

a living wage and consequently they have to work harder in short hours and earn as much money, so as to balance the difference in hours.

It may be said that granting a shorter work day in Canada at this time would mean to paralyze the output of some of our industries. But the worthy persons who are taken in with this fallacy forget the fact, which is the key to a right understanding of this subject, that the general demand for commodities cannot outrun the general production of commodities, because they are really only the same thing in a different aspect.

It may be said work people are endeavouring to restrict production by shorter hours of labour. It is impossible for any one to believe that such is the case as labour is not looking for a decrease but for an increase in wages, and if that was the case, instead of making more work for the unemployed in proportion to the restriction, they would have really, in that proportion, made less work for the employed, as the natural effect of restricting production would be to lower wages not to raise them.

I claim that the prosperity of the working classes as well as the prosperity of the world itself lies in the abundance and not in the scarcity of things it produces, provided however that hours of labour be based on such production, so as to equalize both powers.

If production is over and above the consumption, as it is at present, thus increasing the number of unemployed, then the labour must be pressed. We may be asked: 'When will you stop? When you have shorter hours, you will want still shorter hours.' The very same question was asked in 1847 at the introduction of the 10-hours' law, and the answer is the same as then: shortening of hours was necessitated by over-production.

Let us take the principle of government interference.

Principles are always deduction from sequences of facts. The facts of the history of government development lead the philosopher and the man of common sense alike to hold the following beliefs:

The freedom of the individual to pursue his own interest as he will, must be respected. Where conflict of interest arises, 'common good' takes precedence over the desire of the individual.

This is the basis of justice, the teaching of humanity, the ground of patriotism. But let the government here recognize a moral limit and not invade to degrade the manhood of the least number.

Law must be guided by experience. In some the policy of 'laissez faire' must be corrected by such interference as exper-

ience has taught will result in greater benefit to the community.

And what has experience taught? The Duke of Argyle put the outcome most concisely when he said: 'The two great discoveries of this country are (1) the advantage of freedom in trade and (2) the necessity of restriction of labour.'

We are here especially concerned with the second of these discoveries.

Supposed labour to be left unrestrained what would be the natural course of the life in industry.

Competition between producers encourages all possible reduction of cost. This tends to reduce wages, to increase the use of child labour, to perpetuate long hours of labour, &c.

A few unscrupulous employers resorting to such oppressive methods are able to force others to adopt the same policies.

The interests of the employing classes range themselves against those of the operative classes. In the struggle which results from this antagonism, the employer has the advantage of position to force his own terms of contract upon the labourer. He has in his hand an accumulated capital which is equivalent in power to effective organization.

These industrial conditions, left to take their own course, react upon the home and general social surroundings of labour to force down the workers' standard of living. This is an injury which no community can afford to tolerate, and it is a good reason for shortening hours of labour and thus balancing both powers.

The proofs that the work day should be shortened lies also on accidents occurring every day and at what times? We see from statistics furnished by the Jesuits in Germany where the 12-hours' day is set as a maximum, the following table of accidents that happen per hour in all the industries of that country where the working people commence at 6 in the morning and stop at six at night.

6 to 7..	435 per hour.
7 to 8..	794 "
8 to 9..	815 "
9 to 10..	1,069 "
10 to 11..	1,598 "
11 to 12..	1,590 "
12 to 1..	*587 "
1 to 2..	745 "
2 to 3..	1,037 "
3 to 4..	1,243 "
4 to 5..	†1,178 "
5 to 6..	1,306 "

*And some manufacturers stop 11.30.

†That is after a rest for lunch and many are then gone.

These figures prove that long hours of labour tell on the workers to the largest extent.

Then it is easy to see that the hours and