

difficulty between the Cumberland Coal Company (Dunsmuir), Limited, and their employees. Sunday, the 15th of September, 1912, the employees of said company held a mass meeting and elected at that meeting to take a holiday as a protest against the action of the management of the company in discriminating against two of its employees. There were no arrangements other than that made at the meeting. At the session of the local union, United Mine Workers of America, held in the evening, the action of the mass meeting was endorsed and a committee appointed to confer with the management; that committee went to the officers of the company on Monday, September 16, accompanied by District President Foster, when the management positively refused to meet the committee; on Tuesday, September 17, the management posted notices ordering all men to take their tools out of the mines, also stating that all the late employees of the company would be paid off just as soon as the payroll could be made out. Later, the men held another mass meeting and sent another committee to meet the management. Mr. Clinton, whom they met in the office and whom they had been informed would represent the management, told them he had no authority to do business with them. On the 23rd of September another committee went to the office and met Superintendent Lockhart and discussed the situation with him. There was no offer made by the committee of conditions under which the men would be willing to return to work, nor did Mr. Lockhart make any proposition that the men should return to work or any statement that the company had changed its position or withdrew the notices they had posted or modified them in any particular. Nor as yet have they made any statement to accommodate or posted any notice that they have changed their attitude that simply amounted to a wholesale discharge of all these men. On the 18th day of September, Ladysmith mine workers decided to stop work until the Cumberland mines resumed, and they also were ordered to take their tools.

Yours respectfully,

Robert Foster, President.

John McAllister, Secretary.

You will see, therefore, that the strike in the Extension mine was simply a sympathetic strike, it being one of the mines operated by the Canadian Collieries Company. Passing on to the commencement of the trouble on August 12 the conditions in the strike zone seemed as if the men were becoming very uneasy. There was an undercurrent of ill feeling which led to the supposition that something ill was foreboding. The men assembled at No. 1 shaft in Nanaimo to the number of about 1,000. I was phoned up to ask if I could use my good offices in an endeavour to effect some solution between the company and the men, and I told them I would be willing to do whatever I possibly could in the matter. I went down in an automobile and went through the mob; and, as the press reports stated, they threw brickbats at me, but fortunately none of them hit me.

[Mr. Shepherd.]

However, this did not deter me from doing what I thought was right. I spoke to them and told them that I had come down in order to endeavour to effect a settlement between them and the companies so that this trouble might end peacefully. I made a proposition to them. I could see, to paraphrase Charles Dickens, that the 'ricks were blazing and the mob was mad.' I pleaded for a twenty-four hour armistice, so that they could repair to a hall and there formulate their demands; and I would endeavour, to the best of my ability, to secure a promise on behalf of the company that they would meet them, say at ten o'clock in the morning. My good intentions were evidently misinterpreted. One of the men cried out, 'You want an armistice to get the militia here.' However good a man's intentions may be, they are very often misinterpreted. They turned my proposition down and asked me if I would get the manager to come and speak to them. I got the manager to come and speak to them, and he made a very fair proposition. He said: 'If seven of you men who were working for me on the 30th of April will come to my room to-morrow morning, I will make arrangements with you so satisfactory that I think you will return to work.' They appointed seven men; these men went down to the company's office, but accompanying them was Mr. Farrington, strike manager of the United Mine Workers of America. Mr. Stockett, manager of the mine, refused to meet Mr. Farrington, and consequently the latter's presence rendered the whole proposition abortive.

We come now to the 13th of August. A boy rode into Nanaimo on a foam-flecked horse, rode to the office of the Free Press and stated that six men had been killed by the non-strikers. The result was that a mob a thousand strong, armed 9 p.m. with clubs, guns or rifles, or anything they could command, went out to Extension. At the time the riot took place, an incipient riot took place at Nanaimo, a serious one at Wellington, and a very serious one at Ladysmith, a mining town about fourteen miles from Extension and really the mining town of Extension mine. The most serious riot, as far as injury to the person was concerned, occurred at Ladysmith, where a man by the name of McKinnon had his arm blown off by a stick of dynamite being thrown into his building.

With regard to the hon. member's statement about bloodshed, there was abso-