

so harass the employing class, and profits would be so much cut down, that the game of capitalist production would not be worth the candle. Already there are economic forces at work which are steadily minimising the returns to capital, and otherwise worsening the position of the capitalist; and it ought to be our aim to hasten, by whatever fair means we can devise, the end of production for profit.

“What an intolerable interference with the liberty of the subject!” the unsympathetic capitalist will say. “What a cumbersome method of getting the earnings to the earner!” the uncompromising Socialist will justly exclaim. To the latter I regretfully reply, “You are right, comrade; but, you see, society will not have our simple, drastic, and abiding remedy—at least, not yet; and it must therefore take a remedy much more complicated in its workings and much less satisfactory in its results.” To the capitalist impatient of interference with the liberty (to plunder) of the subject our reply simply is that all political action must be determined by the consideration of what is best calculated to promote “the greatest good of the greatest number,” and that it is a less hardship that one man should have small profits than that a number of workers should have low wages.

There are clear precedents for the establishment of both the institutions we propose. In the American Republic there is a Labour Bureau for each separate State, and these Bureaux have collected much valuable information relative to the position of labour—information all too much neglected by certain writers on the American Commonwealth. It may be mentioned parenthetically that great difficulty has been experienced in getting employers to send in returns such as we have indicated—many having absolutely refused to give any information whatever. It is also interesting to learn that, with one solitary exception, the Commissioners in these Bureaux invariably see good reason to take the side of the workers in any trade dispute—one of them, Col. Wright, of the Massachusetts Bureau, being a well-known friend of the workers. The drawback to the efficiency of these institutions is that they have no powers. For the proposed Labour Tribunals we have an undoubted precedent in the Land Courts which have been set up in Ireland to fix fair rents for agricultural holdings, and which have already done such good service.

We may be sure that after the general enforcement of an eight hours law, employers will use more cunning devices than any yet employed to recoup themselves for the loss which ten hours' pay for an eight hours day will entail upon them; and, to prevent the possibility of an encroachment on wages, the Courts and