

My guards have ~~just~~ held a meeting
& have just sent me an offer to
work in any capacity - even sweeper's -
in case of a strike among natives -



4769

Allahabad.

(So far Ruby to another
many months since)

July 13th 1906

Dearest Pippa

Your letter received last week
was evidently written in a frenzy
against ~~the Government~~ -
with which (the frenzy) I agree -
I didn't hear about it till afterwards
but then chiefly smiled - Perhaps
the smile is more appropriate than the
frenzy -
Times recently have been highly
exciting; you will have heard about
it roughly, but perhaps a detailed



account for withinsides my amuse
you - These are strikes in Babudom -
Unheard of atrocity! - Just before
I came out there were signs
of dissatisfaction among the native
staff - The matter was discussed
at a District Officers meeting &
all agreed that the time had
come to improve their prospects
- they have been working on the
same scale of pay & privileges
as when the traffic ~~was~~ and
work was only $\frac{1}{8}$ as heavy
as it is - Various reforms were
agreed on, and the machinery put

in motion to introduce them; it
is not possible to do a thing like
this in a day, and it was not
till about 3 weeks ago that
an Agents Circular came out
embodying the improvements -

Meanwhile the Swadeshi people
cut in; Sahelquize district was
the most dissatisfied - I believe
because Cowley, the D.P.S. there,
is 'takbari' to a degree - They
say that Surendro Nath Banerjee
himself (I presume you are an
expert on the Swadeshi movement)
(if not please become so because
it's quite the most conspicuous
thing in India & will be more so)
went up there to organise & incite
our staff - Anyway the Sahelquize

balms suddenly struck - Over two hundred telegrams of resignation on 24 hours notice went in on one day - George rushed up to Sahabganje; the strikers advanced, but G. refused to see them till they resumed work - This upset them and after a waver or so they did resume - George then interviewed a deputation, heard their requests (one of which was that Cowley should be dismissed at once!) and told them that large improvements in their lot were already being manufactured - They announced themselves as satisfied & went on working - Two days later Haurah district

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went - This was quickly nipped by
the same means - Asansol then
struck & Duing rushed up &
induced them to turn to again -
By this time everyone was on the
qui vive ; Agents circular was
issued in a hurry, and we
all thought that the many
great improvements in it would
satisfy everyone - However
on 30th June Duiapore district
went, - the most serious of the
lot - Duing went up there, but
for two days they would not
return to work - I believe



that not a single bahn was working at Dinapore, and passengers had to be allowed into trains without tickets because there was no one to issue them - Goods trains stopped running - All this time you can imagine I was hopping about up here. Of course we're not in Bengal, but nearly a half of my babus are Bengalis and these things are terribly infectious - However when Dinapore went I ordered ~~about~~ 70 men to go down there to help; this of course meant

not only every sort of unpleasantness for those who went, but also double work for those left behind - I confess I was nervous, but to my joy 66 men actually went, and of the four who failed, 2 were real cases of sickness, and the other two were Bengalis who ~~was~~ reported sick as soon as they got the order -

On the second day the Dinapore men came back to work, and Dring came up to Allahabad to see about my district - My men who had been sent down came back in the same train as

Dring - He came to my office and
was talking things over with me
- I telling him that I thought
my men were quite safe and
he rather dubious - when it
was announced that 40 or 50
of my men were waiting outside
to state their grievances - Dring
told me that he would interview
a deputation of three, so I
went out into the verandah
and told them so - With
one accord they said they had
no desire to see Dring, that
I was their father or mother &
all they wanted was to lay



their grievances before me - This was a great triumph for me, and Dring was quite pleased, and went outside and made them a little speech to say he was very glad they were such good boys - When he left I interviewed them, & what passed was practically an exchange of compliments - I ~~heard~~ have heard since that Delhi district was ready to go, but would not do so as my district remained firm - On his way back,

