JOHN MITCHELL.

Close-Range Study of the Great Strike Leader.

To no reader of newspapers, to no man with ears, is it necessary to explain who John Mitchell is. No man who has held tightly the reins upon 147,000 men for five months can be denied the publicity which is his due. No man whose word sways 400,000 men can be ignored by the public; no man of the ability, the energy, the power of John Mitchell can be denied.

He has won his way to the command of practically all the coal miners of the United States, he has won the respect and the confidence of the great army of workingmen of all conditions and classes who have poured into the treasury of the strikers thousands and thousands of dollars because John Mitchell asked them to do so, because John Mitchell led the 147,000 into a strike and kept them on strike and true to the union despite the most powerful influences in the country to get them back to work.

"If I have made happy the homes of the laboring men who are now ill treated and in want, then I shall feel that I have lived for something," he once said.

This was long ago, before his name was known outside a small circle. It was as if the words dedicated him to the cause of labor, for he has since become its greatest and its most powerful leader.

To the striking miners he had said, time and time again, before the strike was declared: "This union of ours is some day going to get the little lads out of the mines and give them education, which will raise them above the state where they are now, and I am going to fight for this for them, and you, their fathers, must fight with me."

There was no bombast about the speech—there never is about Mitchell's—but it was the firm, decided assertion of a fact, quietly spoken and yet aimed so true at the very heart of the action that its shaft struck home.

It is a way with Mitchell that when he says things they do go home. He is never loud. He is never the orator of arms and tongue, but what he says has weight. It hits, and his facts are blunt facts; his decisions are blunt decisions. He knows that truth and simplicity of expression are greater than oratory; therefore he tells the truth and he talks right at a man—at every man in his audience—and when he has ended he has said something.

His manner is symbolical of the whole nature of the man. Quiet, reserved, almost grave; the deep set eyes, the firm, straight mouth, the involuntary clenching of the jaw, the impressive forehead, all speak for themselves, and speak of determination and depth.

But there are other things that speak as well. His handshake means volumes. He grasps the one given him as he grasps a question, and, once over, a handshake has occurred. It is a firm, large, strong, wholesome grasp, that takes hold and holds and says, "This is something, this is an occasion, this is the hand I have been waiting to hold." But there is no spontaneity about it. The hand is advanced slowly, more slowly than the eyes, for while the hand is coming the eyes have glanced, seen, considered and decided.

It is Mr. Mitchell's silence that impresses as much as his speech. It is not possible for that head of his to hold aught but thoughts which command respect and attention. There is something doing when he thinks. There is no frivolity in his composition. A glance at his dress proves that. A Prince Albert coat, a plain collar, a black tie which hides his shirt front and gives him, at first glance, the appearance of a minister, which impression the whole face bears out.

There are incongruities about all men, and Mitchell wears a soft hat with those clothes, to the horror of the tailor and the amusement of men who think knowing how to dress in style is one of the chief requirements of manliness.

"Why do you not vary your dress somewhat?" his secretary asked one day.

"Eh?" he said, startled by the question. "Eh?"—he never makes an answer without apparently thinking it over several times—"I've been dressing this way for a long time; I guess I'll continue."

Dress is nothing to Mr. Mitchell, and yet he is always neat and well dressed.

It is not an easy thing to control 147,000 men who are on strike, and especially 147,000 mine workers. There are fourteen different languages spoken by this force—fourteen different nationalities—the fiery Italian, the phlegmatic German, the torpid Slav, the energetic Irishman, the argumentative Welshman, the unimaginative Englishman, the enterprising Pole and the close living Lithunian are in the majority. These men, of different tastes, varied training, conflicting ideas, it was demanded, should be directed and governed and kept loyal to the cause, and it required a man among men, a general by nature, a manager, a power, to grasp these as John Mitchell has grasped them and held them and win them as he has won them.

Today, throughout the coal region, his name is synonymous with loyalty, and at some of the locals the men first expressed their allegiance to John Mitchell and then to the union.

John Mitchell has won the respect of the operators. Baer, Olyphant, Thomas, Fowler, Wilcox, Markle, and even Morgan, recognize Mitchell as a man of power, and, as men of power themselves, they admire him. They do not admit it. Some of them call him names, abuse him, insinuate things which make men clench their fists, but they cannot help admiring him. He has won his way to the top of his class as they have to theirs and he has compelled their respect.

Mr. Mitchell came up from the mines. A poor farm boy, a poor, hard working, conscientious miner, an ambitious organizer, a forceful labor leader, he possessed that indomitable quality that would not let him stay down. He is the type of men of whom one says without flattery, "He can do anything well." He has it in him to be a great statesman. He would be a good diplomat. He would make a stalwart business man. As a military man he would be a wonderful disciplinarian and a loved leader.

There have been some men to picture him in an official government chair. Perhaps some such dream has even flitted through his mind. Who, having power, does not crave more? But if it has, it has been quickly dismissed to attend to the business in hand.

Persons who did not know him might imagine that in the conferences before President Roosevelt in the White house the clever, college bred business giants of operators would so far have outshone Mitchell that he would have been quite overwhelmed. But no. Mitchell himself had no such thought, harbored no such fear.

