

Lord Penrhyn's Methods.

The Press Gag, and
How it was Burst.

PRICE ONE PENNY

[THE PROCEEDS OF THE SALE OF THIS PAMPHLET WILL
BE GIVEN TO THE BETHESDA QUARRYMEN'S FUND]

**Extract from
the "*Daily News*," October 4th.**

Lord Penrhyn's Methods

The Press Gag, and How it was Burst.

Extract from the "Daily News," October 4th.

WE have received the following letter from Lord Penrhyn's solicitors:—

"Re PENRHYN QUARRY STRIKE.
"BANGOR, NORTH WALES,
"Sept. 27th, 1902.

"Sir,—Lord Penrhyn's attention has been drawn to an article on this subject contained in your issue of the 25th inst., headed ' Black Wednesday at Bethesda,' and he has instructed us to write to you thereon.

"The article contains a number of absolutely false and libellous statements, and is calculated to prejudice Lord Penrhyn's interest in the action for libel which, as you are no doubt aware, he has commenced against Mr. W. J. Parry, of Bethesda, in which some of the very issues which you falsely represent are involved. Under these circumstances we are instructed to inform you that, if any repetition of the statements complained of, or like statements, appear in any future issue of your paper whilst the matters referred to are sub judice, application will be forthwith made to the Court for your committal for contempt. And we are further instructed to inform you that Lord Penrhyn holds you responsible in damages for the injury which you have or may have inflicted upon him by the article complained of and other articles in your newspaper, and legal proceedings will in due course be taken against you in respect thereof.—We are Sir, your obedient servants,

"CARTER, VINCENT & Co.

"To the Editor of the *Daily News*."

The Gauntlet Picked Up.

ONE OF MANY EXTENDED TO THE PRESS.

To this threat the journal gave the following crushing reply :—

"We publish to-day a letter from Lord Penrhyn's solicitors which raises in a most vital form the whole question of the rights of the Press in this country to comment on matters of public moment. The letter contains two threats. The first and less important is a threat of action for libel on the ground of statements made in an article contained in the *Daily News* on September 25th, and written by our Special Correspondent at Bethesda. The nature of that article may be judged from the letter written by the same pen, also from Bethesda, which we publish to-day. Neither of those letters contain anything but an honest description of the facts concerning one of the most important events of the day. If the facts are black, that is Lord Penrhyn's own fault. We do not wonder that this implacable man should dislike our Correspondent's faithful description of the wholesale misery of this unhappy community. But if Lord Penrhyn imagines that he can silence the voice of this journal by such threats as these, he is labouring under a complete delusion. We shall continue, in spite of his threats, to publish such accounts of the long-drawn tragedy which is being enacted in Bethesda as we feel the public ought to have. We shall continue to describe the slow destruction of—

An Industrious and God-fearing Community,

and to appeal to the Trade Unions of England and Wales not to stand by and watch this struggle without an effort to help the men who are fighting their own cause, but who—as our Correspondent describes to-day—are at the point of starvation for want of funds. We are perfectly content to leave the decision as to these articles to any impartial mind, and Lord Penrhyn may understand once and for all that we are not to be frightened out of our duty to these men, and to the public of this country.

The second threat put forward by Lord Penrhyn's solicitors is of a nature which we should not care to characterise. It seems that Lord Penrhyn has an action hanging over the head of Mr. W. J. Parry, of Bethesda, as to the details of which we neither know nor care anything. But if he imagines that either public opinion or the law of this land will enable him to use it as—

An Instrument for Gagging Newspapers,

he is vastly mistaken and misinformed. This very point arose in a recent case, in which it was clearly decided that so long as no direct allusion was made to the action or proceedings, there could be no case of contempt. We alluded neither directly nor indirectly to Lord Penrhyn's action. We were not aware of it, nor interested in it. We were dealing simply with a great question affecting not only the fundamental relations of capital and labour, but full of the most poignant human pathos. Lord Penrhyn must study the law of contempt. He may be the—

