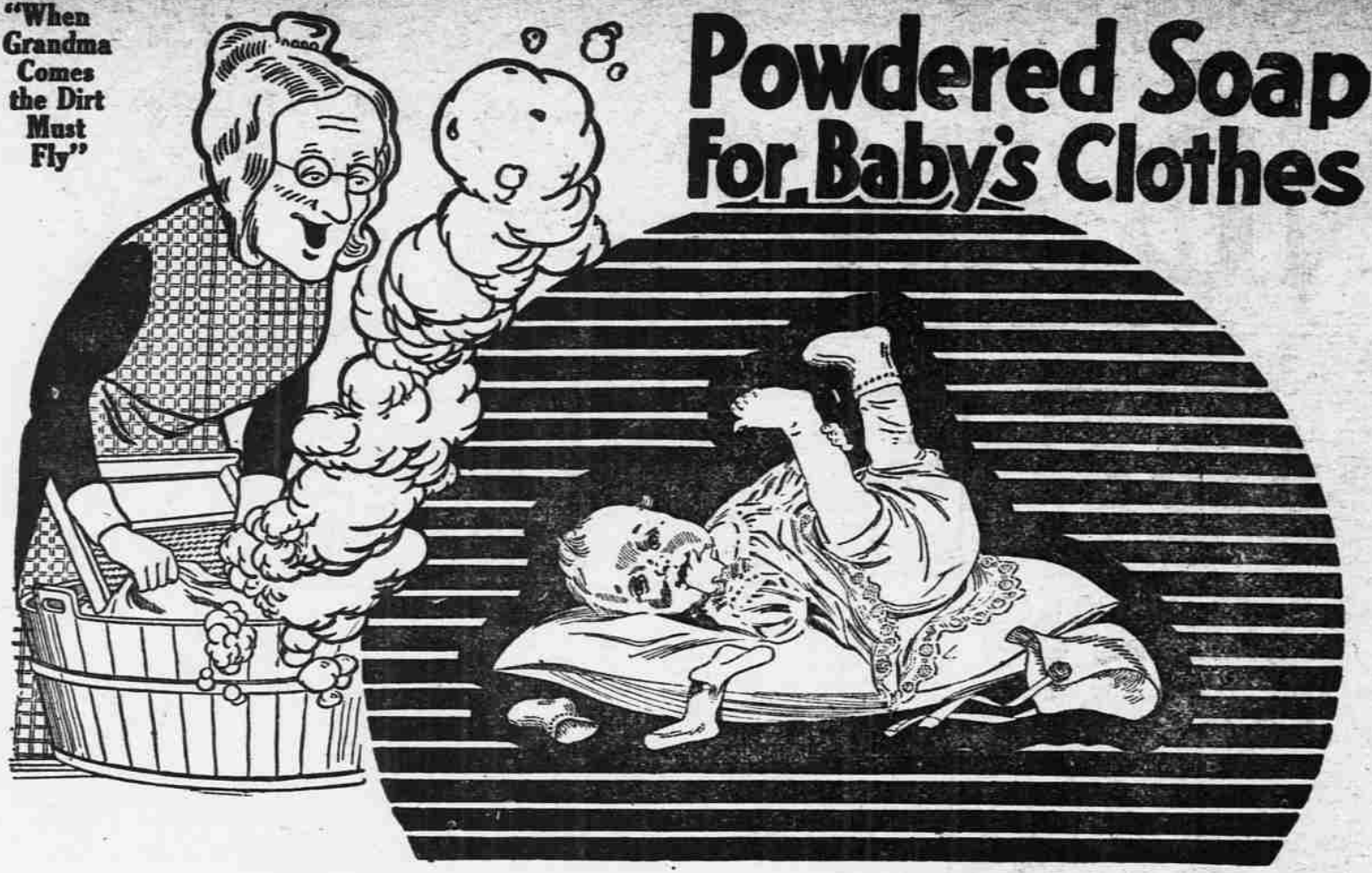


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AT HOME AND ABROAD

A Review and Interpretation of Current Events as Seen by

G. W. PASCHALL

COAL The strike of the coal miners and the consequent shortage of coal continue to be the matters of greatest concern to the people of this country.

