

# AFTER TEN MONTHS OF SILENCE, WHIR OF MILLS IS AT PASSAIC WORSTED AS COMPANY SIGNS UP

By VERA BUCH.

(Worker Correspondent)

On Eighth Street, in Passaic, street of many struggles, there stand side by side two textile mills. There are other factories on this street, here where it crosses the river, but these two great woolen mills dominate. Stretching for blocks, reaching backward as far as the eyes can see, their huge red brick walls loom above the street.

For ten months these towering walls have looked down upon the battles of their workers who were on strike. Mass picket lines singing and cheering; picket lines of twelve tramping steadfastly and silent; furious onslaughts of police, broken heads of workers, screams of women and terror of children, these things the walls have seen for ten months as the textile strikers fought for freedom. Now at last there has come a change.

## Life Stirs Now.

The Passaic Worsted Spinning mill has settled its strike. Now from behind its once silent walls comes an unwonted stir of life. The clicking of wheels, the steady whir of machinery is heard where shortly before there was desolation. Machinery unused for ten months, clogged with rust, with rats, with cobwebs and dust, is being brought to life again.

## Union Recognized.

The workers are back with their union recognized. They are cleaning the machinery and setting to work. And as one department after another gets into working order, the boss calls up the union office and asks for the number of workers he needs. Yes, the workers have fought their bitter struggle to the end they desired: the union is recognized. And the whirring machinery now booms forth a triumphant message to the rest of the city: "Keep it up, fellow workers! Keep it up! Fight on, fellow workers! Fight on! You will win! You will win!"

## The Gera Mills.

Farther on, lies the Gera Mills. Here the strike is not yet ended. Here there is silence. A bare three hundred of the full twelve hundred workers are inside. A few bosses' cars parked around, an empty truck, perhaps a cop coming out of the office, wiping his lips as though from a swig of comforting booze, are the only signs of life.

## Workers Pace Street.

But here up and down the street, from daylight to dark, from Monday to Saturday, without stopping walks the picket line. Twelve men and women are slowly pacing the street. They are shabby; their clothes are poor and worn. For ten months they and their fellows have walked here, untiring in their grim determination to win this strike. The shoes wear off their feet and their legs grow weary, but they come to the line and walk their hour, borne up by the iron will to win this strike.

At first sight small and pitiful, as you watch this picket line pass and think of all it stands for, it grips your heart. It is the symbol of a grim and mighty struggle. Behind the walls of the Gera Mills lie entrenched wealth and power. Courts, judges, police, resources: all that a class in power can command are there. Behind the picket line surges the strength of the awakening workers. The solidarity of the working class; the will to live of the exploited who produce all wealth; the hope of the class that is rising to power; all this is behind that slow-moving picket line of twelve. The picket-line must not lose; it cannot, it will not lose. March on, fellow workers! March on! And as you march, listen to the victorious message of the whirring machinery of Passaic Worsted: "Keep it up, fellow workers! Fight on! You will win!"

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