

practicable. To farming, fishing and lumbering the shorter day could not be wisely applied. Possibly there are also groups of industries to which the immediate application of an eight-hour day would be disastrous. In the Bill before the British Parliament to establish the forty-four-hour week farmers, seamen and domestic servants are exempted. Power, too, is taken by agreement with employers and workers to vary its application to other industries, or the Board of Trade may take independent action to establish a shorter day or extend hours of work as conditions may seem to require.

It was not too clearly demonstrated that with the shorter day production is generally maintained. Nor were the Labour delegates pronounced in opposition to over-time and higher wages. It was declared by employers with practical experience that in certain industries where the eight-hour day was satisfactory to employers the workers opposed reduction and even petitioned to have the nine- or ten-hour day with over-time restored. There was force also in the contention of employers that for many industries the eight-hour day would be a doubtful regulation unless a like regulation were also applied to competing industries in the United States. Under all the circumstances, therefore, and since the eight-hour day now prevails in forty-three per cent. of the industries of Canada the Conference could not easily go farther than to recommend investigation in order to determine how the shorter day would affect industries in which a longer day now obtains and what, if any, could not be wisely brought under an eight-hour regulation. Throughout the employers put the emphasis upon production while the Labour group insisted that production would not fall if hours and wages and working conditions were satisfactory.

There was also disagreement over the recognition of Labour Unions and collective bargaining. But here, too, there were significant concessions alike by employers and by the leaders of Labour. It was declared by Mr. Tom Moore on behalf of Labour that collective bargaining did not involve recognition of unions unless such recognition was expressly stipulated in the contract. On the other hand there was full concession by employers of the right of workers to bargain for wages and conditions of service. Practically employers agreed not to oppose the organization of Labour, nor to discriminate against unionists, but refused to bargain only with organized Labour or to establish the closed shop except where the workers or a decisive majority of the workers in a particular industry or group of industries were unionized.

V

A struggle for
the closed shop

THE issue over which the Conference divided constitutes the basis of conflict between the United States Steel Corporation and the American Federation of Labour. There is something in the contention that the employees of this Corporation constitute the aristocracy of Labour on this continent. The investigation by the Senate Committee at Washington has disproved or greatly discredited many of the charges of the strike leaders. There is no "slavery" among