



P & A Photos

EVICTED PENNSYLVANIA MINERS TRYING TO MAKE NEW HOMES OUTDOORS AND IN TENTS

of the Southern Railway and during the war the purchasing agent for the Federal Railway Administration, has been appointed by President Harding as Fuel Distributer. The Federal Coal Board, under his general direction, will ultimately take the entire output of the coal mines of the country and will distribute it according to the needs of the various interests. Offices have been opened in various parts of the country. A railway coal committee will apportion coal supplies to the different railways. By this means, though the production of coal will not be directly affected, the evils of the coal famine will be minimized.

In the meantime a conference was held in Cleveland between representative mine operators and mine workers. On Monday of last week Mr. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers, declared that as a result of the conference a settlement of the strike was only a matter of a few days. There are indications that some of the miners are drifting back to work, but it is virtually certain that no resumption of mining can take place without some organized action. It is clearer than ever that the Nation needs an authoritative coal commission which will have authority to ascertain the facts and, as occasion requires, promote conciliation or provide arbitration. It will be folly for the country to ignore the lesson of this strike when the exigency ends.

THE ROMANCE OF THE TENNESSEE MOUNTAINS

A GENERATION ago, when Mary N. Murfree wrote her romance of Tennessee, "The Prophet of the Great

Smoky Mountains," the emphasis in American short-story writing was being placed on local color. Mary Wilkins and Sarah Orne Jewett gave us the local color of New England; George Cable, that of Louisiana; and so over almost every section of the country. But the Southern mountains and the life and character of their people were then practically an unknown subject in fiction. It was before the time when John Fox had utilized the Kentucky mountains and before the same region had been treated, less dramatically but far more realistically and feelingly, by Lucy Furman in her "Mothering on Perilous," lately followed by her equally delightful tale, "The Quare Women," which again is most interestingly supplemented by Laura Spencer Portor in the current "Harper's Monthly" in her bit of reminiscence called "In Search of Local Color."

Miss Murfree really discovered a new field. She utilized it to the full from the romantic and the descriptive point of view in her first book. Yet the vigor of the book was such that her pen-name, Charles Egbert Craddock, was generally accepted at its face value and the author was believed to be a man.

Other novels followed "In the Tennessee Mountains" and "The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains," varying of course in ability and interest, but none attained anything like the popularity of the first two romances. The reason was that Miss Murfree, like many other writers of fiction, abandoned her natural line of writing and attempted to be over-subtle and to deal too philosophically with life problems. Even in her

best books she also inclined to rest too strongly on descriptions of marvelous scenery. She was often accused of hauling the moon over the Tennessee mountains too often and too lingeringly, and in one instance, if we remember rightly, of causing it to rise in a part of the sky never intended by nature for moonrise. One or two of her books attempted historical themes, but with no very great success. On the other hand, many of us remember with pleasure Miss Murfree's short stories, afterwards collected in book form; they reproduced the primitive and sturdy character of the Tennessee mountaineers as well as anything she did. Her stories for children were also of excellent quality.

Personally, Miss Murfree, who died in Murfreesboro on August 1, was a most interesting woman; her lameness led her in early life to devote herself to reading, and she had made a thorough study of the history of her own State. She was a direct descendant of Colonel Hardy Murfree, a Revolutionary officer of distinction, from whom the town in which she lived so long was named.

VISIBLE SOUND WAVES

A WEIRD phenomenon reported several times during the late war was the appearance in the sky during heavy cannonading of rapidly moving parallel arcs of light and shade. They were generally seen against a background of clouds, but sometimes they swept across the blue sky. These arcs were the sound waves from the discharge of the great guns, made visible by the varying refraction of light passing through the alternate zones of condensation and

rarefaction which constitute such waves in the atmosphere.

A phenomenon of similar character has sometimes been seen in connection with the explosive outbursts of volcanoes in eruption. The accompanying photograph was taken by Professor Frank A. Perret, the well-known vulcanologist, during an eruption of Vesuvius. Watching the cloud of smoke and dust above the crater, he observed that at each explosion a thin luminous ring flashed outward and upward from the volcano and disappeared in space. The movement of the rings was much more rapid than that of the material ejected from the crater. As their speed corresponded roughly with the speed of sound in the atmosphere (about one-fifth of a mile per second), there could be little doubt that they were, in fact, visible sound waves. Professor Perret named them "flashing arcs."

