

by a long and bitter struggle. The miners feel acutely the odious position in which they stand. 'It is easy,' remarked one, 'to say that the fellows in the trenches must think badly of us, but thousands of them are miners like ourselves, and what would they think if they found when they came back that we had let them down, and that they were worse off than before?'" The state of affairs became very serious, and although the stock of steam coal for the Navy, which had been received by the Admiralty, was ample for all needs, yet the industries of South Wales were at a standstill and steel works in that locality were all shut down. The miners were attacked with a biting virulence by a large section of the press, such papers as the *Morning Post* calling confidently on the Government to put the proclamation into force in all its severity. But as days passed it began to dawn on the nation that to coerce nearly two hundred thousand men was a sheer impossibility, and that the miners were the masters of the situation.

On July 19 Mr. Lloyd-George journeyed to Cardiff and was successful in ending the dispute. The miners agreed to return to work, having gained practically all their demands, the most important point being that the agreement then entered upon should continue for six months after the ending of the war, and should then be terminable only after six months' notice. The victory was a sweeping one for the men, and at the present moment their wages are 96.25 per cent. higher than in 1879. Coal hewers, the most expert workmen in the pit, now receive a minimum of \$13.36 a week, and the lowest paid labourer gets \$8.89. Speaking of the settlement on July 21, the *Times* said: "It was recognized that the strike had been ended by Mr. Lloyd-George, and not by the Munitions Act. The general feeling was that a crisis had been passed, but that the authority of the state had not been strengthened. The Munitions Act was, of course, framed to deal with individual transgressors, and not with large bodies of men. Parliament passed the Act on the assumption that the Trades Unions would invariably act with the Government. This belief was falsified on the first occasion on which the act was tested, and Ministers had to face a situation that had not been seriously contemplated."

The whole incident was of immense import; it had shown that a great body of men simply by the dead weight of their numbers, could with infinite ease defy, not only the masters, but the whole nation, and set penal legislation at defiance, that is to say, so long as time was pressing. "It has shown us, among other things," said the *Westminster Gazette* on July 24, "both the limits of coercion and the powers of persuasion. No power known to the law could have com-