

THOUSANDS OF IDLE MINERS WHO WILL NEVER DIG AGAIN SADDEST SIGHT IN BRITAIN

Cardiff, Wales.—One of the saddest sights in Great Britain today is that of the permanently unemployed coal miners of the Rhondda valley of South Wales, some 133,000 men are working in this valley, now known as the "valley of despair," and beside them stand idly anywhere from 30,000 to 35,000 miners who will never go down a mine shaft again.

Drive through town after town and you will see them standing, hundreds and hundreds, along every main street, most of them are men just reaching their full prime of life. Standing idle, hands in pockets, they seem to be waiting for something. Ask them what it is and they will reply:

"We are just lingering."

"For what?"

Waiting for "Old Age" Pension.

"For the old age pension to come along."

"But you can't be more than 45 years old!"

"Forty-two—but what about it? What can I do?"

At 65 years of age (if men work in an insurable vocation) they would be eligible for \$2.50 a week in the form of a government old age pension. As the chances are that most of them will have been out of work twenty years later, when 65 comes along, they must wait again another five years until they are 70 years old, when they would automatically be eligible to receive a \$2.50 a week for what is left of their lives.

These are merely the cold facts. The mining town of Pontypridd, for example, has a population of 50,000. Eleven thousands are at work. Six thousand are unemployed, of whom roughly 2,000 have been out of work for more than four years. And not one of the latter group is likely ever to go down a mine shaft again.

Fifty Out of 2,300 at Work.

Some towns are in an even more ghastly condition. Maerdy, containing one of the best collieries in "South Wales," had 2,300 miners employed in 1921. It has some fifty working today. When I asked a shopkeeper there how he expected to carry on, he replied:

"By losing all the money I made in 1921. I've done all that now and more—my whole shop's mortgaged."

Maerdy, once such a hotbed of communism that it was called the "Little Moscow," is so dejected and apathetic that it hasn't any radicalism left today.

Homes Models of Neatness

These miners, mark you, are among the most respectable and clean living people of Britain. Their towns are scrupulously clean. They have been enduring privations almost unbelievable for the last five, six or eight years, but go into their houses and you will find hearthstones and brass brightly polished, with both the man and his wife as well as the children peaked and clean.

These people present a social problem of the first magnitude to any British government. Born miners, loving the work underground, they first of all hate to leave their valleys and, secondly, no work can be found for them elsewhere.

Trapped by Economic Forces.

They and very possibly their children are trapped in these valleys by the economic forces which stopped the wheels at the mining pitheads. Worse still, the very rationalization of mining industry which must be undertaken to modernize the British to meet foreign competitions will add thousands more miners to the permanently unemployed, because on the average a machine-equipped mine needs two-thirds fewer men.

Here is a typical case of a miner on the dole. He has been out of work four years. He gets an unemployment benefit, weekly, of 15 shillings 3 pence for himself, 8 shillings for his wife and 2 shillings for each of three children. These sums total 29 shillings 3 pence, or \$7.31 a week for a family of five.

Keep up Funeral Insurance

Out of that sum the head of the family spent 8 shillings, or \$2 a week for rent, 6 cents a week for the doctor, 6 cents each for his wife and himself and a penny for each child for funeral insurance. This last ghastly item is being doggedly paid by the Welsh even when they are starving. When the one of the beneficiaries dies the insurance company pays \$90 for an adult or \$75 for a child, and furnishes the

coffin and the hearse. At any rate, all that is left out of the \$7.31 is \$5.13 to cloth and feed a family of five for a week.

The employed skilled Welsh miner, today earns about \$2 a shift, working five and one-half shifts a week or \$11 a week for whatever family he has.

These are some of the realities of the British unemployment situation, the most chronic feature of which is a more or less permanent core including 2,000,000 jobless. Today 33 per cent of the British coal miners are out of work, 39 per cent idle in the iron and steel industry, 20 per cent in the textiles and more than 55 per cent in the shipbuilding line. And all of them are basic exporting industries, which were the keynote of Britain's prosperity before the world war.

Facts Behind Boom Ballyhoo.

Behind the "boom ballyhoo" in Britain last year it might be illuminating to point out the following facts:

First, there were 10,008,000 persons registered in work at the beginning of January, 1934, 568,000 more than in January 1933. Yet there are 2,287,000 unemployed, more than 25 per cent of whom have been workless for more than a year.

Next to that, the unemployment figures do not show the jobless who have recently been shifted from the dole to poor-law relief and local rates under the "Means test." This test, taken shortly after the notorious 10 per cent cut in the dole and the so-called reform insurance scheme of 1931, showed that the number receiving poor-law relief had risen by 30 per cent.

Statistics Fail to Show Half.