Sole Survivor of Feudal Institutions,

but he is not a Judge of the High Court. He may be able to empty a village by his actions, and to scatter a stalwart race, which might form a bulwark to this country in some hour of trouble, to the four winds of heaven. He may even, if English workmen be indifferent, be able to bring these quarrymen to their knees, as braver men have been brought to their knees, by the sufferings of their women and children. But he is not yet above the law, and criticism of his action is not yet subject to summary jurisdiction. If, indeed, Lord Penrhyn proved to have the law behind him in such a threat, we should be faced with an intolerable state of affairs. In any great matter of public moment, criticism could be silenced by the issue of a writ. A libel action brought by Mr. Arthur Balfour against Dr. Clifford, might silence us on the Education Bill. An action by Mr. Brodrick against Mr. Winston Churchill, might debar us from criticising the conduct of the South African war. We are not aware of the points which Lord Penrhyn has raised in his actions against Mr. Parry, of Bethesda. The details seem to belong to ancient history. But we are quite sure that our articles have referred only to the matters of public import raised by a labour struggle which has now acquired an—

Exceptional and almost National Importance,

and Lord Penrhyn may be well assured that no writs brought against any of his local opponents will be considered by us for one moment as a bar to our right of criticism.

It is high time, indeed, that the nation awoke to the terrible wear and waste involved in the prolongation of this struggle in the Bethesda district. It seems now to be an accepted notion in this country that these destructive struggles between Capital and Labour should be allowed to continue without outside interference until one side or the other is worn out. That is not a view which commends itself to President Roosevelt. We describe elsewhere the efforts made by—

That Alert and Fine-spirited Ruler

to bring to a close the great labour war which is already depriving the United States of their proper coal supplies. The American coal struggle is a far greater matter than the conflict at Bethesda. It threatens America with a

famine of warmth. But it raises precisely the same issue. In the American coal mines, as in the Bethesda quarry, the men have always advocated arbitration, and the employers always refused it. In the American case, as in the Welsh, the fight arises over the refusal of the masters to deal with the men through their elected Union representatives. In other words, in both cases the principle of combination is at issue. In both cases the attempt of the employer is to return to the old individual relationship/where the workman is surely driven to the wall by his individual weakness. In both cases the men have made every possible appeal to their employers, and in the Bethesda case those who have followed our Correspondent's letters will have watched day by day the slow death of the last lingering hope for some reasonable compromise. Across the water President Roosevelt recognises these things, and is working, even in illness, to allay this grievous trouble. What public man is doing the same here?

Which of our Ministers is Stirred by the Sufferings of Bethesda?

Which of them knows anything about such things? We have an Arbitration Act, which cannot be applied without the consent of both parties, and a Board of Trade in the possession of a Minister who is a rigid doctrinaire of the old school. We have just heard from Mr. Seddon his rosy accounts of compulsory arbitration, but such good news has but stirred us in our sleep. How long are these things to go on? Here is a struggle which has continued for five years with but a short interval of abatement. It has brought grievous suffering. It has scattered a community. Are such matters of no account to our public men that they should pass by on the other side? Surely it is the duty of the great Trade Unions to see that this forlorn hope is not lost—that this outpost is not captured—and to force the rulers of this country to attend to this cry of suffering humanity.

The Penrhyn Lock-out.

What is at Stake.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE MEN'S SECRETARY.

From the "Daily News."

Mr. DANIEL, the Secretary of the Quarrymen's Union in North Wales, is at present in London, and as no one knows more about the circumstances of the labour struggles in the Bethesda quarries during the last ten years, we have asked him to give us a brief statement of the points at issue. This he has kindly done to a representative of the *Daily News*.

The first question put to Mr. Daniel by our representative was as to the primary origin of the Bethesda struggles.

The Quarry Committee.

"What," he asked, "is this Quarry Committee for which the men are always asking, and which Lord Penrhyn is always refusing?"