In the first place the miners have not returned to work. After fruitless attempt to negotiate an agreement between strikers and mine operators Dr. Harry A. Garfield, Fuel Administrator, again referred the matter to President Wilson's cabinet on November 25. For seven hours on that day the Cabinet was in conference. There were two propositions before it; one that of Secretary of Labor Wilson recommending that the miners be given a wage increase of 31.61 per cent; the other recommended an increase of 14 per cent. This was adopted, and along with it a resolution that the operators should not be allowed to increase the price of coal because of the higher wages. This was to be temporary settlement subject to revision by a board of arbitration to be headed by Secretary Lane. The operators accepted the proposition of the cabinet; not so with the strikers. They indignantly rejected it, and demanded the increase suggested by Secretary Wilson. In a statement accompanying the decision Dr. Garfield said that a 14 per cent increase would bring the wages of the coal miners well up to the average wages in other industries, and that the board of arbitration would be able to make a full investigation and a proper readjustment. Below will be found a further discussion of Dr. Garfield's report.

Owing to the refusal of the miners to return to work, the country is on the verge of distress. During the past week in the West and Middle West there has been extremely cold weather, the temperature running below zero in many places. Many of the people are without fuel; many others have only scant supplies. Many industries are already closed, and the laborers without work. On December 1 the Fuel Administration promulgated strict regulations to conserve the supply of fuel in many States the Regional Fuel Committees have taken charge. In the South they have directed that industries be operated on a 48-hour week basis; that theatres and moving picture houses close at 10:30 p. m. that stores and office buildings use no fuel, lights or power after 4:00 p. m.; that street lights were reduced to those absolutely necessary. These regulations probably do not apply to those using water power.

THE EFFORTS OF MINE COAL When the strikers refused to accept the proposition of the Cabinet for

a 14 per cent increase, the National Government officially warned bituminous coal miners and operators that it would not tolerate any interference with the production of coal. Ample protection is to be given all persons desiring to work in the mines. The mines must stay open to permit workers who desire to return to work; and any new workers to come in. All are to receive a 14 per cent increase over the former wages. This action of the Government puts all the mines at disposal; for if an operator should refuse to pay the 14 per cent increase, the Government will step in, employ the men and run the mine—that is, if it can find miners willing to work at the price. But there is the rub; the miners refuse to work and the Government has no power or will to try to compel them to work. It can only see that those who desire to work will be protected from molestation. This is the extent of its power.

In addition to what the National Government is doing the governors of seven soft coal producing states in the Middle West have had a conference and are urging the State Government to take all possible steps to secure the production of coal. They also ask that the coal mined should be more equitably distributed, and call attention to the fact that the present production of soft coal is about normal. The Governors of Kansas and Oklahoma have gone further. They have called for volunteers to operate the coal mines. In Kansas the volunteers have been secured, more than 5,000 already being at work in the mines, while more offers are being received daily. Governor Allen hopes to be producing 100 cars of coal a day by the end of the week. If the regular coal miners will not work, those hard-handed farmers of Kansas will take their places, and provide the fuel their families need. And the farmers have to help them, college students, professors, business men and workmen.

THE MERITS OF THE DISPUTE Several facts have been brought out in this coal strike controversy. The first is that the public is being fleeced by the coal mine owners. A statement was given out by Mr. W. G. McAdoo, former Secretary of the Treasury, on November 24, which showed that the coal operators began making profits of 40 to 35 per cent in 1916, and that in 1917 the general average of profits of operators east of the Mississippi was 100 to 150 per cent on invested capital, and in some industries as high as 800 per cent. Profits were less in 1918, and somewhat less still in 1919, some oper-

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THE APOTHECARY SHOP

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Elizabeth City, N. C.

rators claiming to have lost money, but the general average of profits still being very large. Mr. McAdoo challenged the operators to make public a statement of their business.

The laborers, knowing that coal is selling high were determined to get more of the profits for themselves. According to Fuel Administrator Garfield the 14 per cent increase offered the miners will take care of the increased cost of living and puts them on a level with the average laborer. But the coal miner does not want to take the average. He wants more. To this extent he, like the coal operator, has the spirit of profiteering at the public's expense. It is revealed as in many other of our industries higher wages has had the surprising effect of diminishing production. It is said that 100,000,000 tons less of soft coal will be produced this year than last. The coal miner has some points in common with many negro day-laborers. They make enough my working half the time to support themselves and their families, and will work no more. If people generally, and especially of farmers followed the same rule, the world would starve. This world cannot run on half-time work, and the sooner the coal-miners learn this fact the better. Sooner or later laborers willing to work the average time will take their places, just as those farmers are doing in Kansas.

