

his treatment to the authorities who were "curing" him, he might lose his pension. It was more liberal than if he had enlisted here. He discounted my anxiety, assuring me that the doctors were using every possible method.

Minnie O'Brien recounted to me what she had heard of the onset of his illness; I would not talk of it to himself. In hospital with pleurisy, over there in France, he had got out of bed and run out to follow his regiment in delirium. He had received a military distinction, for what I never knew; to me all that was as dust and ashes. No bravery, no unselfishness of his—and both I knew he had—could wipe out for me the sorrow that he had been drawn into the great massacre, one of the millions of pawns, duped and betrayed.

In March W. C. Anderson booked a committee room in the House of Commons that we might take soldiers' wives and widows there to talk to Members of Parliament. We had the same hard facts of misery and neglect to disclose to them which we had been fighting all through the War. The old soldier had the grievances still he had suffered in other wars. We had to tell of a gunner in the R.F.A. discharged pensionless with a shattered leg on which three operations had been performed, the painful wounds still suppurating. After a month of agitation we got him 25s. a week, but only for one month "conditional." The struggle for him must continue. Another private had served twelve years with "exemplary" character and received the Indian and South African medals. He had re-enlisted in 1914. Discharged with an incurable complaint, too ill to work and suffering grievously, he had received only 10s. a week sick benefit, which would soon be exhausted, and he had a wife and five children, the youngest five months old. After two months' correspondence I had received a promise of 4s. 8d. a week for him for 33 weeks "final." Poor fellows, they were but cannon-fodder still.

Despite the new stores of men opened to it by Conscription, the Army still kept its grip on the heedless boys who enlisted under age and then bitterly repented, begging to be sent back to their parents. A widowed mother who was with us wept for her sixteen-year old son. Always delicate, he had four brothers at the Front, and had offered himself to the recruiting sergeant from anxiety on their account. His mother and sisters had pleaded for his discharge from the day of his enlistment. I had summoned all the influence I could muster to their aid, but his release was not sanctioned till he had been sent back from France incurably paralysed. A gratuity was refused on the ground that his relatives had claimed him as under age.

At Old Street Police Court in October 1916 a lad of 14 was charged with being a deserter, and handed over to a military escort. His mother pleaded that he had joined the Army a fortnight before, and was in a draft warned for the Front.

Arrests under the D.O.R.A. became more frequent. Finlay Chisholm, a ploughman, and Kelman, a cattle driver, were imprisoned for an argument with a recruiting sergeant. Miss Howsin, for some time mysteriously referred to as a "country squire's daughter," was taken from her home by police in motor-cars and imprisoned in Holloway, her friends being left 17 days without knowledge of her whereabouts. Her offence, unconnected with the War, was her friendship with an Indian reformer regarded as troublesome. W. Iredale, a foreman warehouseman of Bradford, was imprisoned for two months because he said:

"The very people who want us to fight in their interests are the people who looked upon the Army as the scum of the earth in time of peace."

Alan Kaye, a young Oxford undergraduate, received two months' imprisonment for distributing the N.C.F. manifesto, "Shall Britons Be Conscribed?" though he promised not to do it again.

Old Laurence Ginnell sneered bitterly at the quiescent Members of Parliament, declaring that the Government regarded them as "automats," the mere "filling-stuff" of the House.

Peter Petroff, a brown-faced Russian, whose whimsical smiles had drawn long crow's-feet from the corners of his eyes, a revolutionary of revolutionaries, had sometimes spoken for us at the Women's hall, accompanied by his German wife, a serious intellectual young woman. For Socialist speeches against the War he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment on the pretence that he had failed to comply with the Aliens' regulations. On appeal, his sentence had been quashed. The Government retaliated by internment. When complaint was made, McKinnon Wood, the Secretary for Scotland, retorted that Petroff was a political refugee and his wife "a believer in neither government nor God."

There was trouble again on the Clyde. The agreement made at the Parkhead Forge to pay women the same rates as men had not been implemented. The management was even refusing the bare £1 a week which Lloyd George had promised to enforce in Government factories.