"To answer that," said Mr. Daniel, "we must go back nearly thirty years. The Quarry Committee was founded in the seventies. Upon the termination of the fourteen weeks' strike at the Penrhyn Quarries in 1874 an agreement was arrived at, known as the Pennant Lloyd Agreement, by which the men were empowered to form a committee from among themselves to consider grievances, and bring them to the notice of the management. That was the Quarry Committee. Lord Penrhyn abolished it in 1885—and it is to the restoration of this committee that he is so averse. His great objection to it rests on the assertion that it controlled and managed the quarry. To show how utterly unfounded such a charge is, it only requires to be pointed out that the referee and arbitrator under that agreement was none other than Lord Penrhyn's own estate agent."

"Interference."

"Then what possible objection can Lord Penrhyn have to its renewal?"

"'Interference'—he says that it interferes between employer and employed, and he defies us to quote any Act of Parliament which will compel him to recognise it. 'You can combine' he says, 'if it amuses you, but I decline to recognise your combination in any dealings with you.' Here are his words, used during a conference that took place during the last dispute:—

"Meanwhile, I can only repeat what I have before said, and what you are perfectly well aware of, that is, that you are entitled to combine in any lawful way, that is to say, in any way sanctioned by Act of Parliament; but I

shall continue to contend for the absolute freedom of both employer and employed from any interference or dictation by a committee. If you wish me to add anything to what I have already said, it will be in the form of a query addressed to yourselves, as to where you can find in any Act of Parliament anything which compels an employer of labour to recognise the authority of a committee which seeks to interfere with direct communication between employer and employed. Unless you can show that such an Act of Parliament exists, and that I think you know well enough is not the case, you are seeking to do something which is outside the law when you endeavour to enforce the intervention of such a committee upon your employer."

"It is quite clear," continued Mr. Daniel, "that combination of this kind would be entirely useless for any purpose whatever."

The 1897 Agreement.

"But," urged our representative, "did you not fight this matter out in the strike of 1896-7, and come to a definite agreement?"

"At the end of the 1896-7 strike the men had to accept an agreement which gave them only a limited and restricted right of combination, under which the grievances were to be brought before the management by means of sectional representation. It was the best that we could get at the time, and it might have worked if a good spirit had existed in the dealings of Lord Penrhyn and his workmen. But the agreement never worked satisfactorily."

Cases of Injustice.

"How did it work? Can you give me any instances?"

"One of the first to make use of its provisions was the Chairman of the Strike Committee, Mr. W. R. Evans, who had worked for Lord Penrhyn for fifty-two years. Yet when he approached the chief manager under the agreement, was only told that the interview was `granted to him in order to impress on his mind and the mind of others that he, Mr. Young, could expel whom he wished without giving his reasons."

"This," continued Mr. Daniel, "was only one of several cases of harsh and arbitrary conduct on the part of the management. In a word, the agreement was a mockery. We soon found that Lord Penrhyn had not budged an inch from his position. The `sectional' representation was only the latest phrase for individual dealing. Several men who have taken part in these `sectional' deputations have been discharged without adequate reason given. The result has been that the men have been thrown back on themselves, and there has been a constant accumulation of petty personal grievances, producing a bitter feeling against the management. This feeling, combined with the fear that the contract system would be extended, and the harsh discipline enforced, culminated in the unfortunate attack on the contractors."

The Grievances.

“Suppose, Mr. Daniel, that the right of combination were awarded, what are the grievances that the men wish to press on the management?”

“I may sum them up as follows :

“1. They desire the reinstatement of certain victimised men. This point Lord Penrhyn has refused to discuss.

“2. They desire the free use of the dinner-hour in the quarry. • At present the men are prevented from holding meetings in any part of the quarry, or from collecting any subscriptions. Now, the quarry is virtually their collective living place ; for the men's homes are scattered over a large area, and it is almost impossible for them to meet at any other place or time. They all carry their food, as it is impossible for them to get out of the quarry for dinner, owing to its great size. They have, therefore, a considerable time to spare during the dinner-hour, and it seems a peculiarly unnecessary hardship that they should be forbidden to meet and discuss their interests.

