

regulations were interfering with efficiency in the industry. Then joint conferences which were well on the way to working out these adjustments were mysteriously deadlocked. A little while later the peacefully inclined labor manager for the employers' association was forced to resign, and a notorious union-fighting attorney was retained, after denials, as advisor. On the heels of that came the ultimatum already described. Only after this covert edict to commit hari-kari was hurled back in the employers' teeth by unanimous mass meetings in three cities, and the lockout of union members had actually begun, did the belligerent employers come out in the open with what they really wanted. In the name of one of their number they brought suit for a permanent injunction against picketing, for half a million dollars' damages, and—for the dissolution of the union. The wolf had ceased to discuss the alleged muddying of the waters. He now admitted his desire to destroy the lamb.

Altogether fifteen suits for damages aggregating \$2,400,000 were entered against the Amalgamated. Two suits asked for its dissolution. More than a dozen and a half injunctions were demanded, and some of them were granted. The granting of one of these restraining orders was made the occasion by the issuing judge, Justice Van Sicken, of his now famous confession with regard to the courts:

"They must stand as the representatives of capital, of captains of industry, devoted to the principle of individual initiative—protect property and persons from violation and destruction; strongly opposed to all schemes for the nationalization of industry, and yet save labor from oppression."

A few shops attempted to operate with non-union labor, but met with dismal failure. They gradually closed down, sometimes assisted by wholesale walkouts of their strike-breakers, for even they could not stomach the conditions. Strong-arm guards were advertised for and hired in large quantities, and left their mark on many a picket. Charges of graft were hurled at the union and its officers, and a State investigation was darkly hinted at. But when the union welcomed the suggestion, and volunteered to put the probers on the trail of some good "dope" on the manufacturers, the charges died like mildew in the sun.

Work was of course sent out of town. The very men who in New York were denouncing the Amalgamated for "Sovietism" sought to get coats and pants made in Chicago on the plea that the garments were for Soviet Russia. Wherever workers found that they were tricked into making up goods for the union-fighting employers of the metropolis, they refused to continue. In Philadelphia this refusal was joined in by 6,000 men and women, and netted the Amalgamated a thousand new members.

The New York lockout employers tried to carry the war into Africa by egging the manufacturers in other cities to join the anti-union movement. In Boston they succeeded, and partly in Baltimore. In every other large clothing center the factory managers who had agreements with the union held to them. The net result of the New York manufacturers' out-of-town campaign was to isolate them

from the national body of their industry. The union fighters tried to launch a United States Senatorial investigating committee against the union, the first time a labor organization was ever so honored. As in the earlier New York talk of a probe, they lost heart for the enterprise when the resolution was broadened to include the manufacturers and retailers as well. As if it were providentially timed to make up for the deficiency, the New York Lusk committee sprung its report on radical activities, pillorying the Amalgamated as one of nine great unions which were dangerous to American life, principally, it seemed, because they were not "armed bands of revolutionaries," but only industrial unionists.

On its side the union was equally active. Picketing demonstrations including 3,000 workers were held. Halls were hired where the membership assembled daily for addresses, entertainments, and to plan their defensive campaign. A large legal department was built up to meet the employers' thrusts. An international lockout resistance fund of \$1,000,000, the largest ever known in trade union history, was called for, and in four months it went more than 50 per cent "over the top." Six co-operative stores were opened for the distribution of groceries to the most needy and for their sale at reduced rates to those who could pay. The Union Health Center of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union initiated a comprehensive system of medical assistance to locked out workers and their families. Many a lockout baby owes his life today to the Baltimore girls who, although on slack time themselves, began an emergency milk fund and spent their spare minutes making layettes. New ground was broken in American labor conflicts by bringing a counter-suit against the employers to prevent assault, defamation, and discrimination against union members, and for \$1,000,000 damages. In every way possible the union built up its morale and with unerring generalship countered the moves of the enemy.

Morale and generalship won. The lockout employers' assaulting column lies shattered. Its would-be union-devouring leader and his legal advisors have deserted the cohorts they led into unwilling battle, and are nursing their injured ambitions in wrathful silence. Their erstwhile followers have lost at least \$10,000,000 worth of business, and are late in opening their fall season. The union, on the other hand, has gained every point it fought for. It keeps its organization, it keeps its conditions, it keeps the right to a voice in the management of industry. It may have spent \$2,000,000 in the struggle, but it has reaped rich returns in growth of union spirit, in solidarity, and in the consciousness of unconquerable strength.