He went to the conference to face men great in their business and the greatest executive of the country, with a calm and simple assurance that he was in the right, that his sincerity would win the day, and people who know of what occurred there, of how the operators lost their tempers, of how one was perhaps too forceful in his words to President Roosevelt, tell how the quiet, direct, plain speaking John Mitchell, with his superabundant force, his intense sincerity, his honest directness, outshone the others.

If there is pride in the man it is so well balanced that his heels cannot stand upon it. He is always the same. Quiet, courteous, dignified, clear headed John Mitchell, firm, forceful and free minded.

Had he more humor he would be better off. He laughs shortly, almost silently, and rather mirthlessly, as men do who laugh at another man telling their own stories. Mitchell would rather smile than laugh. There is more in that calm, thoughtful smile of his than in a book full of pictures. Varying emotions are traced upon the borders of his lips by it, and it may mean many things.

He likes good stories, but he never held his sides to ease the pain of laughter in his life. Such laughter is too much exertion to waste, and with the same amount of mental and physical force he could do much work, much thinking, much planning. He seems to always be weighing himself in his mind, carefully adjusting the scale to get the exact poise and then being right.

He is of the worker type of man. When there is anything to be done he does it. There is no plunging in, no rush and hurry and flurry and excitement. But he steps forward for long, hard work like a man starting on a long walk. He has to reach the end and he does it. Day after day, night after night, in all the worriments and struggles, and with the thousands of details of the strike to attend to, distressed, harassed, at one time seeing defeat ready to slap him in the face, dreading every minute a rush back to work by the strikers, but never showing it in his face or manner—that is the kind of man John Mitchell is.

During those anxious days care did not sit heavily on his brows; instead, endeavor lifted his eyes and hope smoothed his forehead, and confidence kept his lips straight. Day by day, like a man dragging himself up a slippery cliff, he climbed, getting a firmer and firmer hold upon the strikers, until he had them where he has held them since, firmly in his grasp, obedient to his command.

He is accused of all sorts of things—never was there a man in his position who was not—and chiefly of inciting and sanctioning the violence which has occurred. But time and time again he has counselled the strikers, in strong, forceful speeches, to remain law-abiding and quiet, to stay at their homes and keep away from the mines. Yet violence has occurred, as occur it would in any body of 147,000 idle men; and despite the charges made against him, despite the operators' attempts to inveigle him into a tangle, he has remained clear and straight, and true to the best interests of his organization.

Perhaps there is no better indication of his character than this, that fair minded men who oppose him and the union and his labor interests yet admit that John Mitchell is the man he is.—New York Herald.

In the World of Industry.

Compiled by The Pittsburg Dispatch.

Telegraphers at Milwaukee, Wis., have joined the federated trades council.

Four thousand tinplate workers at Llanelly, Wales, are on strike for an eight-hour day.

Striking molders at St. Catherines, Ont., have received concessions and have returned to work.

New Haven (Conn.) tinners have won their strike, which included recognition of the union.

Scotch miners are pressing for a minimum wage, much on the same lines as the South Wales miners.

Government employes in Washington have started a movement to secure a 10 per cent increase in all salaries.

Since its organization 50 years ago the amalgamated carpenters and joiners have paid out for benefits about $9,800,000.

The general assembly of the Knights of Labor meets in annual convention at Niagara Falls, N. Y., on November 11.

The building trades council of Kingston, Ont., is protesting against the sale by the penitentiary of cut and rough stone in competition with free labor.

The American federation of labor has 1,377 federal unions, 406 central bodies, 27 state organizations and 95 national organizations. Its growth during the past year beats all records.

State Labor Commissioner William Blackburn of Washington will rigidly enforce the female labor law of that state, forbidding the employment of women over 10 hours a day.

Prolonged idleness among Indiana tinplate workers has been productive of the formation of a co-operative company by tin workers at Gas City, who will locate a plant near Los Angeles, Cal.

The strike of foundrymen at Newport, Monmouthshire, England, continues. It involves pipe bedmen, pitmen, pipe testers, dressers, cupalo men and general laborers. These struck for better wages and conditions of employment. The men belong to the national amalgamated laborers' union.

Resolutions favoring and urging the movement for an eight-hour-day law were passed at the recent convention of the national association of blast furnace workers and smelters held at Buffalo, N. Y.

Owing to the scarcity of boys for messenger service at St. Louis, Mo., the district messenger companies have been experimenting with men, who are paid $1.25 a day and are not required to wear uniforms.

The international 'longshoremen, marine and transportation workers' association recently passed resolutions forbidding the members of any craft or class of 'longshore workers to enter another craft in any but his home port.

Justice O'Gorman of the New York supreme court has given a decision upholding the right of a trade union to withdraw its members from the work of an employer who refuses to pay the wages or accept the rules adopted by the labor organization.

The struggle between the employers' association and the teamsters' union at Santa Rosa, Cal., which has been in progress for many years, has ended. All the employers with the exception of four signed the agreement and schedule demanded by the teamsters.

The jurisdiction of the master steam boilermakers' association has been extended, and branches will be established in Europe. The association already has branches in Canada and Mexico. The object of this extension is to secure the enactment of uniform license laws.