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BIG STRIKE IN WALES

TRUE STORY OF THE GREAT MINERS' STRUGGLE IN 1893.

Despite Dire Want and Privation They Fought With Grim Determination Until Victory Was Won—Remarkable Unanimity of the Colliers—When Cavalry Arrived the Strikers Were Singing a Hymn.

The demand for a minimum wage is no new thing in the history of the south Wales coal trade. In 1893 and again in 1898 the question was to the fore and gave rise to prolonged and bitter struggles between capital and labor.

At the time of the great strike of 1893, the greatest strike ever recorded in the United Kingdom, Welsh colliers' wages were adjusted according to a sliding scale which made the price of coal govern wages.

Now, during the three years 1898-99 the south Wales coal owners were making handsome profits, and a fairly good wage was earned by working colliers, but the next three were lean years, and the miners' wages dropped steadily until they almost reached the vanishing point.

When at last the owners wanted to knock off 42-1/2 per cent from the standard of 1870 the men of Wales decided it was time to make a stand.

Thus the strike of 1893 began. When there is trouble in the air and the price is low and there is need for discussion the Welsh miners' thoughts turn instinctively to the great rocking stone on Pontypridd common.

By order of the men's leaders it was here that a gigantic meeting was convened for Aug. 14, 1893, to discuss their grievances, and the response to the summons showed that the Welshmen were in grim earnest.

When the mine owners learned that 40,000 to 50,000 desperate miners, armed with cudgels, were closing in on Pontypridd from all points of the compass their alarm was great, and they appealed wildly for protection. But they need not have been so terrified.

The thousand cavaliers who rode furiously to prevent the sacking of Pontypridd were taken utterly by surprise when they reached the "battleground" to find that all was perfectly orderly and peaceable. Led by the archdruid Morien, a remarkable figure, perched, where the ancient druids stood, upon the summit of the rocking stone, 40,000 voices rose to heaven in a grand Welsh hymn before the business of the meeting commenced at 12 o'clock.

The result of the men's deliberations was seen next day, when the indefatigable strikers made a series of forced marches for the purpose of persuading erring brethren who were still at work to throw in their lot with the majority. At Tylorstown, Fern-dale and Newcastle, a band of men 2,000 strong layd those miners who were on their way to work and persuaded them to join the strikers.

Another time an army of 15,000 men, in deadly earnest, made a swift night march by way of Porth, Trehafod and other putting villages for the purpose of putting a stop to the work that was still going on at Merthyr Vale.

On their arrival, to their delighted surprise, the delegates found that the Merthyr men had already struck work of their own accord.

The demonstrators were warmly welcomed by the miners of the place, whose wives brought baskets of bread and cheese to satisfy the weary marchers' hunger.

In the whole length and breadth of the Welsh coal field there was no room for backsliders. At a hint of any work being done, apart from pumping and repair work, a great army of determined men would appear, as it seemed, from nowhere to put a stop to it. When one remembers that these colliers, with their wives and children, were starving one is lost in admiration of the wonderful restraint which kept men back from deeds of violence.

To show that the strike was amply justified it is only necessary to recall the way in which it was settled. After the strike in most of the coal fields of the kingdom had drifted on for several weary months, until the owners themselves were heartily sick of it, although they would not give way, Lord Rosebery intervened.

He was, of course, at that time a member of the Cabinet, and the owners dared not refuse to accept his invitation to a round table conference since that would be equivalent to admitting the justice of their case.

Under his presidency the two sides met, and, though he had no vote, his searching questions and tactful observations began for the first time to reveal to the owners how weak their case would appear if laid bare to the public eye.

Nevertheless they remained obdurate, and it seemed as if the "Rosebery conference" were doomed to failure when the general lost suddenly adjourned the discussion and led the way to a room where an excellent rest had been prepared.

Compelled by good manners to attend a little towards one another while enjoying his lordship's hospitality, the two warring factions temporarily laid aside their differences and foregathered like men and brothers. And by the time lunch was over the atmosphere of mutual dislike and suspicion was so far banished that within a very short time they had come to an agreement, the masters agreeing to let the men go back to work upon the old terms without any reduction.

BUSY VANCOUVER.

Pacific-Coast Metropolis Has No Time For Problems.

The lions in their manes of snow look stolidly down from the north on a busy summer scene in Vancouver these days. These twin peaks, strangely formed like the recumbent king and queen of beasts, always challenge the attention of the stranger, although the eager populace seem busily unconscious of the aggressive, silent sentinels. It was once intended to locate this great hive of commerce and industry at Port Moody, on the extreme reach of Burrard Inlet, says S. T. Wood, the well-known writer in a recent article.