These swiftly moving rings were not bright enough to be photographed. In the accompanying picture they were added by Professor Perret himself after the photograph was developed.



"FLASHING ARCS" OVER MOUNT VESUVIUS

transportation industry is proportioned to the length of their service, should be placed in a position of inferiority to a limited number of men who have been employed as substitutes for these experienced railroad workers. The demand that such a wrong should be perpetrated as a penalty against men who have exercised a fundamental and admitted right not to render service under non-acceptable conditions was so unfair that we could not believe it would receive the sanction of any impartial judgment.

It seems to us manifest injustice that the striking railway men should ask for the full restoration of their seniority rights. Men "who have given four to forty years' service" should have thought of their seniority position before they entered upon a carefully planned enterprise to tie up the transportation of the country. The strikers felt that the wrongs they were suffering were so great that the only remedy was war. When a man makes war, he must take the consequences of his act. It was Emerson, we think, who said: "If you strike a king you must kill him." A man who strikes a blow, and when his blow, intended to cripple if not to kill, fails of its object asks to be taken back again into all the rights and privileges of the friendly relations which he has abandoned and attacked is, to say the least, not playing the game. Seniority rights in industry are given, as we understand it, for faithful, continued, and loyal service. No one recognizes more clearly and fully than we do the right of any man, who is not under a specified contract, to cease work whenever he chooses to do so; but no man can both have his cake and eat it. If he chooses to strike, he cannot at the same time

claim the rewards offered for not striking. If organized labor prefers the method of warfare to the method of arbitration for settling industrial disputes, it ought to be able to take the consequences of warfare without whining and complaint.

As reported in our news pages, the President has withdrawn his insistence upon the restoration of seniority rights and urges both sides to submit the disputed point to the arbitral decision of the Labor Board. If that body should decide for complete restoration, we cannot see that what the Portland "Oregonian" calls the moral issue of abandoning the loyal and rewarding the disloyal men will be any more justly settled than by the President's original request. What will probably happen, however, is that the Labor Board, if the managers and strikers ultimately consent to the new proposal, will find some way of compromise by which the loyal and newly employed workmen will have their rights reasonably protected and the returned strikers will preserve at least some of their seniority privileges, and thus the faces of all concerned will be saved. The great advantage of such an outcome is that the authority of the Railroad Labor Board in industrial disputes will be much strengthened. While the railway executives could not with self-respect, we think, assent to the President's first proposal, they may, we believe, consent to arbitration by the Labor Board, for the responsibility of the relations of the returned strikers to the loyal and new men in the railway shops will be shifted from their shoulders to those of the Labor Board.

There is one other aspect of the railway situation brought about by the present strike which we wish the railway executives would carefully consider. We have referred to it in these columns more than once. The people of the United States are never going back to the period of irresponsible private operation of railways. They will either require successful operation under Government regulation or they will turn to Government ownership and operation. Now we do not advocate Government ownership and operation. We think we realize its economic, financial, and political dangers; but the American people are getting restive; their patience is being exhausted by broken-down locomotives, dilatory trains, and bad shipment of freight. The managers may say that it is not their fault; that it is the fault of perverse and obstinate workmen. If, however, the railway executives cannot find a way to get on with their employees, the people, in spite of the dangers of bureaucracy, will

THE RAILWAY STRIKE

ELSEWHERE in this issue the story is told of President Harding's proposal of terms of settlement of the railway strike, and the opinions of representative newspapers and several distinguished State Governors regarding those terms.

It is quite apparent that the President's proposal to restore unimpaired seniority rights to returning strikers is not generally approved by the country. The attitude of the Administration since the plan was published is one of the most telling evidences that it has made a mistake in urging the restoration of seniority. Inspired statements have been given out in Washington to the effect that the Administration regards the seniority question as of minor importance, and Secretary Hoover telegraphs *The Outlook*, in response to a request for the Government's reasons for advocating a restoration of seniority rights to the strikers, "We feel that a public statement in the nature you suggest probably would not contribute to the solution." The strikers themselves evidently do not consider that the seniority proposal is a minor matter. In telegraphing President Harding their acceptance of his proposals, the striking railway shopmen said:

It would certainly be a wholesale injustice of unparalleled extent if hundreds of thousands of experienced men who have given four to forty years' service, and whose value to the