

# MINERS' WELFARE CAUSE OF TAFT

## Bureau of Mines Marks Great Step Forward.

### SAVES HUNDREDS OF LIVES.

Discovery of Danger of Coal Dust Important—Handling of Explosives Made Safer—Government's Experimental Coal Mine.

The saving of many lives annually—the lives of miners throughout the United States—will be one of the splendid results that will follow the establishment of the bureau of mines, one of the great achievements in the history of labor of the administration of President Taft.

The excessive and unnecessary loss of life in the mines of this country was one of the primary causes for the creation of this bureau. For years hundreds of miners were killed in mine disasters, and practically nothing was done to check the terrible loss of life.

Spurred on by President Taft, an act creating the bureau of mines was passed by congress and became effective on July 1, 1910. John A. Holmes of the United States geological survey was appointed as the first director. Mr. Holmes was reputed and certified to be the best trained man for the place obtainable in the United States.

The chief experimental station was established at Pittsburgh, where the investigations of the problems entrusted to the bureau have been prosecuted so successfully for nearly two years.

In the year 1907, the most disastrous of all years in the American coal mines, 8,125 miners lost their lives. This represented 4.86 of men killed for every 1,000 employed. In coal mines in Europe less than two miners are killed out of every 1,000 employed.

One of the notable achievements of the bureau of mines was the demonstration of the fact that coal dust in a bituminous mine is more dangerous and deadly than gas. It had been the belief heretofore that gas or fire damp was the greatest menace to the miners, and little attention was given to the accumulation of coal dust.

The number of deaths in the mines has been greatly reduced as a result of the testing of explosives under the direction of the bureau of mines. In the year 1908 the coal mines in the United States used 2,000,000 pounds of short flame explosives, and at present nearly seven times that quantity is being used with greater safety, due to the co-operation of the coal operators and the bureau of mines.

The establishment of an experimental coal mine at Bruce town, Pa., twelve miles from Pittsburgh, is still another notable achievement of the bureau of mines. It places the United States in advance of other nations with respect to this research and experimental work in mines. Numerous tests are made at this experimental mine, from which many excellent results are obtained.

Still another important work which is conducted under the auspices of the bureau of mines is the rescue of entombed miners. Since the creation of the bureau many hundreds of lives have been saved. At the big mining disaster in Ohio one of the rescue corps of the bureau of mines arrived at the scene thirty-two hours after the disaster. Three men were rescued who had been given up as dead and allowed to remain in the mine. At another time one man was found alive among 150 dead, and today he is the sole survivor of that terrible catastrophe due to the splendid work of the rescue corps.

Before the bureau of mines was made possible by the interest of President Taft, which was followed by the necessary legislation for its establishment, there was no organized effort in saving the lives of entombed miners. Time and again men have sacrificed their lives in vain attempts to rescue their companions. This unnecessary sacrifice of life has been stopped by the co-operation of the state authorities with the federal rescuers attached to the bureau of mines. An investigation of the fuel resources of the United States is also being made with a view of checking the waste and increasing the efficiency with which fuel is used. This latter phase of the work is a part of the practical conservation policy of the Taft administration.

Dr. Wiley Supports Taft. Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, who recently resigned as chief chemist of the department of agriculture, when in Cincinnati several days ago made the following statement: "President Taft is the one man who stood between me and destruction at Washington. When efforts were being made to assassinate me Taft proved my only protector. He stood by me, and I am grateful to him. I hope he will be re-elected president."

# EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE.

No Massive Vertical Base Checks the Wildest Seas.

The Eddystone rocks form a very dangerous reef, lying in the English channel about fourteen miles from Plymouth, and here, in 1695, Henry Winstanley built the first lighthouse, which lasted but eight years.

Winstanley's tower was swept away by a tremendous storm, and every one in it at the time, including the builder, was drowned. Three years later Rudder's tower was built, only to be destroyed by fire in 1755, and then came John Smeaton's.

Modern lighthouses really date from 1759, when this third one was completed. Smeaton's design was faulty, but it served as a model for lighthouse construction in masonry, which has been followed in its general features ever since. This lighthouse stood for over a century, but it was not high enough to keep the waves from dashing the lantern and so was removed and the present one built in 1822 by James Douglass.

At the time of the completion of the new lighthouse two bells weighing two tons each and struck by mechanical power were installed for fog signaling purposes. Since that date an explosive gun cotton fog signal has been erected, the bells being removed. Probably the most interesting thing about the lighthouse now on the Eddystone is its solid vertical base. Heavy seas striking the massive cylindrical structure are immediately broken up and rush around to the opposite side, spray alone ascending to the height of the lantern gallery. On the other hand, waves striking the old tower at its foundation ran up the surface, which presented a curved face to the waves, and, unimpeded by any projection until arriving at the lantern gallery, were partially broken up by the cornice and then spent themselves in heavy spray over the lantern. The shock to which the cornice of the gallery was exposed was so great that stones were sometimes lifted from their beds.—Lookout.

# A HARD WINTER.

When the Mercury Fell to Six Feet Nine Inches Below Zero.

