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**EVERY CITY A TRENCH**

**Mr. Lloyd George Speaks to Miners. Coal—Lord of Industry. Must Pay Victory's Price to Get It.**

Convened by the Home Office, through whose efforts the whole question of coal production and distribution has been considered, a National Conference of representatives of the mining industry throughout the United Kingdom was held at the London Opera House on Thursday to consider suggestions from the Government with a view to their application to increasing the output of coal.

Speeches were made by Mr. Lloyd George and Sir John Simon, the Home Secretary, to a remarkable assembly of delegates representing colliery owners and every grade of underground and surface worker in the coalfields.

"This great assembly is united by a common purpose—to prove how united the coal-mining industry is in the crisis which we are prepared to face," remarked Sir John Simon, who explained that the object of the meeting was to carry out the unanimous report of the Coal Organization Committee. "That must be done by voluntary co-operation, and in that spirit the Government have invited you to come here, and in that spirit we count upon you to promote the success of our object." (Cheers.) The patriotism of the miners received handsome acknowledgement from the speaker—in one military unit every private was a pitman, every non-com. and officers had been connected with a colliery, and the commanding officer one of H. M. inspectors—and going on to plead for a relaxation of restrictions and rules in order to make up a deficiency of 3,000,000 tons of coal monthly, caused by the enlistment of a quarter of a million miners. Sir John made it clear that the Government did not want to go back on the Miners' Eight Hour Act. But that Act contained a suspensory clause for use "in the event of war or imminent national danger."

"We pledge our word of honor to the miners of this country," Sir John Simon stated on behalf of the Government, "that any relaxation of rules and practices which for national purposes we now make shall be made good to them and restored to them, without alteration or modification immediately this danger is over." This statement was received with applause from every part of the House, and Sir John concluded by likening the miners to the rescue party which was fighting the great mine explosion of the world, exploded by the deliberate act of the Kaiser.

**King Coal**

Mr. Lloyd George, who looked fresh and well despite his arduous duties, at once went to the heart of the subject. "We are short of coal," he said, "and we are suffering from the patriotism of the miner. Yet in peace and war King Coal is the paramount lord of industry. It is our real international coinage; we buy our food and raw material not with gold but with coal. It is life to us and death to our foes; it fills the weapons of war. Steel means coal; rifles mean coal; machine-guns mean coal; guns mean coal; shells mean coal. Coal is everything to us, and we want more of it to win victory. Coal is the most terrible of enemies and the most potent of friends."

There was always a difficulty in getting employers to upset workshops and men to relax rules and restrictions. Mr. Lloyd George continued, unless the urgency of the crisis was realized; but could anyone who read the news intelligently doubt that the situation was a serious, if not a perilous, one? Parties had disappeared, but the party system was so engrained in the British mind that two new parties had been formed—the Pessimists and the Optimists. (Laughter.)

"One was the Grey Sky school, and the other the Blue Sky school—(more laughter)—whereas the sky was really mottled. It was necessary to prepare for the worst, and rejoice in the best, remembering that behind the clouds the sun was always shining.

"The heavens in the east, whatever they mean, portend that a larger share than ever of the burden of this struggle will be cast upon the shoulders of Britain. Do not shrink from it. We must pay the price of victory if we mean to get it. It is no use calling attention to the cost we have incurred. That is not the question. The one question is whether it is enough. It is no use trying to bridge a 12-ft. stream with a 1-ft. plank. We have but one question to ask ourselves—Are we doing enough to secure victory? Because victory means life for our country. It means the fate of freedom for ages to come.

There is no price which is too great for us to pay which is within our power. There is too much disposition to cling on to the amenities of peace—business as usual, enjoyment as usual, fashions, lock-outs, strikes, ca' canny, all as usual.

"Wages must go on, profits must go on, but prices at all costs must be kept down, said Mr. Lloyd George with ringing sarcasm, pointing out the tendency to say that no man must be called upon to serve the State unless he wanted to, and then only in the particular way he fancied. The man who would be more use turning out munitions must be allowed to go to the front if he wanted to, and the other who would be better at the front must be allowed to stay at home. Freedom after all implies the right to shirk. Freedom implies the right for you to expect to enjoy and for others to defend. Is that fair? War, war is like a fever, and fever, a deadly fever, a ravage. The rules which are applicable in health are utterly unsuited to fever. What is the good of talking about it? Restraints which would be irksome, stupid, unnecessary when a man is healthy, are essential to save his life in fever.

