

## The Bon-Accord and Northern Pictorial Special Strike Issue No. 2.

### WHITHER?

A week of Sundays leaves us still wondering as to the why and the wherefore—and the whither. The whither is the most important. Scientists have told us that the disintegration of the "mighty atom" might burst up the universe; this fear does not prevent investigators fooling around with something crammed with potential calamity. The advocates of a general strike have never pretended, in their cooler moments, that they could estimate the reactions and repercussions of a policy of this kind which is antithetic to the natural processes of organised life and industry. They may say that is not their concern. They choose to adopt a new weapon which is not, in their judgment, to be wielded in order to kill but to threaten. If the reduction of the miners' wages is a presage of a general attempt to reduce the wages of other workers, the Trades Unionists' claim that they are entitled to use every means at their command to defy the fates as interpreted in the economic conditions of present-day capitalistic society. The industrial weapon may turn in their hand, and it is this aspect of the business which must give concern even to the leaders of the Trades Unions. The sword which is drawn to threaten may be used to slaughter. Is the Trades Union Council the real controller of the situation? We ask the question with deep concern. Is this general strike a great consecration of organised labour on a specific issue or is it a try-out for a subsequent attempt to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat? The Labour Parliamentary Party may seek to disavow the latter motive but are they masters in their own house? Revolutionaries may be the mildest mannered men, but there is no doubt that last week saw the first outward manifestation of a movement whose momentum it may be beyond the power of the recognised leaders of the Trades Unions to regulate.

### "The Bon-Accord" Blazes the Trail.

"The Bon-Accord" had a triumphal tour through Aberdeenshire and Banffshire on Saturday with the Special Strike number. Our publicity representative, who is a modest soul, feels that it would take a Browning or a Longfellow to do poetic justice to the exciting experience. The country districts had been completely starved in the matter of printed news till the arrival of the "Bon-Accord and Northern Pictorial." The special "Bon-Accord" delivery van was besieged and surrounded at the various stopping places all the way from Kintore, Inverurie, Oldmeldrum, Insch, Huntly, Keith, Banff and Macduff, Turriff, Fraserburgh to Peterhead.

Deeside was also successfully covered by swift motor car service. The "Bon-Accord" was welcomed with uncommon enthusiasm. We have to thank the news-agents for their hearty co-operation, in securing as good a distribution as possible of the necessarily restricted issue and in displaying in their windows the news contained in the paper.

### Improved 'Bus Service.

It was intimated by Lord Provost Lewis at a function on Saturday, this week will see the introduction of a much improved bus and tramway service in the city. To-day the bus service is to be doubled, while it is anticipated that tramcars will commence running to-morrow. At the present time, a good number of volunteers are under instruction in the art of driving the tramcars. Many of them are proving apt pupils.

### Special Constables.

Chief Constable Anderson and his officers are handling the situation in Aberdeen with forbearance and tact. More than the usual number of constables are required in the busy central streets, and to meet the withdrawal of men from the outlying districts special constables have been called up for duty.

## A MAN OF PEACE.

### THE PRIME MINISTER'S SOLUTION.

An impressively simple and straightforward statement on the Strike Situation from the Prime Minister's lips was broadcast on Saturday evening. The stoppage in the coal industry, he said, had followed nine months' inquiry and negotiation. He had done his utmost to secure agreement upon the basis of the Commission's Report, and when the time came to discuss the terms upon which the coal industry was to be carried on, he would see that justice was done both to the miners and mine-owners. What then was the issue for which the Government was fighting? It was fighting because, while the negotiations were still in progress, the Trades Union Council ordered a general strike, presumably to try and force Parliament and the Community to bend to its will. The Trades Union Council declared that this was merely an industrial dispute, but their method of helping the miners was to attack the community. Could there be a more direct attack upon the community than that a body, not elected by the voters of the country, without consulting the people, without consulting even the Trades Unionists and in order to impose conditions never yet defined, should dislocate the life of the nation and try to starve them into submission. He wished to make it as clear as he could that the Government was not fighting to lower the standard of living of the miners or any other section of the workers. That suggestion had been spread about. It was not the truth.

Mr. Baldwin said—I want to repeat that the Government is prepared now, as it has always been, to accept the Report and the whole Report, if the other parties will do so. I have said, and I repeat it, that the Government will take whatever steps are practicable to carry out the reorganisation proposals in the Report. The Government remains convinced that these steps are an essential factor in placing the industry on an economic basis so that the country may be preserved from a repetition of the serious disputes in the coal industry. We are prepared to consult with the owners and miners to see in what way effect can best be given to this policy and the country may rest assured that, when the time comes, the Government will be ready with proposals. We are being asked—Is the Government taking up the position that it will not negotiate? The answer to this question was given in the statement made on behalf of the Government in the House of Commons on Monday last to the effect that any one can approach the Government who has authority and can parley with us, and it is our duty to parley with them, but the Trades Union Council have only to cancel the general strike and withdraw the challenge they have issued and we shall immediately begin with the utmost care and patience once again, the long, laborious task which has been pursued over these many weeks of endeavour to repair the economic foundation and the prosperity of the coal trade. No door is closed but, on the other hand, while the situation remains what it is we have no alternative whatever but to go forward unflinchingly and do our duty. Notwithstanding the dislocation of transport and of fuel supplies, I hope employers will do all in their power to keep their works running in order to mitigate those hardships which must necessarily fall upon the people in an emergency such as this.

This is the Government's position. The General strike must be called off absolutely and without reserve. The mining dispute can then be settled. This is a fair arrangement and it will be a thousand times better to accept it than to continue a struggle which can only increase misery and disaster the longer it lasts. The solution is within the grasp of the nation, the instant that the Trades Union leaders are willing to abandon the general strike.

I am a man of peace. I am longing and working and praying for peace, but I will not surrender the safety and the security of the British Constitution. You placed me in power eighteen months ago by the largest majority accorded to any party for many, many years. Have I done anything to forfeit that confidence? Cannot you trust me to ensure a square deal for the parties and to secure even justice between man and man?