The real issue behind the fight was the effort to destroy the Amalgamated, in New York by all means, throughout the country if possible. That this was the motive behind the opening of hostilities is shown by the gradual development of the employers' demands, the attempts to drag the rest of the country into the fight, and the culminating suit for the disbanding of the union. It is shown also by

the statements of the presidents of both the New York and the Boston clothing manufacturers' associations, that they were not bearing the expenses of the quarrel, but were receiving help from outside. The drive against the Amalgamated is thus linked up with the general "open shop" movement throughout the nation. That issue has been settled in favor of the union.

To many employers, labor unions are like Indians to many pioneers—there are no good ones but dead ones. In the campaign to convert live unions into dead ones, however, it is sometimes convenient to draw distinctions in badness, as it no doubt helped to call a prospective Indian victim a horse-thief. So in this struggle the employers sought to strengthen their assault on the Amalgamated with charges of "Bolshevism," "Sovietism," "revolution," and what not, as distinguished from the nice, orderly American Federation of Labor. The files of the union's official papers, the speeches of its leaders, were fine-combed for evidence of its subversive character. Every mention of the word "revolution" was dragged out of its setting and strung into a brief. If the union had been making pinwheels instead of clothes, there would not have been enough "revolution" in its literature to please its assailants.

The bright particular jewel in their charges was a clause in the preamble to the union constitution which said:

"The industrial and inter-industrial organization, built upon the solid rock of clear knowledge and class-consciousness, will put the organized working class in control of the system of production, and the working class will then be ready to take possession of it."

This clause, according to the union-fighting employers and their legal adjutants, made the Amalgamated clearly a conspiracy against the United States government, the capitalist system, and the Holy Trinity. Such a union they would never negotiate with. It would have to be executed—or at least deported.

That issue also has been settled in favor of the union. "We do not presume to tell the employers how to write their constitution, and we shall not allow them to dictate to us how to write ours," the union leaders said. The stern abitrament of facts has vindicated their stand. The employers have now signed a year's agreement with that very union, with its preamble unchanged. Vindication has also come from the bench. Justice Bijur of the New York Supreme Court upheld the disputed clause as perfectly proper. Even if it did mean that the clothing workers were going to come into the possession of the clothing factories, he said, "there is still absent any statement or implication that this is to be accomplished by forcible or other unlawful means." For the present, at least, aspiration toward and preparation for working-class ownership and control of industry remain legal.

True to form, true to their policy of protecting the vested interests of their place-holders and of the employers in preference to those of progressive elements in the ranks of toil, the American Federation of Labor and some of its constituent branches

sought in various ways to cripple the Amalgamated in its hour of trial. At the height of the struggle Gompers editorially declared in the "American Federationist" that the Amalgamated had "betrayed the labor movement of America." In Louisville, Montreal, and Boston the insignificant but "regular" United Garment Workers of America deliberately signed contracts with employers who had locked out their Amalgamated workers. The Louisville Trades and Labor Council endorsed the United against the Amalgamated, and even went so far as to expel a delegate from the boilermakers who denounced the act as imperialistic and un-American. In Montreal the manager of a lockout shop openly went to the city central labor council and bespoke and received their approval of his taking in the United to fight the real union in the industry. The Boston Central Labor Union refused to assist the Amalgamated in its struggle. With characteristic vindictiveness these elements in the official labor movement allowed and furthered a drive which might end by overwhelming them, hoping only thereby to achieve the ruin of a body too advanced and too independent to remain in the reactionary harness. It speaks well for the growing manhood of American labor that certain unions, such as the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the Fancy Leather Goods Workers, the milliners, the machinists, Alexander Howat's Kansas district of miners, and individual progressive locals in Boston and Los Angeles, broke through the embargo and did what they could. Notable assistance was given by the Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees, also an independent organization.

An interesting chapter of the conflict was written in mud on their own nighties by the Old Ladies of the Brass Check, the capitalist newspapers. While some of the journals were fair or even favorable to the locked out workers, the prevailing spirit was one of inveterate hostility. Every occasion was seized to decry and attack the union people, and when occasions did not exist they were manufactured. Thus a reference of President Hilman's to the "war department" of the union, meaning the picketing and other defense committees, was heralded broadcast as a blood-thirsty threat to the federal Department of War not to intervene in the lock-out "or industrial warfare of the fiercest kind will follow." Before 19,000 members of the union, no one knows how many policemen, and an official stenographer, Secretary Schlossberg declared that the employer "may determine for himself where his factory is to be," but that the workers would not permit him to determine for them how long they should work, or for how much, or whether they might form a union. Yet this statement was twisted into an assertion that the union was "not going to permit the employer to determine where his factory is going to be." A correction of the misquotation was sent to the New York "Times," which published it obscurely. Yet a week after the retraction was printed, the "Times" repeated the charge in an editorial.

That is to say, the capitalist press is the capitalist press.

The "public" played a negligible part in the fight.