

also that no man could convince him that the same amount of work could be accomplished in eight hours as in ten.

Mr. SPROULE. In ordinary lines of work—and I still stick to it.

Mr. MADDIN. However, the research of those who have devoted attention to this matter has led to conclusions on the subject. It has been stated by some manufacturers that they thought it was the last hour that gave them their profit, but they have discovered that it was the last hour that registered their loss—that their workmen had lost the vim and vitality with which they had pursued their labours earlier in the day, and that the last hour was carried on at a loss which seriously interfered with the profits of the employer. There is one instance which I will recommend to the hon. member for East Grey. The Messrs. Holden, of Bradford, England, the largest wool combers in the world, who have mills in France running 72 hours a week and mills in England running 56 hours a week, find that they can comb wool more cheaply in England than in France, though they pay higher wages for the short day in England than for the long day in France, and employ exactly the same machinery in both cases.

As pointed out by the Minister of Labour, this question is not a new one, it has been discussed from time to time in various countries throughout the civilized world. I was surprised to hear the Minister of Labour say that this was a matter upon which the House had very little information, and that consequently the House was not in a position to deal intelligently with it. Why, Sir, it is only the other day, in discussing the resolution on technical education, that the Minister of Labour pointed out that his department had taken the greatest care to gather statistics and data with regard to technical education, and that he had at his fingers end this data. I submit that, familiar as he is with the history of the eight hour question from 1862 in the United States, and for the last ten years since he has been Deputy Minister of Labour in Canada, with the knowledge that this proposed legislation was first introduced into this House on the 11th of December, 1906, almost three years ago to-day, one would have thought that his department would have the necessary information to enable this House to deal intelligently with the subject. The subject has been agitated by labour organizations throughout this country for the last thirty years, and by labour bodies in a very active manner within the last ten or fifteen years. It is a matter with which the Department of Labour should be quite familiar, especially in view of the fact that they have had such ample notice.

Mr. MADDIN.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me point out that the government has introduced in public contracts a fair wages schedule insisting that the hours of labour on government contracts shall be those current at the place of employment, and this was granted at the request of organized labour. Now, it is not sufficient for this government to say, when labour asks for an eight hour day: Oh, never mind that, we will think it over, and we will gather information; we gave you a fair wages schedule and insisted on current hours of labour under government contracts. Why, Mr. Speaker, what contractor could hope to obtain anything else but current hours of labour under his contract? If a contractor undertakes to erect a public work at Vancouver or at Sydney, can he hope to obtain any other than the current hours of labour at Vancouver or at Sydney, and would it not follow that those would naturally be the hours of labour, whether they were embodied in the government contract or not? The same with regard to a fair wages schedule. The wages that obtain in Victoria and obtain in Sydney are well known to the trades in those places, and contractors seeking for workmen in those places will find it difficult to get such labour at a lesser schedule, even if there were no fair wages schedule in government contracts.

With regard to the applicability of this Bill in its present form, I do not feel like supporting it in all its details. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that from the point of view of that part of Nova Scotia from which I come, it would not be in the best interests of labour, nor would it be in the best interests of the industries there to adopt this Bill in its present form. This government bought from the different coal mines of Nova Scotia last year, for the use of the Intercolonial alone, coal to the value of nearly \$1,750,000. I must say that whilst practically an eight hour day obtains amongst the miners of that province who are employed at the working face, it would be impracticable, almost physically impossible, for any of the coal mining companies in Nova Scotia to furnish coal to the government under the provisions of section 1 of this Bill as it stands at present.

At six o'clock, House took recess.

#### After Recess.

House resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. MADDIN. Some reference was made during the course of this debate to the suggestion that this Bill savoured of class legislation, that it was unfair to the farmer who was obliged to work very long hours. My hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule) took occasion to say that farmers, to his knowledge worked twelve, fourteen and sixteen hours per day. That will be con-