The men who pre-empted the room and helped to draw upon and form the prospective community for its use were sadly disappointed when the Canadian Pacific decided to locate the metropolis at Vancouver. The city's foreshores, with the exception of a few street ends, are owned by the railway company, but that does not make Vancouver an inland city. There are foreshores owned by that peculiar institution, the Government, and people actually build houses there and live in them.

To some there seems something innately wicked in presuming to live while neither owning nor paying rent for land, but the railway squatters are not sensitive. The vandal outrage that razed the timber of Dead Man's Island has been followed by the location of a shack town on its shores. Although the city could not defend itself against the timber vandals, who have razed the island an unsightly blot, it has not only defended itself against the shack-builders, but has successfully carried the war into their territory. They were technically sustained by the same Governmental authority as the triumphant timber vandals, which goes to show that officials is much the same here as elsewhere.

The city is too busy for problems. The thousand turbaned Sikhs who have been a problem elsewhere, but they do not seem to strain the city's capacity for absorption. In the mills, on the railways, in the salmon canneries and on farms they are gradually acquiring western speed and losing their dependent and childish ways. Like all Orientals, they make but small contributions to the unearned increment. For this and other reasons they are locally regarded as undesirable. The Chinaman, employing the economic law through which the ultimate consumer pays the duty. He shifts the \$500 tax by asking \$40 a month for domestic service.

The Japanese exemplify the more aggressive Oriental attitude. Welcomed gladly by the salmon canneries because they are cheaper than white fishermen, they soon got the fishing into their own hands. In spite of theories about the superior courage and determination of the white races its representatives here are reluctant toward going out on the water at night where the Japanese are fishing. It is not hinted that the Japanese would cut a net or line, or do anything which other fishermen would not do. But fishermen are fishermen, and the thousand eyes of night are not always open.

The Japanese will not always remain remote of boats and haulers of nets. The wheel of chance set in motion by the employment of them by the cannery has not exhausted its momentum, and they may displace the white fishermen. They have shown their capacity this spring by organizing a campaign and they control the local market by keeping their fish alive in the tank compartments of a vessel. They have determined there shall be no more bargain days in codfish. The mental subtlety of the Oriental is levying its toll, but it is an excellent corrective of the complacent vanity of the west.

Witness Not Sure.

Out of the House Napoleon Champagne, M.P.P. for Ottawa, is as ready to laugh at himself as to make deadly fun of others. For example, he relates, with gusto, a story concerning his ocular weakness—a "cross" of the eyes. Mr. Champagne is a prominent Ottawa lawyer. One day he was examining a French witness in one of the courts at the capital, where English only is used. He had to speak to the witness through an interpreter, so that the court could understand question and answer. The witness was acting stupidly, and Mr. Champagne says: "I spoke to him in French asking him why he didn't answer. Still he was silent. Again I said to him: 'Will you tell me why you do not answer?' " "Are you speaking to me?" asked the man at last.

"Why certainly I'm speaking to you." "Oh," said the fellow: "I thought you were talking to somebody at the other side of the room."

A Mis-Directed Appeal.

The late Sir John Carling was one of London's most popular citizens, and although his business as brewer did not recommend him to the strenuous temperance workers, he was held in high esteem for his personal qualities. On the occasion of a semi-missionary meeting in what was then called Queen's Avenue Methodist Church, in the "eighties," Sir John was asked to take the chair. One of the speakers was an eloquent Indian from the far west, who spoke strongly against the sale of "fire-water" to his people, describing its frightful ravages in picturesque language. He concluded by calling upon the chair-man and all other Christian persons to put down the liquor traffic with a firm hand. Sir John smiled graciously on the orator, but the audience was not slow to appreciate the irony of the situation.—Saturday Night.

Gold Paper Weight.

Chairman Englishman of the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway Commission has a gold nugget paperweight which he considers to be one of the finest samples ever brought out of Northern Ontario. It was taken from the Dome Mine and has just been presented to the chairman of the commission by the superintendent.

It is seldom difficult for a matchless beauty to make a match. A girl can be sentimental even about the way she eats pickles. Many a blonde has a light head and a lady heart.

LADIES OF THE CABINET.

Ministers' Wives at Ottawa Have a Hard Task to Fulfill.

