

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRADES UNIONS.

The report of the Royal Commission on Trades Unions has been laid before the British Parliament. The Commissioners were Lord Dunedin, Justice General in Scotland, Sir William T. Lewis, Bart., Sir Godfrey Lushington, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., the Right Hon. Arthur Cohen, K.C., and Mr. Sidney Webb, LL.B. L.C.C., barrister-at-law. Mr. Hartley B. N. Mothersole, M.A., LL.M., barrister-at-law, acted as secretary to the Commission.

A large number of witnesses were heard, but, strange to say, the Trades' Unions as such, refused to give evidence.

The majority report recommends that an Act of Parliament be passed for the following objects:

(1) To declare trade unions' legal associations.
(2) To declare strikes from whatever motive or for whatever purposes (including sympathetic or secondary strikes), apart from crime or breach of contract, legal, and to make the Act of 1875 to extend to sympathetic or secondary strikes.

(3) To declare that to persuade to strike—i.e., to desist from working, *apart from procuring breach of contract*, is not illegal.

(4) To declare that an individual shall not be liable for doing any act not in itself an actionable tort only on the ground that it is an interference with another person's trade, business, or employment.

(5) To provide for the facultative separation of the proper benefit funds of trade unions, such separation if effected to carry immunity from these funds being taken in execution.

(6) To provide means whereby the central authorities of a union may protect themselves against the unauthorized and immediately disavowed acts of branch agents.

Other objects are: (1) to enable trades unions to enter into enforceable agreements with other persons and their own members; and (2) to declare "Picketing" legal unless any one engaged in this practice "Acts in such a manner as to cause a reasonable apprehension in the mind of any person that violence will be used to him or his family, or damage be done to his property."

One minority report, by Sir William Lewis, suggests "That in view of the overwhelming evidence we have received as to the cruelty and oppression to which non-unionists are subjected at present, the practicability of devising legislation to prohibit strikes against non-unionists should be considered in order to prevent, if possible, the existing gross infringements of the liberty of the subjects." The same report protests against "Picketing," or "watching and besetting" non-unionists, being allowed by law.

Sir Godfrey Lushington is also of opinion that "picketing is an abuse for which a remedy is urgent-

ly required, and that the personal freedom of workmen needs not less protection than hitherto, but more. I, therefore, recommend that the existing prohibition of watching and besetting be retained, and that the proviso permitting it for the sole purpose of giving and receiving information be repealed."

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THE NORTH AMERICAN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.

This thriving and substantial company has marked its 25th annual report by issuing a copy of it in a very attractive form with a list of the securities held on 31st December last, and those held as collateral for loans. Accompanying the report is the following statement:

(1) This company has never through any of its officers, or otherwise, entered into any underwriting syndicate or any agreement relating thereto in any manner or form.

(2) This company has never contributed to the campaign funds of any political party in any manner whatever; in fact, it has never been asked to do so.

(3) This company has no subsidiary institutions in any manner or form, and is not connected in any way with any other financial concern; neither does it in any way control any company in which it is a stockholder.

(4) No director or officer of this company is in any way, whatever, interested in any agency contract in connection with the company.

(5) No director or officer of the company qualifies as a director in any other institution by the use of the stock of this company.

(6) The records of the company show that it will purchase securities from any person or firm, or make loans to any person or firm having satisfactory securities or desirable investments, as set out in its charter.

(7) The auditors of the company are appointed by the policy-holders and guarantors, and are gentlemen of the highest standing as professional accountants. The auditors elected this year, Messrs. Gordon and Young, are not interested in this company in any way, not even as policy-holders, and are absolutely independent of any control from the directors or officers.

(8) Under By-law No. 34, it is provided that "No director or office holder of the company shall either directly or indirectly borrow any money from the company." This By-law has been strictly adhered to.

(9) The remuneration payable to the president, the two vice-presidents, chairman of the Executive Committee and the directors of the company, is limited to \$8,500 per annum, under By-laws 15 and 16 of the company.