

Mr. GERMAN: They were not marked as condemned boots?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: They were condemned boots. They had been discarded as not fit for the soldiers to wear any longer. The condemned mark may not have been on them.

WOMEN MUNITION WORKERS IN TORONTO.

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. GEORGE W. KYTE (Richmond): I desire to call the attention of the Minister of Labour to the following article which appeared in the Toronto Daily Star of July 27th:

"They are killing us off as fast as they are killing the men in the trenches", declared the spokeswoman of a deputation of women munition workers who came into The Star Office yesterday morning. "We are working six days a week from seven till seven and on Sundays from seven till four, and now they want us to work fourteen hours a day by coming back three nights a week to work two extra hours. We just have half an hour for lunch and half an hour for supper."

There were seven of them and they had just been dismissed from a munition factory in which they had most of them been working for over a year, because they refused to work on the fourteen-hour shift. Two wore the six months' munition workers' badge, and one wore the munition workers' good service medal as well. Two had husbands at the front and one had lost a brother in the trenches, while three other brothers were on active service.

Skin Off Hands.

"Look at our hands" cried one black-eyed maiden, thrusting out hands blackened with oil and machinery and from which the skin had peeled in big patches. They were all saturated with oil, and told of removing oil-soaked garments at night to replace them in the morning because they had no time for laundry work.

"One of the girls was too sick to come with us", they said, "She has been working five nights night work and is just dying on her feet. The oil has got into her system."

"We refused to work the fourteen hours yesterday, and when we went in this morning we were told we could go. We are going to see the Mayor about it."

The deputation then went up to the Mayor's office, but he was not in and they were referred to the Imperial Munitions Board. Sir Joseph Flavelle was in Ottawa, and Mrs. Fenton, Supervisor of Female Labour in munitions factories, was out of town. Mr. Mark Irish, to whom the deputation was then referred, had not time to-day to make public the result of the interview.

One Dropped Dead.

"There was one of us dropped dead on the street car the other day", said one of the deputation, "Though they put it down to heart trouble. And I know another who was so tired and dizzy that when she was going home from work she fell off the car and died later. And another the same way that walked right in front of a car and was so badly hurt that she is disfigured for life. I tell you we can't stand it."

I would like to ask the minister if his attention has been called to the conditions of women workers in munition factories in Toronto as described in this article, and if steps have been taken to ameliorate these conditions.

Hon. T. W. CROTHERS (Minister of Labour): I have no information as to any such conditions as those read by my hon. friend. I may add I do not believe they exist. It will have been noticed by hon. members that the statements are very general in character. If my hon. friend will get some particulars, and the names of employers in Toronto who are said to have treated their employees as set forth in what my hon. friend has read, I would be very glad to inquire into the matter.

Mr. KYTE: Was the Minister of Labour aware before to-day of the publication of this article?

Mr. CROTHERS: No, I was not.

Mr. KYTE: Does the minister think it is the duty to institute some inquiry without waiting for me to make a charge?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The subject is not now open for debate.

COAL SUPPLY IN THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

On the Orders of the Day:

Hon. WILLIAM PUGSLEY (St. John): I would like to ask the Government in regard to the transportation of coal to the Maritime Provinces, which is a matter of very grave importance. I have in mind more particularly the port of St. John, where there is very serious anxiety with regard to the anthracite coal supply for the coming winter. As my right hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce knows, anthracite coal is brought from the United States. I may tell him it is only worth about \$6 per ton in New York, whereas the price in St. John is about \$15 per ton. It is alleged this high price is due to the great cost of transportation. Within the last few days the announcement was made that the Government has offered to place certain steamers at the disposal of, I presume, the municipal authorities or those engaged in the coal trade, for the purpose of transporting coal from the mines to the city of St. John. The question is of such great importance that I think a definite statement should be made, and I would ask my right hon. friend, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, if he will inform the House as to what arrangements, if any, have been