

1485

Barataria

15th March 43

My dear Father

I dare say you have seen in the weather reports what extraordinary weather we have been having here. It has been much more like the rains than the beginning of the hot weather with somewhat unfortunate results for us. Of course they told you of our accident; it happened this way. The temporary line was carried over the river by a pile bridge about 200 ft long and 6 feet above the river bed. The rain brought down a flood in the river, which rises very quickly and could not get away fast enough through the temporary bridge. The 200 foot girder was half

built on a sand bank upstream and I was afraid of the water undermining it so I cut away the bank at one end of the bridge to let the water get away. When the river went down we filled up the gap again when it again rained like blazes. However it seemed all right and the train went over to the colliery. When it was coming back just before the engine got on the bridge the bank settled a little and a rail broke. The engine went off and travelled over the sleepers till about 20 feet from the end of the bridge when it went off. The bridge was a good deal smashed and the waggons piled about pretty promising. Cross but luckily none was hurt. It took nearly a fortnight to put everything right again working pretty hard. Drysdale has written me a complimentary letter expressing his approbation! We might have taken our time though as about 6 hours after an engine whist over the river

again rose and has washed the bank away again. I hope this sickening rain is going to stop soon though there don't seem to be any signs of it yet. Besides doing actual damage it stops the work on the bridge as the masons won't turn out in the rain. However we are getting on pretty well and are erecting the girders as fast as they come which they are at last. We have got most of the piers up ^{on them} 30 feet and the girders are being erected at this height. When the piers will be built up and the girders lifted with them for the remaining 40 feet. I expect the extension of the Chauce branch will go on at once which I shall also have to look after. The bridge over the Khordia will be 5 spans of 88 feet, the piers about 50 feet high and the line beyond about 2 miles so I shall have plenty to do. Have they sent you the photographs of the bridge taken by Pont? They are

rather good - I am going to get you
some photos of points of interest along
the line as well. Those wretched critics
in Calcutta haven't paid me my wages
for the 2nd half of October yet and the
Government of India object to my being
paid for the 1st half at $1/4\frac{3}{4}$ and want to
cut it. Aren't they skinny? If they do
I'm going to appeal to the Board and the
Priority Council. I should like to have
my aneroid when its constitution is
repaired but there is no immediate
hurry about the other object, silver
not being in much demand at present.
I should also like a copy of your last
report if there is one going.

I must now close or I shall
miss the mail so goodbye

Your affectⁿ son

Rayphlacher

Fewest Library
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Lanona S.W.J.

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