Dring got a wire that Gya district was going - He went there and nipped it in the bud - All this has been very trying, as you may imagine, but I can't say how pleased I am with my men - In the last fortnight I've been to every station in my district (a good number) and talked to everyone - from station master to sweeper - As a result I'm very pleased with them, and believe they

are perfectly safe - Up here at any rate I think patriarchal government is what they like - and the thing is neither to look upon them as 'those swine' nor to be ~~in~~ in Olympus - To proceed - The Hon'ble staff have ^{now} sent a printed letter to Douglas asking for every sort of impossibility - native station masters all to rise to Rs ~~150/-~~ 150/-, sweepers to be paid Rs 10/-, the whole staff to get an immediate increase of Rs 5/- without discrimination u.s.w. - and if

these mild requests are not all
granted in a fortnight they
will strike - A copy of this,
with various ^{inflammatory} ~~inflammatory~~ pamphlets
has been sent to every station
on the line, and it is
proposed to have a general
strike on the 21st of this
month - One of my Bengali
station masters gave me this
and though after the mutiny
events one realizes the
difficulty of depending on the
native - still I do firmly
believe in the personal loyalty
to me of my men - Higman
(at Singapore) writes to say that



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he expects his men to go out on
strike again on the 21st so

I suppose I shall be able to
test my opinion - which is that
my Bengalis as well as my
up countrymen will remain staunch.

I hope you won't consider
all this trivial; to me it
would ~~be~~ be a most bitter
personal disappointment if
my men went out - I should
begin to think that Watson might
be ~~so~~ right in thinking I could
not deal with men - for I do
look on the native as most
certainly as human being - though

a child.

Of course though I might manage children, I might not be able to manage men — so Watson might still be right — I'm afraid this is rather complicated, but I dare say you'll follow it —

Also, I expect in this part of the world my name goes a good long way —

I shall leave this letter open in case of any further events of interest — Would you mind sending it on to Ralph Wedgwood, to whom (to my lasting disgrace) I have not written this side the flood —

Ruby and Julia are coming back to me in about a week —

It's quite cool now here, since the rains have broken —

A propos of the name and its value, one of my station masters said to me "Sir, we are quite happy to be ruled by a master of such respectable family!" — a new kind of testimonial to the brothers Strachey — But it is odd how often the Baln hits off the real meaning of words in a way to make a ludicrous contrast with their current value — Talking of respectable families have you heard that Adick has

been sent here to officiate as one
of my inspectors? I suppose George
did it on purpose, but can't help
thinking he would have done better
in sending him to anyone else. It
puts me in an awkward position, in
case he turns out useless. As far
as I can see, — though he hasn't
been here long — he's interesting
and rather clever, but as an inspector
doubtful. He is especially clever
in ~~tw~~ twitting me in private
and M.V. Stracheying me in
public — which of course was
one of the things that might
have been made most awkward.
Also I find no difficulty in
lecturing him, in spite of our
ages — he is full of tact —
I have not yet met Lucy, but



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I am really very sorry for the poor girl - You can imagine what it must be to be practically restricted to the society of the wife of station masters & loco foremen; - they are stationed at Sutra, where there's only a rather stuffy Asst Engineer and lots of the inspector's jats - She cannot associate with the blacky whites, and it's a terrible business for an inspector's wife to get in with the sahib log -

Of course I'm doing my best
to help the poor creature, and
when Ruly comes down ~~with~~
we'll ask her here for
weekends or so forth, but
still it must be a miserable
lonely sort of existence for
her.

Friday 20th

All the other main line
districts have now followed
Hornal's lead & sent in similar
printed ultimatums to the
Agent (poor old Douglas!)

Sahibzunge of course is worse than
the main line, so that my district
is the solitary pillar - I am rather
surprised a Delhi fellow is
here - there are fewer Bengalis
there than ⁱⁿ any other district -

Today Dering interviews a
deputation and tomorrow or
next day I suppose we shall
know. I have just heard
that Sarvendro Nath Banerji
himself is expected here
tomorrow; this is an honour -
I don't expect he'll get much
luck.
If the war strikes & we give in

w'd better close the shutters
altogether - I'm afraid that
in any case the next ten or
twenty years in India will
be trying ones. They have
reached that stage, I think,
of thinking they can think -

The part worn kingly - Ade

Yours lovingly

Orson Welles