In Ottawa the queens of society reign not, as in some cities, by virtue of the possession of great wealth, but by right of political leadership of their husbands or fathers; and perhaps this acts to some extent as a check upon the inclination (so generally prevalent) toward display in dress, household management and the exercise of hospitality. If ambitious either for herself or for her husband, the Ottawa woman has other outlets for her energy than mere efforts to outshine her neighbors in the gorgingness of her apparel or the splendor of her entertainments; and beyond the gaieties which keep society at the capital in a whirl for the first few months of each year there is often much of a serious purpose. It is the nature of women, even in this age when in unprecedented numbers they are engaging in independent enterprises, to be intensely interested in the interests of those dear to them, and in political circles the women most averse to entering what they regard as the "province of man" cannot hold entirely aloof from the keen and exciting and absorbing politics. It is impossible that they should not take sides, but if it is done tactfully and without bitterness, even an opponent like, I believe, to see a wife standing staunchly by her husband, unceasingly caring for the interests he has at heart, and helping him, in ways old or new, as a woman.

Whatever idea one may hold on the question of "woman's sphere" in general, one is bound from the nature of the case to take what may be called an old-fashioned view of the leading women at Ottawa. To them outside the world they are first and foremost the wives or daughters of the Honorable Minister of this or that Department; and as their parts are largely played within the sanctity of home it is less easy to write of them than it is of their husbands. The women whose public work is not in the least injured by the utmost possible amount of limelight.

Even a glimpse into the lives led by the Government ladies whilst at Ottawa suggests that, for part, if not all, of the year they must be very busy women. For instance, take the matter of receptions alone. During the season the wives of the Cabinet Ministers receive on Monday afternoons, and the number of their callers mounts far into the hundreds. It is obligatory to return to these calls, but I was told that this year they had resolved to do so. When, however, one lady had nine hundred callers and another sixteen hundred (with several reception days still to come) it became manifest that to return to the visits of the great number was impossible. And, of course, there are in addition a multiplicity of other social functions, such as dinners and luncheons, at-home and bridges, to take the time and strength of the social leaders, whether as guests or hostesses.

Many of the ladies belong by birth and education to the two old provinces which were the first to bear the name of Canada. Ontario is represented by Mrs. Sproule, the wife of the Speaker of the House of Commons, at whose table (it is of real interest to know) wine never appears, and also by half a dozen of the Ministers' wives.—Emily P. Weaver in The Saturday Globe.

Passed the Third Degree.

When he was a member of the House of Commons, no one was more fond of giving the greatest number of "old ladies of the Senate" than Rufus Pope. Despite the fact that he was one of the principal insurgents against the leadership of Mr. Borden while the Conservative party was in the cold shades of Opposition, the new Premier heaped coals of fire upon the head of his "quondam" follower by making him a member of the Senate to succeed the late Senator Baker. Pope went into the Senate filled with all kinds of ideas respecting the reform of the Upper Chamber, and was going to set up his feet and take notice. The days went by, however, and the innocent ones who believed in the professions of practical politicians looked daily for the Pope bomb to burst and shatter the gloom of the red chamber. Nothing happened, however, until the late Senator Tom Davis from Prince Albert found the "would-be reformer" fast asleep in his chair while Sir Richard Cartwright was fulminating against protection. Davis shook him, and grasping his hand said: "Welcome, Rufus, old man. Now I know that you are really a Senator!" —Saturday Night.

Bristol to Participate.

There is now every probability that the City of Bristol, Eng., will be represented at the dedication in August next of the Halifax Memorial Tower, commemorating the first grant of self-governing powers to a British colony, namely, Nova Scotia. It is stated, also, says a Canadian official communique, that the City Council are considering a suggestion that a bronze tablet should be sent from Bristol to be placed in the Tower. A proposal to the effect should be representative of the departure of the Cabots from Bristol on their first voyage of discovery in 1497, as depicted in Mr. Board's picture at the Art Gallery, was thought to be a very happy one, and it is understood that the Lord Mayor will take action with that object in view. The Royal Colonial Institute, the ports of Liverpool and Glasgow and the city of Edinburgh are being invited to send representatives to the opening ceremony, which will be presided over by the Duke of Connaught.

Immigration Doubles.

Immigration from the United States through the port of Emerson, Man., for March, shows an increase of one hundred per cent over the same month a year ago, according to Commissioner of Immigration Bruce Walker. The value of effects of American settlers passing through North Portal, Sask., during March totalled \$9,900,000.

The Flat Hunter is Handicapped by No Game Laws.

