

Many thousands cheered the King as he arrived ~~by car~~ at Merthyr Tydvil in the Rhondda Valley, but the purpose of his tour was deadly serious, not triumphal. His Majesty went to see for himself the conditions in ~~which~~ one of the areas that have ~~suffered~~ been suffering most from the burden of unemployment, and his conclusions have been an urgent reminder of this most pressing problem of our modern life. Those who cheered the King were families whose menfolk have endured for many years the demoralising influence of worklessness. The King saw this --- and he was appalled. At a farm in ~~the~~ the vale of Glamorgan the King talked to men who worked on the land --- but ~~he~~ he heard of families who cannot even afford a light in their homes ~~after~~ ~~nightfall~~ when night falls. Being in Wales, the King had to pass beneath an archway of leeks, of course, as he went with Sir Kingsley Wood, the Minister of Health, to inspect the Housing Scheme. ~~Here again there were enormous crowds --- so great that progress by car would have been impossible.~~

One of the few signs of industry was at the Ministry of Labour Instruction Camp at Pentrebach, where men were engaged in building houses. Here the King himself took a hand with trowel and mortar.

The grimmest phase of all this tour came at Dowlais. Accompanied by Mr Ernest Brown, the Minister of Labour, the King inspected what had once been a busy and prosperous steel works. Nine thousand men lost their jobs when this works closed down --- ~~and they have been workless ever since.~~

The King ~~was much moved by this desolate, desolate evidence of the biggest problem of our present civilisation.~~ He left South Wales with the determination that something must be done.