionists of the Victorian Railway Service and of the opinion held by Railwaymen generally of the merits of candidates who may be best described as non-descript. The voting is shown below.

J. Fogarty ... 15,129
B. B. Devaney ... 15,665
A. T. Sheldon ... 1,826
C. L. Wadelton ... 1,728

Informal Papers, 750.

This definitely settles the question for some time to come, and probably those who refused to take part in the long-continued but eventually successful fight for the seat, will go and hide their greatly diminished heads. It is expected that the first sitting of the Board will take place on Monday, December 15.
QUESTION BOX.

What constitutes true economy in the performance of a locomotive?—Answer: To handle the locomotive so as to obtain the utmost work on the least possible fuel and water consumption; to be careful in its lubrication; to see that all bearings are properly oiled and no oil wasted; to guard against failures by carefully inspecting engine at all stopping points, and to correct anything found wrong, if possible, to do so on the road. In fact, true economy in the performance of a locomotive, in so far as enginemen are concerned, is to handle the engine as though it belonged to them personally, and, at the same time, get every possible pound of effective work out of it.

E.K.—When may both driver and fireman be absent from the engine whilst on a running line?—Answer: To protect a disabled light engine on a single line or on a double line when the fireman goes to the station in advance for assistance.

Loko.—How many degrees does the crank pin move without any movement of the crosshead (DD engine) when on back or front “dead centres”? What is the term applied?—Answer: The crosshead only remains stationary while the crank moves through the point known as the “dead centre.” Therefore, the crank does not move through even one degree, while the crosshead is stationary, but for the first three degrees the movement is so slight as to be practically imperceptible. The velocity of the crosshead gradually increases until it reaches its maximum, when the crank is at the top or bottom “quarter centre.” The term “dead centre” denotes that stationary position of the crosshead.

Loko.—What is the amount of “lead” on DD and A2 engines (saturated steam and superheated steam)? Is any allowance made when setting valves for “lost motion,” “cross roll,” expansion and contraction?—Answer: An eighth of an inch for all except those fitted with Walschaert valve gear; these have 3½ inch. No allowance is made for the displacement of the ball check valve, which prevents oil syphoning back into the condensed steam.

Federal Conference Sittings in Adelaide.

The 1919 Conference of the Federation held its sittings in Adelaide Trades Hall, commencing on Friday, 21st, and concluding on Monday, 28th November.

The President (Mr. H. P. Butterworth) in the chair, and Mr. G. Crossman, Federal Secretary, represented the Federation, and Mr. T. C. Ollier the Queensland Division, Mr. G. Skelton N.S.W., Messrs. B. B. Devaney and A. S. Drakeford, Victoria; Mr. R. W. Wright, Tasmania; Messrs. J. Lewis and O Howard, South Australia; and Mr. J. O’Malley, West Australia.

The Conference was delayed for eight months owing to the influenza outbreak, and the restrictions on travel arising therefrom, which was followed by the great maritime strike. A lengthy agenda of important items was dealt with by the Conference, and it was decided unanimously to bring about closer unity amongst the divisions by the formation of a Locomotive Brotherhood of Engineers, which, if brought to fruition, will have been the most important work undertaken by the Federation, and a step forward that should result in the creation of a new era of prosperity for the loco. men of Australia.

At the conclusion of the Conference Mr. T. C. Ollier, of Toowoomba, Queensland, was installed as Federal President by Mr. Butterworth, and Mr. G. Crossman as Federal Secre-
The Federated Railway Loco. Engine-
mens's Association of Australasia.

CLOSER UNITY FOR AUSTRALIAN
ENGINEMEN.

In these days of reconstruction much is heard of the need for closer organisation amongst the workers. "Greater cohesion"; in fact, "Closer Unity."

And closer unity for the Locomotive Enginemen of Australia was decided upon unanimously by the representatives of the Divisions of the Federation

AT THE ADELAIDE CONFERENCE, 1919.

It may be asked why a Locomotive Brotherhood?

The answer is that there is need for a better understanding, a common objective, and the cultivation of a greater feeling of fraternity amongst the Locomotive Enginemen of Australasia, which, if secured, will put us on a better basis and raise us to a higher status than we have hitherto achieved.

