

oak of a husband, so the legal idea of her was as an absolute nonentity. That condition has not been wholly altered, but it has been altered in great degree.

Married women now own and control their own property, if they want to. In the law, the relationship that subsists between them is more analogous to partnership and less to serfdom than in former days; while in some States women are even invested with the ballot, as they are destined yet to be in all.

Throughout this whole movement Elizabeth Cady Stanton was conspicuous and influential. It was natural, perhaps, fighting as she was for the withheld rights of one sex, that the struggle should have assumed the appearance to her of a sex conflict, just as the anti-slavery struggle seemed to so many of its leaders a race conflict. But Mrs. Stanton lived long enough to see her cause rise to the higher plane of a conflict not of sex against sex but of men and women who believe in equal human rights against men and women who do not.

Her own daughter, Mrs. Blatch, truly characterized this conflict when in a speech at Cooper Union a few years ago she recited all the objections ever made to woman suffrage, both those that have been abandoned and those that are still urged, and declared that every one was essentially neither more nor less than an objection to democracy.

Probably the most perfect characterization of Mrs. Stanton is that of her coadjutor for so many years—Susan B. Anthony. Miss Anthony has called her “the statesman of the woman suffrage movement,” and that was really her relation to it. From her speech before the legislature of New York in 1848 in support of the married woman’s property bill to the latter days of her life, she did the kind of work for the movement that falls to statesmen to do, and she did it with singular ability. She was a statesman of the first order.

Of course, Mrs. Stanton suffered the jibes and jeers of thoughtless and vicious adversaries. That is something which no one can escape who enlists in the service of his kind. Of course, also, these jibes and jeers came from the upper mob even more

freely than from the lower. It is the upper mob, always sensitive to such weapons when turned against themselves, that uses them with greatest freedom against others. But the day has passed when the jeers of the thoughtless or the slanders of the vicious can have any influence upon the cause to which Mrs. Stanton devoted her long life. She lived to see it successful in many particulars and its success assured in all. And as to herself, she has left a name that will be honored as long as the story of woman’s emancipation shall be told.

#### THE TRUE ISSUE IN THE COAL STRIKE.

He must be a confiding soul who believes that the Presidential arbitration can settle the anthracite coal strike.

The arbitration commission does serve an excellent purpose in allaying excitement and making opportunity for calm reflection. It will doubtless make an adjustment of terms of employment which may keep the peace for a little while. It may recommend palliatives to Congress and State legislatures. In a flight of optimistic imagination, one might almost prophesy its securing better treatment for the miners, as a similar commission might possibly have secured 50 years ago better treatment for Negro slaves in the District of Columbia.

But the true issue will go unnoticed by the arbitration board. The relation of mining serf to feudal lord will remain undisturbed and unmenaced. The essential right and wrong of the matter will be passed over. The irrepressible conflict will be minimized. Like the issue of chattel slavery, which was allowed to gather momentum until it plunged our nation into the throes of a bloody civil war, this issue of economic slavery will, so far as the President’s arbitration board affects it, be left to develop its own kind of cataclasm.

The comparison of that issue with the slavery issue of our fathers is something more than an analogy. The two issues are but different expressions of the same thing. Under chattel slavery, the master drove his slave to work and appropriated the

proceeds of his labor. Under economic slavery, the coal baron appropriates mining opportunities and thereby forces the disinherited miner to work upon his grinding terms or starve in idleness. In both forms of slavery the worker must work for a master. Whether he cringes under a lash and to save his body from bruises consents to work, or cringes under fear of starvation and to save his life begs for work, makes no difference. So long as his will in that respect is controlled by another, so long as his earnings over and above his bare “keep” are appropriated by another, he is a slave—even though he have a vote.

One need only to know the surroundings of the anthracite coal mines to realize that the miners are slaves. Even the well paid ones average hardly a dollar a day in wages. This is not because they cannot or will not earn more, but because they are not allowed to earn more.

Says Henry George, Jr., who is familiar with the region and the subject:

It may be truthfully said that eight railroads, to all intents and purposes, own all the hard coal lands in the United States, for Pennsylvania contains the only anthracite deposits in this country, and commercially, in the world. The Reading railroad, the Erie railroad and the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western railroad own considerably more than half of the hard coal lands, and their policy dominates. . . . They aim to make an artificial scarcity of coal. The scarcity they effect in two ways. First, they do not work the equipped mines as long and as fully as they might be worked. They are deliberately closed down for periods that are not needed to make repairs. Next, they do not attempt to open all the available coal land, but on the contrary keep as much as possible out of use, and deliberately and continually buy and lease workable coal land to prevent it from being worked. By its published annual report current during the coal strike of 1900, the Lehigh Valley railroad was paying a quarter of a million dollars a year in minimum royalties on coal land from which it was not taking a pound of the mineral, but was purposely holding out of use.

