

to be ashamed of the result. Instead of voting for anarchy and public pillage, the working man has voted for economy, administrative reform, army reform, justice to Ireland, public education. But no body of men ever found political power in their hands without being tempted to make a selfish use of it. Feudal legislature, as we have seen, passed laws compelling workmen to give more work, or work that was worth more, for the same wages. Working men's legislatures are now disposed to pass laws compelling employers, that is, the community, to give the same wages for less work. Some day, perhaps, the bakers will get power into their hands and make laws compelling us to give the same price for a smaller loaf. What would the Rochdale pioneers, or the owners of any other co-operative store, with a staff of servants, say if a law were passed compelling them to give the same wages for less service? This is not right, and it cannot stand. Demagogues who want your votes will tell you that it can stand; but those who are not in that line must pay you the best homage in their power by speaking the truth. And if I may venture to offer advice, never let the cause of labour be mixed up with the game of politicians. Before you allow a man to lead you in trade questions, be sure that he has no eye to your votes. We have a pleasing variety of political rogues, but, perhaps, there is hardly a greater rogue among them than the working man's friend.

Perhaps you will say as much or more work is done with the short hours. There is reason to hope that in some cases it may be so. But then the employer will see his own interest; free contract will produce the desired result; there will be no need of compulsory law.

I sympathize heartily with the general object of the nine hours' movement, of the early closing movement, and all movements of that kind. Leisure, well spent, is a condition of civilization; and now we want all to be civilized, not only a few. But I do

not believe it possible to regulate the hours of work by law with any approach to reason or justice. One kind of work is more exhausting than another; one is carried on in a hot room, another in a cool room; one amidst noise wearing to the nerves, another in stillness. Time is not a common measure of them all. The difficulty is increased if you attempt to make one rule for all nations, disregarding differences of race and climate. Besides, how, in the name of justice, can we say that the man with a wife and children to support shall not work more if he pleases than the unmarried man, who chooses to be content with less pay, and to have more time for enjoyment? Medical science pronounces, we are told, that it is not good for a man to work more than eight hours. But supposing this to be true, and true of all kinds of work, this, as has been said before, is an imperfect world, and it is to be feared that we cannot guarantee any man against having more to do than his doctor would recommend. The small tradesman, whose case receives no consideration because he forms no union, often, perhaps generally, has more than is good for him of anxiety, struggling and care, as well as longer business hours, than medical science would prescribe. Pressure on the weary brain is, at least, as painful as pressure on the weary muscle; many a suicide proves it; yet brains must be pressed or the wheels of industry and society would stand still. Let us all, I repeat, get as much leisure as we fairly and honestly can; but with all due respect for those who hold the opposite opinion, I believe that the leisure must be obtained by free arrangement in each case, as it has already in the case of early closing, not by general law.

I cannot help regarding industrial war in this new world, rather as an importation than as a native growth. The spirit of it is brought over by British workmen, who have been fighting the master class in their former home. In old England, the land of class distinctions, the masters are a class, econo-