“3. They desire a minimum wage of 4s. 4d. a day.

“4. They desire the abolition of the contract system, but are willing to test the point by experiment. They object to the bullying of the contractors and subordinate officials, and wish to deal direct with the management.

“5. They consider that the rules of discipline are too harsh (a man who is 15 minutes' late loses half-a-day's pay—over 15 minutes a whole day).

“6. They desire more democratic management of the Benefit Club.

“7. They wish for the right of an annual holiday.

“These grievances were discussed between Mr. Young and four representatives on Dec. 19th, 1900. He refused any concession either on the right of combination or on the first three points. With respect to the contracting system, he suggested the experiment of co-operative contracts in a part of the quarry where contracts did not at present exist. This the men naturally regarded as a simple extension of the contract system. On the remaining points he was more conciliatory ; but you will see that he refused any substantial concession, and on the proposals being submitted to the men they were rejected by 1,707 votes to 77.”

How Long? How Long?

“You speak of December, 1900. Since when has the present struggle been going on?”

“It began on Nov. 22nd, 1900; but owing to the suspension of the men before the strike as a punishment for the attack on the contractors, they have really been but of the quarry for two years. Negotiations broke off because Lord Penrhyn refused to discuss any modification in the 1897 agreement. Remember that the men are not asking for the recognition of their Union officials, but for the barest rights of combination, in the recognition of their

Quarry Committee. Perhaps I cannot do better than quote the men's own appeal to the Trade Unions in February, 1901:

“After the last great fight the Manager victimised the men's leaders, and the fight is now for “to establish our right” to appear before the management by our own freely elected delegates. We have not gone so far even as to ask for the recognition of our Union. We merely ask to freely elect spokesmen from our own ranks in the quarry, for the purpose of discussing grievances from time to time with the management. We are denied this right; we are denied the right to discuss grievances in the quarry among ourselves in our own time during the dinner-hour. We are not treated as men. We are sworn at, abused, and libelled. We are subject to a system of espionage. We are punished for fictitious offences; if a few minutes late we were suspended for two days. One of our customary holidays has been taken from us, and many of our number are compelled to work under the sweating system, without any real chance of redressing grievances when they arise. The management is harsh and oppressive in spirit, and failing to understand the men, it results in friction and grievances, which, without any means of amelioration, become intolerable to men who respect their manhood.”

How Many?

“We are now clear as to the issue. Could you tell me precisely the number of men involved; how many men are now out, and how many in?”

“The full quota of the men employed at the quarries before the dispute was 2,800. A small section of men seceded in June, 1901, and there are now employed in the quarries from 700 to 800. Not half of these are quarrymen, even if we include all officials and boys. Over 2,000 are still outside the quarry. Of these, some 1,200 are working, either in South Wales or elsewhere, leaving some 800 to be provided for by the Union funds, besides all the people who are involved in the distress, and are looked after by the Relief Committee.”

Arbitration Accepted.

“You do not refuse arbitration, or feel any unwillingness to submit to the Conciliation Act?”

“On the contrary, we have always been willing to submit our case to arbitration, and would accept with joy such a Commission as has been appointed by President Roosevelt to settle the American coal strike. If the Board of Trade sent down a Commissioner to report under the Conciliation Act, we would give him every facility and assistance. We are content that our case should be submitted to the judgment of any impartial men, because we are convinced of the justice of our cause. Meanwhile, we appeal to the whole country to help us in our struggle.”

Starving Bethesda!

A Letter from the "Daily News"

Special Correspondent.

TO-DAY should be a proud one for the subscribers to the *Daily News* Fund for the quarrymen. This morning's meeting of the Relief Committee marked a triumph for their efforts. The meeting was their triumph, first of all, because, as the Chairman pointed out, but for the *Daily News* there would have been no meeting at all, or at best only an abortive one. It Was a triumph, again, because the Committee, greatly daring, virtually decided to organize distributions twice, and not, as formerly, once a month; but chiefly it was a triumph because of the decision to grant relief in certain cases to the families of unemployed strikers now receiving the Trade Union allowance—a much needed protection for that hard-pressed flank of the men's army, the seven hundred strikers now at Bethesda. In all there were 725 cases reported to the Committee as requiring instant relief, and as no less than 130 of these came from Caellwynrydd, I decided to spend the day in that district, two members of the Committee kindly volunteering to show me round.