The city of Cardiff, for example has 18,000 persons registered as unemployed and an additional 24,500, or one-tenth of its entire population, on poor-law relief.

Beside all the prosperity talk in Britain today lies the following cold-blooded fact: Some \$96,000 workers in England got their wages reduced during the "boom" of 1933 and only 171,000 got a wage increase. Wages were reduced by a total sum of \$4,000,000 and increased only \$80,000,000 leaving \$320,000,000 less paid out in wages last year. And 2,500 workers had one and a half hours' increase in work per week, while 11,000 had three and a half hours weekly less work.

A sinister admission is the government's own report that the largest wage increases were in the steel smelting and rolling mills and for "employees of certain firms engaged in the manufacture of heavy chemicals and explosion and allied trades."

HE WAS A MECHANIC AS WELL AS A CLOWN

(New York Sun)

One of the smaller burlesque houses employs a young colored man to clown up and down on the sidewalk before the theatre, in order to attract patrons.

He is dressed in a clown's red suit, with a red high hat. His face is painted red where it is not whitewashed. He is decidedly clever in his sidewalk maneuverings, his fancy steps, and his cane flourishing. He makes comical faces at the passersby, and entices them in with inviting gestures of his white-gloved hand. Many persons stop on the corners to watch with amusement his antics.

The other night his role was changed temporarily. A car broke down before the theatre. Forgotten immediately was his clowning, forgotten the theatre, forgotten his cane, which lay on the walk beside him.

While the driver was busily rummaging in the rear of the car for tools, the clown had the hood up and was inside, working over the engine. Apparently he was as adept a mechanic as clown, for the owner stood aside and permitted him to have his way.

CAN BE USEFUL

Washington, Feb. 24.—An Attempt will be made by the CWA to rehabilitate the Virgin Islands, now the property of the United States. The growth of sugar cane can be encouraged and or \$75 for a child, and furnishes the

A GLANCE AT THE LOCAL NEWS OF FREDERICTON 27 YEARS AGO

(From the DAILY HERALD,
Feb. 25, 1907).

Going to Debec

George Bailey son of L. W. Bailey of the University lately completed his medical course at McGill College. He will receive his degree in May and has made arrangements to practise his profession at Debec Junction.

Severe Weather

Saturday night was not only the coldest of the season but also one of the coldest nights the city has experienced in several years. The thermometer at the pumping station registered 36 below zero during the night. The weather moderated Sunday night and a heavy snowstorm set in continuing for some hours today.

Finished Work

Says the Moncton Times—J. T. Forbes arrived home Wednesday night from Bangor where he has been for the past two years in the capacity of pay master for A. S. Trites, the well known railway.

Trites has finished his contract with the Bangor and Aroostook railway for the p.

that Mr. Trites has built about one hundred and forty miles of the B. & A. man, mills of sidings. Although busy with railroad building Mr. Trites has devoted some attention to pleasure. In Bangor at the present time the Salisbury man has one of the finest racing stables to be found in Maine. He is also the owner of a very fine pleasure yacht on the Penobscot River.

A Governor's Death

Lieutenant Governor J. B. Snowball is dead. The fateful summons came to him shortly before seven o'clock Sunday evening when he was on the way to Christchurch Cathedral to attend divine service. He collapsed on the sidewalk near the lower corner of Parliament Square and passed away almost instantly apparently without suffering any pain. It is needless to say the sad announcement of his death has greatly shocked the Province. His honor arrived in the city from his home in Chatham on Wednesday, the 13th instant and has been occupying rooms at the Queen Hotel. He formally opened the Provincial legislature on the 14th instant and has since attended regularly to his official du-

ties almost daily. While not in the enjoyment of his usual good health for more than a year his condition gave no cause for anxiety. On Saturday evening he entertained a number of the members of the Legislature and departmental officials to dinner at the Queen Hotel and as usual the function passed off very pleasantly. On Sunday morning he attended service at the Methodist Church. No change was noticed in his condition at the supper table on Sunday evening. At 6.45 o'clock he set out with his valet Fred McKenzie for the Cathedral. When opposite G. Y. Dibblee's residence he remarked to Mr. McKenzie that he was not feeling very well. They started to return to the hotel and when just above Farraline Place His Honour without warning collapsed to the sidewalk. A man who was passing at the time repaired to the Queen Hotel and broke the news to landlord McCaffrey. C. J. Osman, M.P. P. and John Sullivan clerk at the hotel hastened to the scene and with the assistance of Mr. McKenzie carried the stricken man to his room. Drs. Atherton and McGrath were summoned and upon examination found life extinct and expressed the opinion that death had resulted from a heart attack.