David Kirkwood, as convener of shop stewards, had hitherto been permitted to pass freely about the works for the settlement of small questions, as was customary in other factories. He was now ordered not to leave his vice without permission. Thus prevented from performing his duties as convener, he resigned the position. His work-mates thereupon informed the management that if Kirkwood's freedom of movement were not restored they would cease work at noon that day. The management remained obdurate, the strike took place. In the small hours of the next morning<sup>1</sup> Kirkwood and four other shop stewards, Messer, MacManus, Shields, and Haggarty, only two of whom worked at Parkhead, were deported to Edinburgh, because they were members of the Clyde Workers' Committee, which was regarded as the source of all the trouble in the area. Wainwright, another Parkhead shop steward, and four men from other factories, were later deported to Aberdeen. The 1,600 people who had downed tools at

<sup>1</sup> March 25th, 1916.



Parkhead remained on strike, and as news of the deportations spread, the strike extended. Twenty thousand munitioners left their work to attend a protest meeting on Glasgow Green, and a large proportion of them did not return. Some of the strikers were brought before the Munitions Tribunal and fined £5 each; but the strike continued, nevertheless.

Henderson, to whom loyal Labourists would imagine they might have looked for support, or at least for mediation, denounced the strikers without a word on their behalf. The Press vilified them.

The officials of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, to which a large proportion of the strikers belonged, was bitterly implacable towards the Workers' Committee movement. They attacked the strikers in their journal, refused all strike pay, and posted a notice in their offices, informing the strikers that if they failed to return to work immediately the Government would take "drastic action," information as to the nature of which the Amalgamated Society was "not allowed to give publicity." This attack by the A.S.E. was more damaging to the strike than anything the Government could do.

In the atmosphere of doubt and terror created, persuasion prevailed; the strikers returned to work, on receiving a vague pledge from the Government that all their grievances, including the deportations, should be inquired into and redressed.

The pledge was wholly broken. Gallacher and Muir, with several Members of Parliament, had interviewed Dr. Addison in London and a further conference had been arranged; but Lloyd George was then in Paris. On his return negotiations were cut off. The deported men, from whom permission to return to their homes was still withheld, found themselves boycotted by employers in every locality, and unable to earn a living. On pleas being made for them in Parliament, the Government eventually offered to grant relief of 10s. to 15s. a week to their families. Many and deep were the imprecations uttered by Trade Unionists against Arthur Henderson, who though a Labour representative and a Trade Unionist, had shared the responsibility for the deportations.

Thus, assisted by the Government, the employers continued paying women such pittance as they chose. Their power was great, for, as the Board of Trade *Labour Gazette* reported, there were still more than 160 women applicants for every hundred jobs. The President of the Local Government Board proudly declared<sup>1</sup> that all the factory inspectors were engaged in "combing" the factories of men, and urging the employment of women in their stead. Thus men were driven to the Front, and employers supplied with cheap labour.

Whilst the Clyde struggle was at its height the Press reported an action for £20,000 commission on a £2,000,000 contract for supplying horses to the French Army. The Runciman company was concerned in it, and Philip Runciman admitted that his associates hoped to make £100,000 profit out of 40,000 horses sold to the French. Complaints were heard

<sup>1</sup> March 29th, 1916.

that the relatives of the President of the Board of Trade should be so heavily involved in war contracts, as well as in the shipping companies, which had driven up food prices.

Another Budget was introduced in April, with the taxes on cocoa, coffee, and chicory raised to 6d. per lb. "to bring them to the level of tea," and a further tax on sugar. White granulated sugar used ordinarily by the poorer families had cost 1½d. per lb. before the War; it rose now to 5d. and 6d. per lb. The income tax was graduated up to 5s. in the £, and the excess profits tax to 60 per cent. Railway and entertainment tickets were taxed. Yet the deficit was greater than ever and must be met by a further borrowing of £1,323,000,000.

To spare tonnage for war material certain imports had now been prohibited, including fruit, an important food. The import of sugar, already so costly, was limited. People now stood in queues for it, and many shopkeepers would sell it only to purchasers of other commodities.

The import of paper was limited, and that of wood pulp and grass for making it prohibited. This struck a serious blow at education and propaganda. Newspapers became excessively costly and difficult to obtain. Williams, our East End printer, bought where he could and gave us paper, now pink, now grey, now yellow. We feared that a week might come when he would not be able to produce the *Dreadnought* at all. May O'Callaghan urged me to move the printing to the National Labour Press. The charge was much higher, but Moss, the manager, declared he could guarantee us paper, and the *Dreadnought* could be more expeditiously despatched from the press in Swinton Street to the wholesale agents and railway termini. Our provincial circulation was mounting.

Further economies were demanded. Public museums and galleries were closed, another blow at culture in the interests of war. Yet nearly £6,000 was spent on re-lighting a single room used by the Members of the House of Commons.