They were talking about hard winters. The man on the cracker barrel said he remembered a winter when the mercury fell to six feet nine inches below zero, and consequently he had never seen any weather since then that he could call real cold.

"Oh, you pshaw!" said the man with the ginger whiskers. "Six feet nine inches! Oh, you pshaw!"

"Meaning that I put you in mind of Ananias?" said the man on the cracker barrel.

The man with the ginger whiskers simply said: "Six feet nine inches! Oh, you pshaw!"

"Then listen," said the man on the cracker barrel. "It was the winter when no snow fell. Nothing fell but the thermometer that winter. We kept our thermometer hanging on a cherry tree in the yard to give it a chance. One morning the weather had been so cold the mercury went down below zero as far as it could and let the thermometer have the credit of showing it, but it couldn't do its duty by the weather by pausing there, so it busted the bulb at the bottom and kept on falling. The thermometer was six feet above the ground. We dug the mercury out in the spring, nine inches below the surface. So until you can trot out some weather that is six feet and nine inches below, don't talk to me about cold!"

The man on the cracker barrel lit his pipe and went out, and the man with the ginger whiskers just said, "Oh, he pshaw!"—New York Press.

# Back in the Good Old Bowl Days.

A man of apparent means brought two boys into a barber shop for a haircut. While waiting for the completion of the job, he said:

"I never sat in a barber's chair when I was a kid. My brother used to go over to the engine house and borrow the horse clippers. Then my mother would put a bowl on my head and cut around it. Until I was twelve years old, I always looked like a window washer's brush."—Chicago Post.

# The Dead Revived.

In a scientific weekly we read the headline, "Can the Dead Be Revived?" They are revived every performance at the Metropolitan Opera House. It is a most encouraging symptom to see corpses arise from the stage after the curtain falls and bow their appreciation of the applause.—Musical Courier.

# Sarcastic.

Hawkshaw Holmes—I wish to be vaccinated. Doctor—What's your business? Hawkshaw Holmes—I'm a detective. Doctor—Stand out of line, please, and give somebody else a chance. There is no danger of your ever catching anything.—Boston Globe.

# The Long Chase.

"I understand that your splinter friend has gone into one of the professions?" "Yes." "Indeed. And what is her particular pursuit?" "Man."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

# Advancing.

He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into living peace.—Ruskin.

# Mercenary.

Griggs—So smart is going to marry his divorced wife? Briggs—Yes, the mercenary case is after the alimony he pays her.—New York Times.

# TAFT INSISTS ON AID TO FARMERS

## Says Department of Agriculture Work Must Go On.

### LABORS FOR CONSERVATION.

Far-reaching Legislation Administered by Scientists of Rank Brings Good Results to Tillers of Soil—Food and Drugs Act Upheld to the Letter.

In his inaugural address President Taft called attention to the deficit then existing in the revenues and the consequent necessity for rigid economy in expenditures. However, the president singled out the department of agriculture as an exception. He said, to quote his exact words, "In the department of agriculture the use of scientific experiments on a large scale, and the spread of information derived from them for the improvement of general agriculture must go on." This view the president has steadily maintained, and repeatedly has urged appropriations for the work of the department.

In his comprehensive message on conservation President Taft said, "The feature that transcends all others, including woods, waters, minerals, is the soil of the country," and that all means at the government's disposal should be used to conserve the soils, adding, "a work of the utmost importance to inform and instruct the public on this chief branch of the conservation of our resources is being carried on successfully in the department of agriculture."

Reports made recently to Secretary Wilson of the department of agriculture by the heads of his bureaus justify this solicitude on the part of the president for the department. In calling for these reports the secretary asked that they be brief and that they mention notable achievements of the last five years only, inasmuch as that period is really the period of fruition in the department, the period during which, owing to the broad foundations previously laid by the training and grouping of many corps of scientific men, by securing far-reaching legislation, by gathering together masses of statistics and other information, by providing scientific and other equipment, it has been possible to produce most marvelous results for the common good of the people.

# Taft For Conservation.

In his conservation message President Taft emphasized the importance of the maintenance of the forests and urged their scientific treatment "so that they shall be made to yield a large return in timber without really reducing the supply," and in other messages he pointed out the necessity of reforestation. In accordance with these views much available work has been done in protecting the national forests and by researches in the laboratory of the department at Madison, Wis., and in the past five years the work of reforestation burned over areas has proceeded at the rate of 15,000 to 30,000 acres a year. The department takes justifiable pride in its forest work, considering the administration of 100,000,000 acres of land protected and managed for the public benefit a great achievement.

Since Jan. 1, 1907, when the food and drugs act went into effect, more has been done to provide a good, clean food supply than in all the preceding life of the nation. A wonderful change has also been effected in the character of the drugs on sale. The department has a trained force of inspectors and chemists doing excellent work in all parts of the country in behalf of pure foods and pure drugs. This salutary law, however, needs amendment, as the supreme court held in May, 1911, that its provisions, to quote President Taft's words in his vigorous message to congress a month later, "do not cover the knowingly false labeling of nostrums as to curative effect." The president added: "An evil which menaces the general health of the people strikes at the life of the nation. In my opinion the sale of dangerously adulterated drugs . . . constitutes such an evil and warrants me in calling the matter to the attention of the congress."