In the light of that information it is easy to see not only that the coal barons do reduce the miners to bare subsistence wages, but how they do it. They do it by reducing opportunities for mining to a minimum as

compared with the supply of miners. This forces the miners to compete for work in an overflowing labor market, and thereby to bring down wages to the lowest levels.

But what is it that gives the coal barons that power? Evidently it is not the mining machinery they own. It is not the cars nor the locomotives, nor the railroad buildings. All these things could be easily reproduced. Not only could they be, but they would be if they could be utilized. But they could not be utilized because the barons control all the rail highways and terminal points and all the coal deposits.

In controlling these, they control everything. Though the hills of Pennsylvania had been stored by the Creator with ready-made goods of all kinds, instead of coal, the miners could live no better if this monopoly condition prevailed. They would still be slaves to the forestallers, and no arbitration board could help them, beyond deciding that they ought to have a beggarly increase of pay.

There, then, you have the true issue of the strike. Capital there is in abundance to operate railroad coal trains from the mines to the sea; but the barons monopolize the highways and no one can transport coal without their consent. Capital there is in abundance to work coal deposits; but the barons monopolize the deposits, and no one can open them without their consent. This consent they refuse. Consequently, they make coal abnormally dear, they diminish opportunities for the productive use of capital, and by thus lessening demand for labor they make of miners abject beggars for jobs of work.

Should this be allowed?

No question of interfering with property rights is involved. If the coal barons accomplished their ends through monopoly of things they have a moral right to own, of things they had made or had bought of people who did make them, questions of property rights would arise. But there is no question of property rights here, because highways and coal deposits are no more subject to

legitimate ownership, as you own your hat or your coat, than is a black man's baby.

Then why dawdle over the question of the property claims of the coal barons in these privileges of highways and coal deposits? If any set of men were to obstruct our streets, we should make quick work with them and their "property" rights. If any were to forbid fishing in Lake Michigan we should make quick work with them. Then why not make quick work with the coal barons who obstruct those great arteries of trade known as railroad rights of way, and forbid digging for coal in the coal-stored hills of Pennsylvania?

This is something which we must do sooner or later, not only with reference to coal deposits, but to all other natural opportunities, including the opportunity to build on vacant city lots, that are withheld by forestallers from improvement by labor and capital, though worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to the acre. If it is not done calmly, with good judgment and in good time, we must be prepared to see it done as its kindred reform, the abolition of slavery, was effected,—in the heat of passion and in a storm of blood.

There is no excuse for allowing this giant wrong of land monopoly to develop into a disturber of the peace. Nor is there any necessity for revolutionizing our system of land tenure in order to avert the danger.

With reference, for instance, to the coal question, were we to open the rail highways to common use as public highways, like our streets and roads—something that is perfectly feasible—we should destroy the power of the barons over coal transportation. Were we then simply to encourage the coal mining business by exempting it from taxation, and to discourage the business of locking up coal deposits by taxing them all they are worth in the market, we should destroy the power of the barons over coal mining.

With free competition in coal transportation, and with worked mines profitable owing to exemption of mining from taxation, and unworked deposits unprofitable, owing

to a heavy taxation upon mine monopoly, the demand for labor would exceed the supply. When that is the case neither trade unions nor arbitration boards are of any use. Each miner becomes his own trade union and he and his immediate employer become their own arbitration board.

Any settlement of the present coal strike which ignores the monopoly of highways and coal deposits, may serve a temporary political purpose, but it will utterly fail to relieve us of coal strikes, of coal famines, or of the portentous problem which is to our generation what the slavery problem was to our bewildered and fatuously compromising fathers of half a century ago.

## NEWS

Pursuant to President Roosevelt's call (pp. 454-55), the presidential commissioners for the arbitration of the anthracite coal strike appeared at the White House at 10 o'clock on the 24th. When they had assembled, the President read to them the following address of instructions:

At the request both of the operators and of the miners I have appointed you a commission to inquire into, consider, and pass upon the questions in controversy in connection with the strike in the anthracite region and the causes out of which the controversy arose. By the action you recommend, which the parties in interest have in advance consented to abide by, you will endeavor to establish the relations between the employers and the wageworkers in the anthracite fields on a just and permanent basis, and, as far as possible, to do away with any causes for the recurrence of such difficulties as those which you have been called in to settle. I submit to you herewith the published statement of the operators, following which I named you as members of the commission, Mr. Wright being named as recorder; also the letter from Mr. Mitchell. I appoint Mr. Mosely and Mr. Neill as assistants to the recorder.

Mr. Edward A. Mosely is secretary to the Inter-State Commerce commission; Mr. Charles P. Neill is professor of economics at the Catholic University in Washington.

After listening to the President's address, the commission repaired to the office of the bureau of labor, where they formally organized by electing Judge Gray as chairman. It