

ne strike only that we did not like those four words "as soon as possible," and that we must have a definition of what was meant by those four words. We were not convinced by any means that he was sincere and honestly intended to do what those words might suggest to the average gentleman should be done, that is, to reinstate all men to their former positions, and we wanted some more definite assurance than his mere say so that the words meant just what they said. All day Sunday, July 31st, we were waiting, waiting to see whether anything would come out of it, and all day Monday, with the assistance of the Minister of Labor,—who was, let me tell you, faithfully working for us (hear, hear),—working for us every hour in doing something that we were absolutely helpless to do for ourselves, and finally on the evening of August 1st, 1910, he did not get an understanding in a conference with Mr. Hays. He said it was necessary for him to go to Ottawa and see his colleagues, the other members of the Cabinet who might be there, and discuss the matter with them, and we told him that if he could give us any kind of definition that would satisfactorily dispose of the meaning of those four words we would at once call off the strike. In other words, that if Mr. Hays' word convinced him, or would assure him, or give him any kind of guarantee or the other members of the Cabinet any guarantee that those words "as soon as possible" meant a certain stated period—one month, two months or three months, that that would be enough for us. And don't you forget what I am going to tell you now, ladies and gentlemen, that if we had not got that assurance we would have been tickled to death to take a chance without the assurance, and that is what we would have done if we did not get it. However, on the evening of August 2nd, as the result of further conferences or messages passing between G.T.R. officials and Mr. King and his associates we received this telegram from Mr. King, which we had told him would be sufficient for us, just so long as Mr. Hays would assure him—because he could not assure us, we could not see him, we could not get to him, there was no possible way we could have been assured by him (laughter)—but just as soon as Mr. Hays would assure Mr. King that the words "as soon as possible" meant with him a certain stated period that would be good enough for us. I want to say to you that we were never so relieved in our lives as when we received this telegram, which you have all heard, "Mr. Hays had given Sir Frederick Borden and myself to understand that the men will within three months from this date be taken back in the service and within that time be placed in their former positions." We understand by "the men" all men referred to in the agreement signed by both parties. As soon as we received that we were pleased beyond measure. Not all the men on the line may be. Maybe not the men in Mr. Lennox's constituency, or in Mr. Blain's, or in Mr. Northrup's, but the sub-committee and the officers who had placed in their charge the future welfare of 4,000 men who had gone out on strike for a principle. (Hear, hear, applause.)

We were not pleased beyond measure to please some firebrands that would criticize and find fault. We were looking after the women and the future happiness of the men and their families who had been on strike. We knew the settlement was very far from what it should have been. We knew all the objectionable features both at that time and ever since, more than Mr. Blain or any other honorable gentleman I hope will ever know. (Laughter.) We have heard from those gentlemen all over this country—(A voice: Who advocated the strike?) Mr. Murdock: 4,000 men on the G.T.R. (Applause.) All the men on