

forty-eight hours it will increase the cost of production, we do not think there would be any increase in the cost of any particular article. We are of opinion that if working the eight hours the men would be more content than at present, and we are fairly of opinion that nearly the same quantity of work would be turned out as is done under the forty-eight hours. The latest report of the 'eight-hours' system appears in the Government monthly return of the *Labour Journal* of September, 1900. You will find there, sir, it refers to the great success of the eight-hours system at the Thames Ironworks. It says: "Every believer in the eight-hours movement will rejoice to learn that at the Thames Ironworks the adoption of an eight-hours day continues to prove a grand success. Some remarkable facts and figures concerning the matter were given recently, on the occasion of the eighth annual festival of the Thames Ironworks Federated Clubs, which was held at the Town Hall, Canning Town. In presenting the prizes to the successful competitors, Mr. A. F. Mills congratulated his hearers on having passed through a most successful year, and upon having sufficient work before them to keep the yard busy for three years to come. Mr. Mills referred to the fact that seven years ago they had just passed through a period when the whole neighbourhood seemed infected with strikes, and when the Thames Ironworks had had eighteen months of continuous strife with everybody engaged in the yard. The only pleasant recollection, Mr. Mills said, he had of that time was, that the men did not get the better of him—(laughter)—and he mentioned this as an answer to the charge which was always brought against him, that the concessions given were the result of pressure. But, after all this fighting, he turned his attention to the project of making the Thames Ironworks known as the place where the best battleships in the world were built. (Cheers.) So, in 1892, he decided that everybody should have an interest in the work that he did, by means of a good-fellowship dividend, which should depend upon the realised profits of the firm. In 1892 the amount distributed was £4,804, and in 1898 it was £15,390. During the seven years—1892-98—it amounted to £42,519. (Cheers.) This was in addition to the highest wages in the trade in this or in any other country for an eight-hours day. (Loud cheers.) In 1894 he decided to introduce an eight-hours day. In 1893 the wages paid were £99,066, and in 1898 they were £242,336. In seven years there had been an increase of wages paid of 145 per cent., which was a very remarkable testimony to the working of the eight-hours day, and showed that the work done was becoming more profitable. He had taken out the net cash per ton of five vessels built for the Government before the eight-hours day had been introduced, and the cost for two Japanese battleships, and a cruiser for the British Government after, and he found that the latter were built at a cost per ton of 17 or 18 per cent. less than the former. (Cheers.) And during the past two months the Thames Ironworks had, in open competition, secured work at a price which was the lowest put in by any firm. (Cheers.) So greatly had their business increased that they had taken a yard over the river to which they intended to transfer the eight-hours flag, which had brought nothing but blessing on them since it had been adopted. It had proved good for the men, good for the work, and good for the shareholders." That is just one fact where it has been proved—and others can be quoted—where by working eight hours instead of nine it is proof that it will not add to the cost of production by knocking off three hours per week. We have heard it urged that by working short hours it is going to increase the cost of production, and that article proves that it is not going to do so. Take section (b) of the clause: "A person shall not be employed in or about a factory for more than eight hours, excluding meal-times, in any one day." My union are of opinion that eight hours is a fair thing, and that one hour for dinner should be established under the Factories Act. At the present time in a great many indoor factories, the employés are only getting half an hour for dinner. We have tried it, and find it is not conducive to the best health of the men; that there is not time to have your dinner, and you are not in a fit state to go on with your work, as if you had had a proper hour, and gone out to a restaurant and got your dinner as ordinary beings. When you are working a plough team, you do not feed horses as fast as you can get it into them, but give them time to digest their food. We are asking that an hour in all factories should be allowed employés for their dinner. There is clause 19 lower down, where it says, "The prescribed number of working-hours may from time to time be extended, but not more than three hours in any day; or more than two days in any week; or more than thirty days in any year; or on any holiday or half-holiday. On every such occasion, a person shall not be employed more than four hours continuously without having an interval of at least half an hour for rest and refreshment. Every person who is employed during such extended hours under this section shall be paid therefore at half as much again as the ordinary rate: Provided that when the ordinary rate is by time- and not by piece-work the overtime rate shall not be less than sixpence per hour for those persons whose ordinary wages do not exceed ten shillings a week, and ninepence per hour for all other persons so employed; and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a record-book called "the overtime-book," wherein shall be entered a correct record showing, in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section, the names of the assistant and the respective dates and periods of such employment. The overtime-book shall at all times be open to the inspection of the persons employed, and of the Inspector. The Inspector may at any time require the occupier to verify the entries in the overtime-book by statutory declaration in such form as may be prescribed by regulations." Take where it refers to the prescribed number of working-hours—eight—which may be extended from time to time. We are of opinion that if the number of days to be worked in one year as overtime was fixed at thirty days, it would prove sufficient. We are of opinion that in section (b) that "only able to work two days in one week," should be altered in some way. We think if we are allowed to work thirty days—and we are satisfied that it should be, say, thirty days overtime in the year—we do not think only two days in each week should be sufficient. If we are allowed to work the thirty days, we should be allowed to work that time when the work has to be