

sometimes wholly, by the intensity of their labour for the loss of its duration. Victorian experience shows the recoupment almost completely.

One other short paragraph, showing his conclusion as to the effect of the eight hour day in Victoria:

Altogether, the more we examine the subject the more irresistibly is the impression borne in from all sides that there is growing up in Australia, and very largely in consequence of the eight-hours day, a working class which for general morale, intelligence, and industrial efficiency is probably already superior to that of any other branch of our Anglo-Saxon race, and for happiness, cheerfulness, and all-round comfort of life has never had its equal in the world before. For all this advantage, moreover, nobody seems to be a shilling the worse. It is truly remarkable how immaterial apparently has been the cost of the eight-hours day in Victoria. Look for the effects of it where you will, they still ever elude your observation. Wages have not fallen, wages have not risen, production has not fallen except in certain trifling cases; prices have not risen except again in certain trifling instances; trade has not suffered, profits have not dwindled (or we should have heard croaking), the unemployed have not vanished, not so much as shrunk in any perceptible degree; the working classes—the great body of the nation—have an hour more to call their own, that is all.

Now, I may say that organized labour has gone to the various provincial legislatures in this country asking for an eight hour day within the province, and they are invariably met with the reply: We cannot enact an eight hour day for this province, because our employers would be compelled to produce goods under an eight hour day in competition with the employers of other provinces who work under a ten hour day; and for that reason we cannot grant your demand; were, however, all the other provinces to enact an eight hour day, we would be very happy to grant your demand. The representative of organized labour comes to the House of Commons and presents a Bill. Unfortunately, owing to the limitations imposed upon this House by the British North America Act, we are not able to enact a comprehensive measure, and, therefore, we say to the representative of organized labour: You must go back to the provincial legislatures, there is the place to get your legislation. I may say that so far as this Bill is concerned, even if it had the effect which the interpretation placed upon it by the hon. member for South Toronto (Mr. Macdonell) would produce, I am prepared to vote for it. I believe if that measure were adopted this country would be not one whit worse off economically; while the introduction of an eight hour day throughout the Dominion of Canada would have the effect of bringing up a class of labouring men such as those de-

scribed by this author in Australia. So strongly do I favour this measure that, in spite of the objections that have been urged against it, I shall be pleased to vote for it as it stands.

Mr. C. A. MAGRATH (Medicine Hat). I have no intention to take up the time of the House in speaking on this measure. I was not present last session when the Bill was discussed; I was not approached in any way for or against it at that time. There is a principle, however, involved in this Bill that we must face, we cannot evade it. I listened to the remarks of the hon. member for Kootenay (Mr. Goodeve) and was pleased to hear what he had to say. I endorse what he said; I am a supporter of the principle underlying this Bill and am prepared to vote for it. It is a question we have got to face in this country, and the sooner we deal with it in a fair and honourable way the better it will be for the country. There are two features connected with it that appeal to me. We hear much said about the conservation of our natural resources in this country, but the conservation of health is one of the most important things to which we can devote our attention, and this Bill affects health. It also has a bearing on the question of the unemployed. It may effect the profits of some of our industrial concerns, but as between the conservation of health and the diminution of unemployment on the one side and maintaining the profits of capitalists on the other side, I am in favour of it, of looking after the interests of the workmen, and allowing a few dividends to be diminished.

Mr. SPROULE. I made a few observations on this Bill when it was discussed before the House last time, and I wish to repeat them, or some of them now. Looking over the Bill, as far as my judgment enables me to determine, it is quite impracticable. It is a Bill which never could be put into operation without any amount of trouble as the result. Under a portion of the Bill, any institution that was turning out goods which it had contracted to supply the government would be compelled to grant its men an eight hour day. The Bill aims at that, it seems to me, if it aims at anything. If that be the case, it appears to me that it would bring about no end of trouble. But there is another reason why I oppose it. While I think that in many avocations of life eight hours a day is ample, and more than enough, for any labourer to work, in other lines he can work eight, nine or ten hours, and neither do himself any injustice nor his health any injury. In mining, when a man has to go under ground, eight hours is a fairly long day, but if you are working out in the open