What is the good of a patient saying: "I must have meat as usual, drink as usual, in fact, more than usual, because I am thirstier than usual. I have a high temperature, therefore I am more parched. If I want to go about why should I be confined to this little bed? Freedom above all things." But you die," he is told. "Oh," he says, it is more glorious to die a free man than to live in bondage. (Laughter.) Let Britain be beaten, dispirited, and dishonoured, but let no man say that any Britain during the war was ever forced to do anything for his country except that which was pleasant in his own sight." Victory is not in that road. The trenches are not all in Flanders." Every city is a trench in this country, a labyrinth of trenches. Every workshop is a rampart; every yard which can turn out munitions of war is a fortress.

**Brave Anstrallians.**

"Picks, shovels, lathes, hammers, they are as much the weapons of this war of European liberty, as a bayonet, a rifle, and a machine-gun, and the man who does not handle them with all his strength is falling as much in his duty as the soldier who runs away from the battle at the front. (Cheers.) I do not know whether the story of the Anstrallians and the New Zealand battalions has yet appeared. If it has not, I will take the risk of breaking a Cabinet confidence and tell it, and I will defy even the Press Bureau. (Laughter.) You must have some courage in a war. (Laughter and applause.) What happened the other day? The New Zealand battalions and the Anstrallians were expecting a Turkish attack. What was the effect upon them? No man would go on the sick list. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Not all the doctors of the regiments could persuade them. They would not complain; there was no pulse feeling. I can tell you. (Cheers.) There was no shirking. Not until the attack was over and until they had finished the Turks would they go into the hospital. (Applause.)

"That is the spirit which alone will enable us to win through. Nothing short of it will achieve victory. The peril is a great one; the peril is an immediate one; but if the Democracy of Britain rises to the occasion they will once more triumph over all forces of despotism in Europe. Nothing we can say can possibly do more to convince the people of this country of the danger than the facts that appear from day to day in the papers—not the headlines; please pass these over—(laughter)—read the news please, and the man who, having done that, does not understand the peril of his country would not believe it though one rose from the dead to tell him. There are hundreds of thousands of them lying in the East and in the West who can tell the peril if they rose. The time has come for every man, yes, and every woman who can help their country. There are scores of thousands of brave men—250,000 miners among them—in the trenches, facing the death of fury at this hour; waiting anxiously to hear the rattle of the loaded caissons coming from England to aid them.

"The waggons are waiting outside the yard gates to be filled. Let us fill them. (Applause.) Let us send them along; then when that is done there will be written in letters of flame the greatest chapter in the history of these islands, in which it will be told how, when the flag of freedom

**J.J. St. John**

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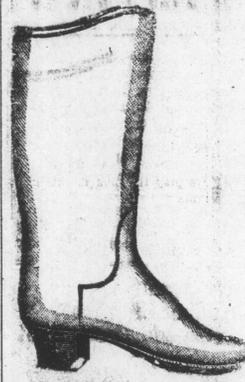
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dropped for a moment under the onslaughts of a ruthless foe, the men and women of Britain came to the rescue and planted it firmly on high where no tyranny can ever tear it down." (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Henderson then left for a Cabinet meeting. The meeting rose and cheered them heartily as they left.

Mr. Robert Smillie (president of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain) urged the miners for an increased output of coal "in order that something may be done in the coming winter to prevent the poorer classes of our great cities being sweated—(cheers)—30s., £2, and £2 10s. per ton for coal." ("Shame.")

**How Wars Begin**

Tommy was reading the war news. When he had finished he said to his mother.

"Mamma, how to wars begin?"

"Well, suppose the Germans hauled down the Austrian flag, and that the Austrians—"

"My dear," interrupted Tommy's father, "the Germans would not—"

"Excuse me, they would."

"Who ever heard of such a thing? You are giving Tommy a wrong idea."

"I am not, sir!"

"You are, madame!"

Tommy (preparing to leave the room): "It's all right. I think I know how wars begin."

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