

quote some remarks of well known gentlemen on their appreciation of a shorter work day. Mr. Chamberlain related an experience of his own firm in his speech in the House of Commons in England on Mr. Le Leakes Mines Eight Hour Bill in March, 1892:

When I was in business, said he, (I am speaking of twenty years ago), my firm was working under great pressure twelve hours a day. Shortly afterwards the Factory Acts were applied to Birmingham, and we reduced the hours to ten a day. Sometime later we voluntarily reduced the hours to 9 a day, after the experiment at Newcastle of a nine-hour day. We were working self-acting machinery. All the workman had to do was to feed the machinery and see the fires were kept in order. In this case if in any, the product should be directly proportioned to the number of hours worked. What is the fact? When we reduced the hours from twelve to ten, a reduction of 17 per cent, the reduction in the production was about 8 per cent, and we again reduced the hours from ten to nine, a reduction of 10 per cent, the reduction of production was 5 per cent.

It will be observed that there was here apparently no speeding of the machinery nor any other change in the arrangements of the work, but that the whole difference is due to the increase in the personal efficiency of the workman under the influence of the shorter hours. It will be observed that the degree in which this personal improvement is effective did not decline with the successive reductions, but is quite as high, or rather a little higher proportionately in the second reduction than in the first. The same results are reported from America. Mr. Pratt, of Pratt & Co., says that in his rolling mill in Buffalo, when the hours were shortened from ten to nine in 1876 on account of bad times he found that the same number of men performed the same amount of work in nine as they did in ten, especially during the short days of winter. If we seek information from experienced men; we know that the shortening of hours has been an incitement to promptness at the hour of beginning work, and as less time is lost consequently production costs less, and the men are in better health. I might cite the experience of large industries as to reduction of hours.

If we take the report of Messrs. Short Bros., in Sutherland, when they established a reduction of hours at the same time as their neighbours, Messrs. Allan & Co., they have precisely the same story to tell. After eight weeks trial, they write Mr. Hadfield, that they are already satisfied the new arrangements of hours will not increase the cost of production, that they have every reason to believe that the production will be greater; that the week before they wrote, their wages bill was high-

Mr. VERVILLE.

er than it had been any week during the previous year, showing that the men were working better and more regularly; that they had scarcely one absentee under the new arrangement, whereas under the old system 20 per cent of their men lost the first quarter every morning. Some of those who have given evidence as to the result of a shorter work day have not agreed, and some go as far as to condemn even the good result obtained by others, but should we be guilty of denying to hundreds and thousands of working men the right of reasonable leisure because a few employers will not believe a thing possible which is being done every day.

Have the employers of this country ever granted a restriction of hours willingly? if so they are so few that they are not mentioned in any labour literature that I have seen so far. It has been obtained in most cases from the result of a struggle between employers and employees which we can avoid by legislation.

In the spring of 1894, the English government, showing for once an enterprise above that of private employers, established a restriction of hours, by way of experiment, at the cartridge factory at Woolwich arsenal and although no details of the results of that experiment have been published, it is understood that as much and even more work was done by the men after the reduction of hours than was done before it. At any rate the experiment proved so successful that the late Mr. Campbell-Bannerman to whom the credit is due announced in parliament on the 5th of January in reply to John Burns the intention of the War Department to adopt a shorter work day as a general rule in all the public ordnance factories.

The United States has given us numerous examples of restriction of hours from ten to nine and from nine to eight.

In 1868 shorter hours were introduced by law in the United States, but the superintendents of the works immediately reduced the men's wages to correspond by paying them at the old rate per hour. This was done in the Springfield Armoury amongst other places. The New York 'Tribune' quotes the first report of the Commandant of the Armoury as in the effect of the new experiment. He states that file workers managed to make under the old tariff of wages quite as much per day under the short hours as under the long hours system, and that he believed the workmen had worked harder and more faithfully under the short days system than under the long hours. The foreman of the milling department reported on August 17, 1868, that the average earnings of 1,212 pieces of work under the long hours system in the month of June previous was \$2.60,