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen of America, and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen of Great Britain have accomplished for their Locomotive running men what we in Australia have so far failed to obtain—

STANDARDISATION OF WAGES.

A VOICE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE RAILWAYS.

PROMPT SETTLEMENT OF GRIEVANCES BY BOARDS WITH EQUAL REPRESENTATION OR BY DIRECT NEGOTIATION.

IN AMERICA.

100 miles or less, 8 hours or less, for goods or freight service.

100 miles or less, 5 hours or less, for passenger service, as the basis of a day's work.

These things, and many others, have been secured. They are worth striving for in this fair land of ours.

But Australia, which once led the way in industrial legislation and regulations, lags behind.

They have been achieved by our brother Enginemen as the result of concerted action, broad based, on thought of a national and not a State-wide character.

The American Brotherhood has all the good features of an Australian Trade Union, plus a method of linking the member to his union instead of his employer.

A Brotherhood stands for a higher and a better status, a more independent form of life; and it does not only stand for it, it secures it.
Do you know of any real reason why the Engineman of Tasmania should receive a lesser ratio of payment for his responsible work than that of New South Wales? Why the Fireman of Victoria should get one and sixpence per day less than he of Queensland?

If there is any real reason it is because we are without a common claim, that our effort to obtain a proper reward is of a spasmodic and intermittent character rather than a long-sustained pull-together movement, which has taken our British and American comrades on the path towards their goal.

With a common aim in view, with the power to exercise the whole numerical, financial, economic; in a word, the industrial strength of the Locomotive men of Australasia, we will have forged a link that will make our position more secure in the industrial chain.

The American Brotherhood was founded in 1873 with eleven (11) men, and in March of this year had 116,000 members, gaining membership at the rate of 1000 per month in 1919.

It not only looks after the industrial wants of its membership while they are on the job, it looks after their interest when they are no longer physically fit to carry on.

It provides for its members Protection, Insurance, Indemnities, and, latterly, has put into operation a pension scheme open to all members from eighteen (18) to sixty (60) years of age.

The capital and energies of the organisation are used for the direct benefit of the members, and they get their return in solid results and a happier life.

The British Locomotive men, by their unity of thought, their strength of purpose, and their readiness for action, were the first section of Railway men in England to win the eight hours day, which was followed by standard rates of pay and conditions of work for Enginemen and Motor-men.

They had achieved those things when the great strike took place recently, but they threw in their forces willingly in the fight for justice by their fellow Railway Unionists, and the great factor which took them forward on the path of progress was “Unity of Purpose” and action from one end of the land to the other. The lesson to be learned is the need for common thought, purpose and action here, and you can help towards that end by urging forward the creation of a Brotherhood of Australian Locomotive Enginemen.

The need for an aim, a purpose in common for us all is so evident as to need no emphasis. The time must come when the railways are under Federal control, and you can help to hasten the day, and until that day comes we can fight our claim for standard rates of pay and conditions of work for the Enginemen of Australia whenever and wherever the opportunity offers.

Fellow Members of the Federation, the decision of the 1919 Federal Conference means much to you. It can be furthered greatly with your aid or hampered much by your apathy. What the Federation needs to bring it to a successful issue is your thought, your interest, and your help, with a definite plan for your industrial improvement, with a definite desire and belief in our capacity to share in the management of the railways, with the full strength of the knowledge that we can and will gain our proper place in the industrial sphere by collective thought, common aim and concerted action, the furtherance of the Brotherhood or Federation is a matter as much for you, your mate or your Executive.

Talk of it with your mates, discuss it at your Branch meeting, seek a way to help those who desire to help the cause, and the road towards the better day to come, and a

WORLD-WIDE BROTHERHOOD OF ENGINEMEN OPENS TO US ALL.

We are,

Yours fraternally,

(Signed) GEO. CROSSMAN.

(Signed) ARTHUR S. DRAKEFORD.

Propaganda Committee.
SPARKS.

