

were willing to do it. Industrial pressure would have to become severe indeed before we should find the mason, blacksmith, rivetter, boilermaker, printer, &c., &c., doing a part of their day's work in the kitchen or the coal-cellar.

Another objection is that the eight hours limitation could not be generally applied because in some industries—tailoring, for example—there is a dull season and a busy season, when it is sometimes necessary that the work should be carried on “night and day.” This seems somewhat of a difficulty—so far as the tailors are concerned; but it would be rather a hardship if, because the tailors found it difficult to limit the working day to eight hours all the year round, other workers should be forced to work nine or ten hours a-day all the year round. This is an aspect of the eight hours question which will perhaps be made the subject of special legislative provision; although there is no strict necessity why it should be so. If an Eight Hours Act were extended so as to include tailors' workshops, it would simply have the effect of spreading the work over a greater length of time; and that, surely, is not in itself an undesirable thing. If we are asked whether the comfort and convenience of the tailor should be conserved, or Tom, Dick, and Harry should be able to get their summer suits whenever they choose to order them, few sober-minded persons will hesitate as to their answer. Here, indeed, the work might readily be taken home—if the workmen were sufficiently foolish or selfish to do it; but it is to be hoped that the tailors themselves, either through their Unions or as individuals, would have something to say on that matter. In any case, there is no good reason why other trades should be denied a reduction in their hours of labour because the tailors cannot get it. If they wish to be exempted from the provisions of an Eight Hours Act, that, of course, can be managed without much difficulty; though any such exemption would be a thing to be regretted.

I come now to deal with the most important objection that has been advanced against the shortening of the hours. As stated before, it is (2) That an eight hours day is economically impossible—that is, the employing class cannot afford to pay ten hours' wages for eight hours' work.

Those who advocate a reduction of the hours of labour have for the most part contented themselves with showing that it was possible to adopt an eight hours day in Government and municipal employments and on the railways, whilst leaving the present rates of wages untouched. Although I propose to carry the dis-