Starving Caellwynrydd.

Caellwynrydd has for months past been a starving district. I question if anywhere else in the world can there be found a parallel for the spectacle it presents—that of a number of skilled workmen, temperate and thrifty to a degree, yet lacking with their wives and children the actual necessities of life. It is impossible for me to describe the scenes that I witnessed to-day in the homes of these half distracted people, and fortunately I need not do so. The facts are eloquent, and speak for themselves. I need only set out in skeleton form some of the more representative cases which I have selected from a mass of others.

Take first the case of Mrs. Richard Jones. Her house was, I found, absolutely bare though scrupulously clean. When I and the Committeemen arrived she was cutting some bread that she herself had made into slices. That bread was the only food she had in the house with which to stay her five children's hunger, and but for the Relief Committee (who had supplied the flour) she would have lacked even that. She had not a drop of milk. She was without so much as a lump of sugar. There was a little burnt treacle and some tea leaves, that had been used over and over again. This was all she could add to the brew to make the children's meal. It is small wonder that they looked haggard and worn. They had known worse times: their mother told me that once, half demented, she had gone out and begged from door to door for food. She had to walk far before she could find anyone to give her more than pity. In this case the husband, a striker, has been unemployed for eighteen months. At the commencement of the present struggle he got work in the

Lancashire Collieries, but an accident compelled him to return home. He and his family have had nothing since to live upon except the Union allowance of 10s. a week. Now, thanks again to the *Daily News*, the Relief Committee will be able to add at least a trifle to this wretched sum.

Suffering and Misery.

I found an even sadder case. At the next cottage we visited we were faced by a woman in the last extreme of suffering and misery. She herself was expecting very shortly to be confined. Her husband lay prostrate with rheumatism. She had literally nothing in the house with which to get food, and her husband's strike allowance of ten shillings a week from the Quarrymen's Union did not become due till next month. True, the husband has been unemployed only for a week or two, but his earnings (he worked at Rhayadr) have not admitted of his sending more than ten shillings a week home, and his wife has nothing to fall back upon now that she is ill, and her two children are clamouring for food. Small wonder therefore that she burst into tears when told that 9. grant had been made her from the Relief Committee. That grant, alas, was only six shillings, but to her it was priceless. Her children would be fed at last. My own feelings I do not chronicle. Indeed, if I allowed my mind to dwell upon the facts I could not state them at all. One marvels as one visits cottage after cottage in this stricken district at the extraordinary dogged honesty of the people. Nearly all of them told me with a touch of pride that they had paid their rent—a matter of two shillings to half a crown a week—all through this dreadful time. Among all these sufferers I did not find one single waverer. The men all scouted the idea of returning to the quarry on Lord Penrhyn's "terms" of unconditional surrender. The women answered even more fiercely. "I would sooner die," one told me, "rather than that he should go in."

On the hillside leading up to Moel Faban (where are the unworked quarries referred to in your issue of to-day) we met two women wretchedly clad. One was looking after some sheep; the other, Mrs. Morgan, the wife of an unemployed striker, has two children, and nothing but the strike allowance. Her children were fed practically on the potatoes that she raised in her garden. Another woman told me that she had supported herself for months by gathering cockles; and more than one confessed that but for the Relief Committee and occasional credit from tradespeople they must have succumbed.

Need of Further Help.

The *Daily News* has removed that danger, but the suffering that still remains is terrible. Consider the case of Albert Rutglede. Before the strike he was gardener to a quarry official. His wife's brothers were strikers, and the official urged Rutglede to get them to submit, but the gardener preferred to stick to his work and was accordingly discharged. To-day I found his wife in tears, sobbing her heart out over a child. Her husband does odd jobs in the district, and manages to bring home perhaps Seven shillings a week.

