

last five years a Liberal Government has legislated to fix wages in a number of industries, and to tax wages for insurance. Each of these measures destroys any argument that may be based on the belief that the economic circumstances of a man or woman cannot be affected by the possession of a vote. . . . Those who argue that a vote is no weapon to a class, fly in the face of history. For each class has begun to have its point of view considered in Parliament after receiving the vote, and not before. Those who argue that the vote is a weapon, but that the ruling classes can protect the interests of the voteless better than the voteless classes could protect themselves, are flying in the face of all democratic principles. They are approaching the problem of their own day in the spirit of Lord Eldon or the Duke of Wellington. The refusal of the party to apply its own principles to this urgent question, while every measure it passes increases the anomaly of refusing the vote to women, is at present the chief cloud on its horizon.



South African Labor Trouble.

Counselling peace, the strike leaders seem likely to avoid an open clash with the military arm of the government. Martial law throughout the Union of South Africa was declared on the 14th. The strike region is divided into nine areas, each controlled by an officer vested with absolute power as in time of war. Secretary Bain, of the Trades Federation in Johannesburg, together with 300 members, sought refuge from police arrest by barricading the Trades Hall. They surrendered when artillery was brought to bear on the building. Most of the principal labor leaders had been placed under arrest by the 15th. The response to the call for a general strike was not as unanimous as had been expected; and the defection of many of those who did go out indicates that the strike has been a failure. The operating force of the railways has decided to return to work. It is reported that the Government has discovered documentary evidence at Johannesburg of a plot for a revolutionary movement in April to set up a South African labor republic. [See current volume, page 59.]



Japan's Disaster.

Sakura-Jima, the volcano in the Gulf of Kagoshima that became active on the 11th, continued its destructive eruption for several days. There was a gradual subsidence until the 16th, when its activity was renewed. The small island upon which the volcano is situated is entirely covered with lava and ashes, rendering it uninhabitable to such of the 19,000 inhabitants as escaped. Nine thousand are known to have escaped in boats before the hot lava reached the shore. How many of the remaining 10,000 have been lost is not yet known. The earthquake on the mainland has destroyed many houses, but owing to their light construction little loss of life is expected from that

cause. Ashes to the depth of several inches cover the land, adding to the discomfort of the people who have been driven from their homes. Three hundred refugees from Sakura, the volcanic island, were buried under a cliff in a village near Kagoshima. The disaster was due to earthquakes. [See current volume, page 57.]



Judge Urabe, a refugee from Kagoshima, thus describes the disaster:

On the evening of January 12 the buildings in Kagoshima crumpled up and fell. I saw men crushed to the earth as they were fleeing from their houses. All points to the north of Kagoshima were crowded with despairing refugees as I passed through. Many of these people were so stricken with fear that they resembled clay figures. Weeping women, begrimed with ashes, straggled along, carrying infants in their arms. Others were dragging with them the sick and aged. Pumice stone and lava spurted from the craters; a scarlet vapor obscured the heavens; the roar of the volcanoes was like the sound of a thousand thunders. The whole island shook and oscillated like a swinging paper lantern. Plants and trees withered, and whitened mounds of ashes formed before us. The earth itself reared like a wild horse and knocked us down; poisonous gases choked our nostrils and crazed cattle charged, instinctively seeking the sea. Many of the aged refused to leave, crying that they preferred to die in the home of their ancestors. One by one those who sought to swim away were drowned or killed.



President Wilson has issued the following appeal:

Our sister nation of Japan is suffering from two very serious disasters. The failure of crops in the northeastern part of that country has brought hundreds of thousands of persons face to face with the terrible misery of slow starvation, and in the southwestern island of Kyushu a sudden great volcanic eruption has carried death and desolation to large numbers in a thickly populated district. I appeal to the humanity of our American people that they may give expression of their sympathy for the suffering and distress of so many of their fellowmen by generous contributions for their aid. Such contributions can be made to the local Red Cross treasurers or sent directly to the American Red Cross, Washington, D. C.



If Benevolence could do it, there would be no pauperism in England, for in no country I believe is there more benevolence than in the United Kingdom. But Benevolence can touch scarcely the fringe of this vast disorder. There is another virtue we could add and that quality is Justice. It is not Benevolence but Justice that can deal with giant evils. It was not Benevolence that gave the people bread twenty years ago, but it was Justice embodied in the abolition of a cruel and guilty law.—Speech of John Bright in Glasgow October 10, 1836, in Trevelyan's "Life of John Bright."