Hughes and his Views. Use, then abuse. According to the "Age" Mr. Hughes said at Bendigo that Australia was filled with men who had been "spewed up from England, Scotland and Ireland." Will it be considered "lese majestice" to say that political journalists have been "spewed up" from Wales?

The refusal of the Lawson Government to grant a living wage to the men of the railway service shows what Railwaymen can expect from a Liberal Government.

That it might interfere with the course of justice and influence the finding of the Board is a cry that will not bear analysis. The question for the Government to answer was: Is 9/6 per day a living wage under existing conditions? And the answer was, in the face of already having filled with men who had been "spewed up from England, Scotland and Ireland." Will it be considered "lese majestice" to say that political journalists have been "spewed up" from Wales?

The refusal of the Lawson Government to grant a living wage to the men of the railway service shows what Railwaymen can expect from a Liberal Government.

Surely the facts that the basic rate of pay of 9/6 was fixed when the cost of living was considerably lower, and the Arbitration Board's most recent awards were 11/- per day or more, should have influenced the Government. But the Government is not open to reason; it is only open to persuasion by force of numbers.

Mr. E. G. Backshall, until recently General Secretary of the West Australian Division of the Federation, has been appointed Director of Operations to the W.A. Railways, which position brings him into close contact with the men in all branches engaged in the running of trains, and he is responsible for matters under his supervision directly to the Commissioner.

The appointment is a popular one amongst his old comrades, and it is believed that he will make good with the department and do justice to the employees. His many friends here wish him success in his new sphere.

It is expected that the introduction of a fifteen-minute service on the Essendon-Ringwood line will improve the shifting of motormen, which already have been improved as a result of continuous efforts. There is room for further improvement, and the introduction of 100 miles as the basis of a day's work.

THE FOOTPLATE.

MOTORMEN'S UNIFORM.

"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy;—
The apparel oft proclaims the man."

At last The Loco. has got into uniform. It has been a slow process, and a retrograde one at that. The average loco. man begins his career as a cleaner, with blue linen. After a "stubborn fight to maintain his status as a fireman, he is driven back to durance. He serves his time as goods driver, minus his blue pants, and by the time he reaches suburban work, he has lost all in the line. But his calling is one of surprises, and just when he is about to give up bothering about his appearance, an unexpected event occurs, which revolutionises him, mode and habit, and he steps out on the stage in serge and buttons. The only things missing are his mate and his engine. In his new situation his uniform is his chief symbol of office, and the fact is growing clear that a special form of clothing will be evolved from the surroundings. In appearance he must be unlike the other members of the station staff, so that passengers will not hold him up for information; he must have as little metal as possible about him, there fore his buttons must go. His coat might be used in emergency to break contact, consequently its resistivity must be as high as possible. And, last, but not least, the wise counsel of Polonius, quoted above, is worth something. His habit should be as costly as his purse can buy. In his case his uniform is his badge of service. It engenders the esprit de corps so highly essential in developing a love of duty in large bodies of men, and it enkindles those latent forces in our nature which all great leaders of men value and take the precaution of burdening with by-law by Arthur S. Ford, Loco. Hall, Victoria Street, North Melbourne.

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OBITUARY.

DEATH OF MR. H. RAISBECK.

The death of Mr. H. Raisbeck as the result of an accident in Melbourne Yard on October 22nd to his friends and comrades of the footplate, and illustrates the uncertainty and danger of an engineer's life. The train for which he signed on duty that morning was cancelled, and he was sent out to relieve on the 7 a.m. passenger pilot, taking with him his kit of tools in the bucket which he carried over his shoulder with the shovel.

He was 52 years of age and his loss and manner of his death is regrettable, and while it is a pity that a valuable life should have proved the penalty to prove it, it should furnish an conclusive argument against engine-room sympathy and condolence of the Association is tendered in the hope that the Department will reconsider its attitude on the "kit" question.

To Mrs. Raisbeck and family the sympathy and condolences of the Association is tendered in the hope that the high esteem and respect in which our valued comrade was held timely death.

For all unsigned matter appearing anywhere in this issue of the "Footplate" relating to Federal elections responsibility is accepted in accordance with by-law by Arthur S. Drakeford, Loco. Hall, Victoria Street, North Melbourne.