MEXICO The note from Mexico in response to the note of our Administration demanding the release of Jenkins, the United States consul held in a Mexican prison at Puebla, was disappointing, as well as long delayed, in spite of the warning given in the American note that, "the harassing of Mr. Jenkins cannot but have a very serious effect on the relations of the two countries, for which the Mexican Government will be solely responsible." Carranza refused to release Jenkins, declared that he was unable to interfere because it was a Mexican State and not the Mexican Federal Government that had placed him in prison, and that Jenkins would be given a fair trial. This reply was far from satisfactory to our Government and on December 1 Secretary Lansing sent another note to Carranza renewing the request for the immediate release of Jenkins, and expressing the view that Mexico had made a "studied effort" to ensnare Jenkins in legal intricacies, divert the attention of the American and Mexican people from the fact that the second largest city in Mexico is overrun with bandits, and that the Mexican authorities have been negligent." Mr. Lansing makes short shrift of the legal arguments urged by Carranza. The point with him is that Jenkins must no longer be subjected to exposure, hardships, and physical suffering, but must be released. And the wily Carranza after getting his note printed in the Mexican newspapers will doubtless order secretly the release of Jenkins by the local court which he says has jurisdiction. He will not risk war with the United States, a thing that he will certainly get if he tries to hold Jenkins in prison longer.

RUSSIANS ON HUNGER STRIKE Last week seven Russian Reds, detained at Ellis Island, New York, for deportation went on a hunger strike. Day after day the appetizing food was set before them, but they refused. Nobody cared, and many were delighted at the saving of so much good bread and meat. After two or three days the be-whiskered slaves thought that forceful feeding was in order. But it did not come. On the third morning they could stand it no longer. When the food was brought in they jumped for it like hungry dogs and licked the platters clean, and called for more. When they get back to Russia they can go hungry without going on a strike, and will probably starve in spite of all they can do.

BY ORDER OF THE FUEL ADMINISTRATION

Drug Stores will be opened not before 8 o'clock A. M., and will be closed promptly at 6 o'clock P. M., for the sale of drugs (medicines and sick room supplies.) Other articles than those intended for the treatment of disease can be sold in drug stores between the hours of 9 o'clock A. M. and 4 o'clock P. M. ONLY.

THE REASON—

Attorney General Palmer—"The American people should refuse to be stampeded by threats of lack of coal into concessions which will insure unreasonably high prices in all commodities for at least three years to come." Do your best to help conserve coal.

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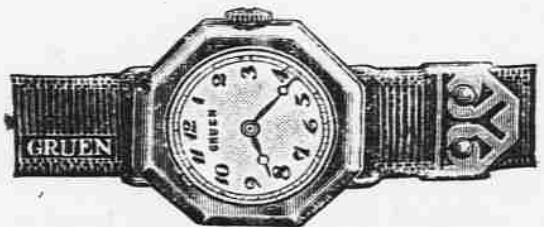
The condition of one's health is largely dependent upon their eyes. An examination will determine whether or not yours are normal.

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Selig's For Christmas Jewelry



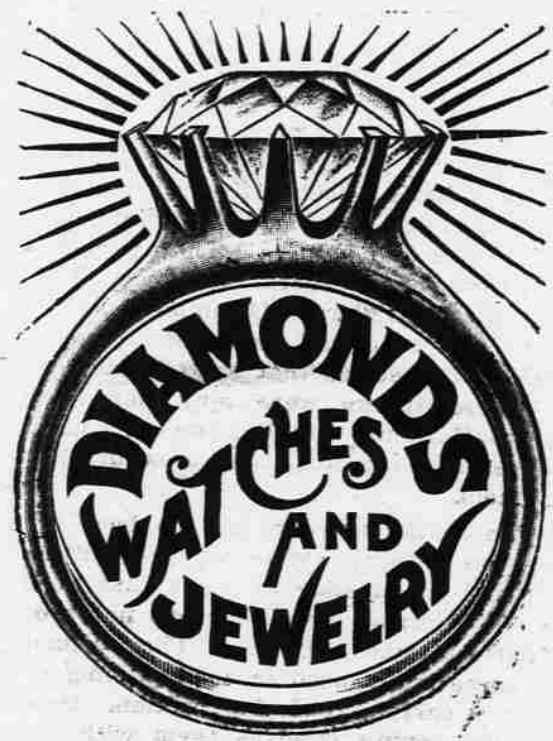
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MAIN AND WATER STREETS

(Concluded on Page 8)