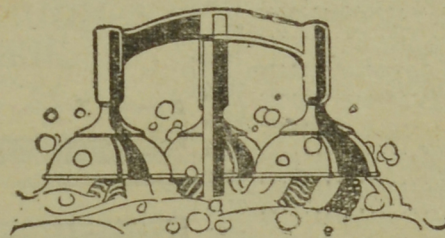
Premier Tweedie who was spending Sunday at Chatham was promptly notified and arrived at 6 o'clock this morning by special train accompanied by W. B. Snowball, son of the deceased.

ed, Col. J. D. B. F. McKenzie, R. A. Lawlor and others. The remains of the deceased governor will be taken to Chatham for burial by special train on the I.C.R. at four o'clock this afternoon.

The House Adjourns

When the Legislature met this afternoon Premier Tweedie said: "It becomes my painful duty to announce to this House the death of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. The line between life and death, joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, is a very narrow one. On Saturday night His Honour performed the duties of governor in a social way and was then in fairly good health. On Sunday night he was dead, his spirit gone from amongst us. Since boyhood it has been my pleasure to know him as a man ever ready to assist in all good work. He was one of the captains of industry of the Province, and in the Miramichi district his loss will be keenly felt. To his family, on behalf of the government, I extend the deepest sympathy, knowing that the whole Province will soon join with us in expression of our feelings in the matter. Under the circumstances, I feel that the House should adjourn as a mark of respect to His Honour, I would therefore move that when the house adjourns it stands adjourned until Tuesday the 5th of March next. The House then adjourned.

A New Perfected VACUUM CUP WASHER



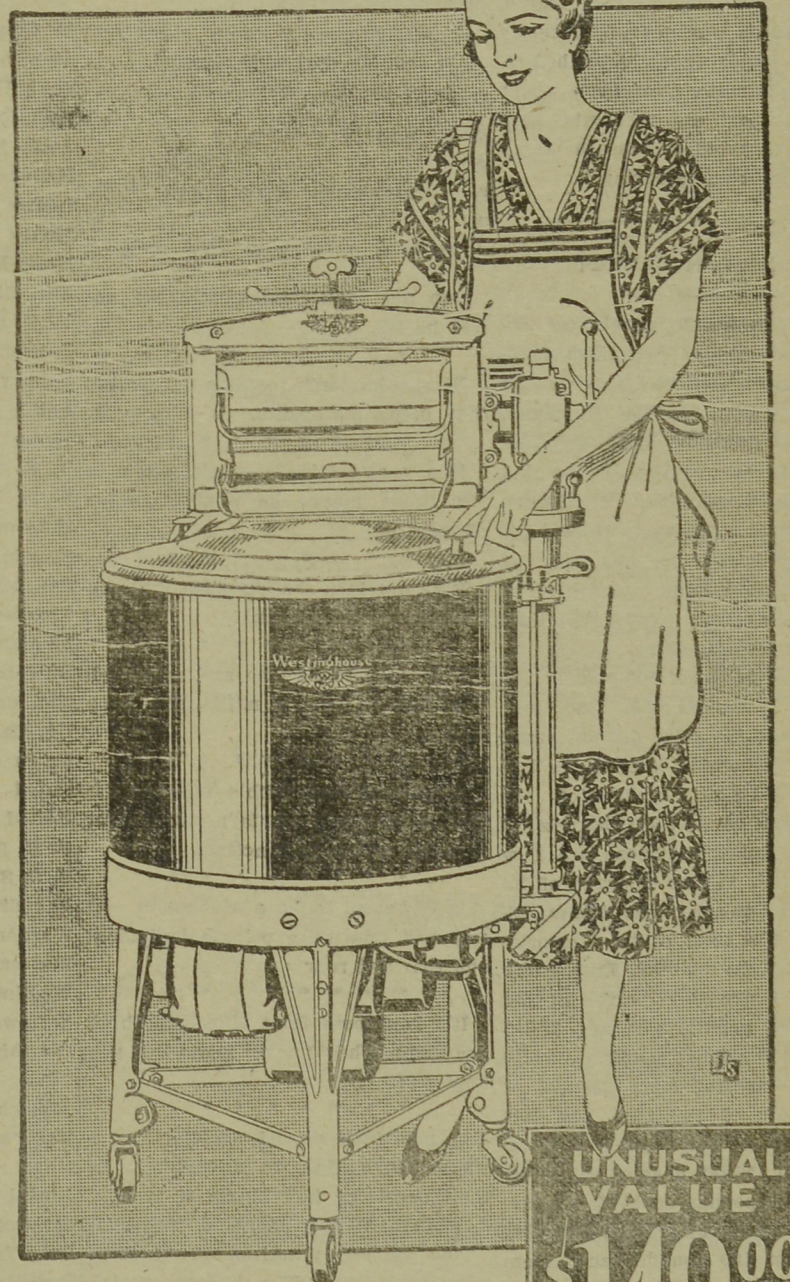
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