Frequently she told us she has been for a fortnight without coal. She has to pay six shillings a month for rent, and can barely keep body and soul together. Her house was the model of cleanliness. It is by struggles such as these that the men and women of Bethesda maintain the struggle. That they cannot do so without further aid is obvious. Famine for the moment is staved off; but if help slackens, nay, if it doesn't instantly increase, its menace will be instantly renewed. The men have shown unexampled fortitude, marvellous endurance. Only three of their number have given in to Lord Penrhyn since this nobleman's trump card, the rupture of the negotiations, was thrown down. It will be a thousand pities if their heroic fortitude goes for nothing.

Freedom or Slavery?

Let there be no doubt as to the issue at stake. The whole history of the Penrhyn struggle shows it to be between freedom and slavery. There can be no doubt whatever that if Lord Penrhyn triumphs the men's morale will be utterly shattered and broken. They will in very truth be helots. I doubt if even yet the public realise the full significance of the regime at the quarries; bad as it is to-day, it would be infinitely worse were Lord Penrhyn's power unchecked. I can prove this by a reference to the past. In 1884, when the men were weak, a deputation from them waited on the present Lord Penrhyn, then the Hon. George Sholto Douglas Pennant. That high-minded and chivalrous aristocrat heard their leaders' statements, and then, calling the three Unionist members of the deputation before him, he read out to them a peremptory notice of dismissal. These men had worked in the quarry all their lives, and not a single complaint had ever been made against their work or their character. Two of them had been in the quarry for over thirty years. So great was the indignation roused among the men by this savage act, that they threatened to strike if their leaders were not reinstated. Nominally this was done, but the Unionists were marked men. They were told that the managers would be specially desired to report on their future conduct.

"Divine Right of the Landlord."

Lord Penrhyn has not deigned to even acknowledge the last letter which the men's leaders sent him. The fact is, that Lord Penrhyn presents grossly and palpably the old feudal view—the Divine right of the landlord to do what he likes with his own. The men who are suffering to-day urge that it is their skill and toil which give value to the quarry, and surely they have some claim to control the conditions of their own labour. It is, in fact, a natural fight between the old idea and the new—a perfectly typical phase of the great world conflict of our time. That the sufferers are not to be deserted in this hour of bitter trial the *Daily News* has made clear, but the need of "support" is vital still, as all who have seen this stricken division of the army of labour will agree.

One word I should say in conclusion as to the disused quarries in this district, referred to by another correspondent in your issue of to-day. I have been carefully sifting the evidence as to their possibilities. Though there are difficulties in the way of a decision, yet there seems good ground, as I hope to

show shortly, for the expectation that with sufficient capital to develop them the blight of Penrhynism might be done away with for ever.

Penrhyn Quarrymen's Lock=Out.

LONDON CENTRAL RELIEF FUND COMMITTEE.

Chairman—E. H. PICKERSGILL.

Treasurer—JOHN KEALEY.

Secretary—C. SHERIDAN JONES.

Offices—168, TEMPLE CHAMBERS, TEMPLE AVENUE, E.C.

The Committee EARNESTLY APPEAL for SUBSCRIPTIONS in support of the locked-out Penrhyn Quarrymen and their families.

The Members of Trade Unions and Clubs, of Friendly and Co-operative Societies, Ministers of Religion, and Individual Sympathisers are specially invited to further the Committee's efforts to obtain funds.

To that end, regular Collections could be made at Meetings, Services, Entertainments, and in Workshops. The formation of Local Committees would greatly assist the work.

Sheets, Boxes, and Bottles for collecting, 1d. Tickets to sell, Literature, Speakers, and every Information, supplied by the Secretary of the Committee. Intending helpers should please communicate with him at once.

All remittances should be made payable to Mr. John Kealey, *Daily News*, Bouverie Street, London, E.C. They will be acknowledged in next day's issue of the *Daily News*.