Once in a while a woman buys something at a bargain sale, only to discover after she gets home that it was just what she wanted.

THE PRAIRIE BACHELOR.

He is One of the Most Hospitable Creatures on Earth.

In a part of the west which was virgin prairie six or seven years ago, and where the homesteads are still in all stages of infancy, the bachelor abounds. He has been in the country longer than the married man, and is still in the majority. Sometimes he has some of his own people living with him, or at least a sister, who "holds up" the feminine end of the establishment; but more often he lives alone, being his own housekeeper, cook, washer and baker, in fact, ministering to himself in all things. He has, therefore, many household duties to perform, as well as his day's work on the farm, so that his life is by no means an easy one.

To a man so situated, marriage would bring greater ease and comfort. It would relieve him of many small cares; but, then, a homesteader's wife has a hard time of it, and it may be that chivalrous considerations keep the homesteader so often without a mistress. The bachelor seems quite contented, and no more vulnerable in matter of love than a man who has more to divert his mind. Though the homesteader sees comparatively few women, he is fastidious enough in his ideas of them. He does not even strive for the favor of the fair by trying to look his best. As a rule, he surpasses the average man in height and good looks, generally, but he is as unconscious of this fact as he is of all the rules of becomingness. The laundryman and the clothes presser are far distant, and his own exertions do not extend to giving his garments that care which must be given if the wearer is to look spick and span. These words cannot often be used in describing this bachelor's appearance, and his attire frequently needs all the force of his good looks to carry it off. Indeed, girls, he is not the ready-made prey to your charms that you imagine him to be. So do not extend to him unbounded sympathy for his hardships and the desolateness of his home and his life. No doubt there are such drawbacks present, but he is accustomed to them.

After all, his activities are often only those demanded by the care of a one-roomed shack (of which, by a process of evolution, the house will be the final achievement). But it is said that the narrower the limits, the greater the difficulty in preserving order. Housekeeping bachelors here and there share this opinion, and are so fully convinced of its soundness that they forego all efforts towards tidiness.

But there are some, whether living in shacks or houses, whom no woman could rival in neatness and general domestic ability. They are good cooks, or are looked upon as such. But their reputation has been won by skill in a few simple lines. They attempt nothing elaborate. One of them has explained that recipes in cookery books bring with them a difficulty which balks the bachelor at the very outset. The first direction is generally: "Take a clean dish."

These men are as much addicted to visiting one another as were the three curates in "Shirley," with their perpetual "triangle of visits." It is generally on Sunday that the farmers seek each others' society, forming into twos and threes for the purpose. Sometimes they are five or six strong, yet they are received by an undimmed host. Probably the fact is that he is well prepared for such an invasion, for it is usually the most caped and best dressed of the group of guests. The unmarried homesteader who entertains is surely one of the most hospitable creatures on earth.

Ernest Thompson Seton, naturalist to the Government of Manitoba, and chief of the American Scouts, has been a huge success over in England. He has lectured, publicly and privately, a dozen times, and talked with great sound common sense and acceptability that he has been received rather as an old friend than as a new acquaintance. His quaint enunciation, his imitation of birds and animals, his intimate knowledge of natural history and forest lore have proved most fascinating. The Countess of Carrick, among many others, has taken him up, and has introduced him to everybody worth knowing. His books are selling by the thousand, and his unique personality gains him friends at every party he goes to. The other night he was at the House of Commons, listening to a coal strike debate, and he dined there in company with the Right Hon. John Burns.

Mr. Thompson Seton has spent a lot of time in several visits to the Zoological Gardens, and a keeper there, not knowing who he was, said to a friend: "He is just wonderful, that chap; talks to the beasts as though he were one of them himself!"

An Anglo-Canadian Hostess.

Lady Kirkpatrick, who is now in the south of France, is one of the most prominent of Anglo-Canadian hostesses in London. Her connection with social circles in the metropolis, of course, dates from the time, when, as a girl, she made regular visits to that country. Like so many other Canadian ladies, she has succumbed to the charms of the capital, and for some years has made it her residence. Many of the intellectual leaders of Britain and Canada are to be met at her flat in Hyde Park Gate.

Never a Goose Quill.

Only one hitch occurred a few days ago when the West Indies treaty was being finally agreed to. It is customary to sign the treaty with a goose quill, but none could be found. An armed policeman was sent through the city of Ottawa, but searched in vain, with the result that an ordinary pen performed the deed. H.R.H., the Governor-General made a happy speech to the representatives of the two countries after the ceremony of signing had been concluded.

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