# Work of Soil Mapping.

Of importance to the farmer has been the work carried on in the past five years of soil mapping and classification, so that now the area included is 407,000 square miles, or nearly 41,000,000 acres. The value of this work is incalculable. Disseminating the valuable information acquired by the department has proved a wonderful work. Practically 200,000,000 publications have been distributed since Secretary Wilson assumed control of the department, and more than half (103,508,100) of that number have been distributed within the past five years.

Other work accomplished by the department includes a comprehensive system of weather warnings and forecasts, the most inspection service in which 2,500 experts are employed, who see that every pound of meat sent interstate is fit for human food, protection of live stock, the checking of rodent pests, the destruction of noxious insects, the conservation of water supplies, the building and care of public roads and the policy for better farm-houses, so that every dollar expended in the prosecution of this work in its numerous phases has brought back a hundred fold to the people.

# LANDING AT RAKAHANGA.

A Risky Feat and One That Sorely Tries the Nerves.

Rakahanga is a little coral atoll in the south sea, not very far from New Zealand. Few people ever visit it, and to judge from the account in Mr. Frank Burnett's "Through Tropic Seas" of the difficulties that attend a landing there none would care to go a second time.

At Rakahanga the feeling is that only by a miracle can a safe passage be made through what, by a stretch of the imagination, is called the entrance to the lagoon. Imagine a once good entrance obstructed by a wall of coral rising to within a few feet of the surface of the water. This coral wall is built by that wonderful creature, the coral polyp. Over it break with inconceivable fury huge ocean billows that travel with the speed of race horses, lashing and churning the water into a milk white foam and with a deafening roar throwing the spray to such a height that it may be seen miles away.

The backwash of every breaker forms, on the outside of the wall of rock, a chasm fathoms deep, which is again filled up by the next rushing wave. To cross the abyss and reach the quiet shelter of the lagoon is a difficulty that the islander shows the greatest skill in surmounting.

His boat—a long, low, flat bottomed affair, built much like a halibut dory, manned usually by six paddlers besides the steersman—is brought to the very verge of the boiling cauldron, and there it is held till the opportune moment arrives. Since that sometimes does not occur for five or ten minutes the passenger has plenty of time to reflect upon his misdeeds, to survey the sublime scene and to wonder how in the world that fearful turmoil of water is to be crossed.

The delay does not tend to compose his nerves, but if he is observant he will notice that about every five or six minutes three giant billows in quick succession roll majestically in. When the last of the three has passed and the chasm has been filled up the paddlers give a frightful yell that terrifies the unsuspecting passenger almost to death, dig in their paddles and shout the boat forward like an arrow from a bow.

Before the backwash can re-empty the chasm the boat is across. The passenger has hardly time to grasp how it is done before the paddlers have sprung to the reef and pulled the boat clear of the next roller, usually a small one.

In entering the lagoon the chief risk is that of an upset after crossing the chasm and a ducking in two or three feet of water, but on going out, if the boat does not reach the smooth water before the next succeeding swell breaks, woe betide it and its crew, for nothing will prevent its being swamped and carried, with all hands, back into the awful abyss by the frush of broken water, out of which only the strongest and most skillful swimmers can emerge.

# The Truth About Icebergs.

Many existing theories regarding icebergs require modification. For instance, it has generally been believed that for every cubic foot of ice above water there are seven below, and a berg, therefore, that towers, say, 100 feet above the ocean level has a total height of 800 feet. Lieutenant Peary, the conqueror of the north pole, declares that this is not always the case. "It is true," he says, "that the heaviest portion of the berg is submerged, but it is wrong to say that seven-eighths of its height is under water. I have noted several instances where only two-thirds of a berg is submerged."—St. Nicholas.

# A Quaint Notice.

Here is a copy of a notice that was posted up in an art exhibition in Tokyo: "No visitor who is mad or intoxicated is allowed to enter in. If any person found in shall be claimed to retire. No visitor is allowed to carry in with himself any parcel, umbrella, stick and the like kind except his purse and is strictly forbidden to take with himself dog or the same kind of beasts. Visitor is requested to take care of himself from thievly."

# Ready to Resume.

Lady to neighbor at anniversary dinner—Unless I am mistaken you and I sat together at this table twenty-five years ago. I remember you told me about your researches into the history of ancient Babylon.

Professor (eagerly)—Quite right. Let's see—where was I when I left off?—Flegende Blätter.

# Impossible.

"You are going to inherit all my money," said the rich old man. "Yes," sobbed the youth. "I wish to goodness I could fix it so that you could also inherit my ability to take care of it," was the old man's last expression.—Detroit Free Press.

# A Delicate Position.

"That was an annoying coincidence," said Mr. Higgins. "It took great tact to manage it." "What's the trouble?" "The pension examiner and the life insurance doctor both called on me at the same time."—Washington Star.

# A Good Rule.

If you wish success in life make perseverance your bosom friend, experience your wise counselor, caution your elder brother and hope your guardian genius.

The pain of life but sweetens death; the hardest labor brings the soundest sleep.—Albert Smith.

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