

**SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF
TO-DAY. A SHORTER
WORKING DAY**

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Social Questions of To-Day. A Shorter Working Day by R. A. Hadfield & Henry de B. Gibbins

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R. A. HADFIELD & HENRY DE B. GIBBINS

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EDITED BY H. DE B. GIBBINS, M.A.

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A SHORTER WORKING DAY.

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS little volume is a combination of the work of two writers, the one a student of economic science, and the other a practical man of business. It does not directly advocate a shorter working day from the point of view of eager partisans of the present Eight Hours Movement, but at the same time both authors have been compelled to come to the conclusion that a reduction of the present working hours would be by no means an economic impossibility. The reader will easily see that the chapters have been written in some cases by independent hands, the student discussing the economic and historical aspects, and the man of business giving his actual experience of what he has done himself and found other business men doing. These chapters are distinguished by the initials of the writer who is in each case responsible for them; and where the work of both is combined, the initials of both are given.

A special feature of the treatment of the subject here presented is the chapter on, and constant reference to, the experience of our Australian colonies in regard to the working of the Eight Hours Day, and the writer of this part of the book desires to express his indebtedness to Dr. Stephen Bauer's valuable *brochure* on *Arbeiterfragen und*

Lohnpolitik in Australasien (Jena, 1891), which gives as an appendix a valuable conspectus of past and present wages in Australia.

Perhaps it may be well to remark that our *Shorter Working Day* is written on lines quite different from Messrs. Webb and Cox's *Eight Hours Day*, and in no sense competes with that extremely able and valuable work, which both of us greatly admire. If anything, it is rather a supplement to it, as it brings down the history of the movement to September, 1892, and includes reference to recent developments of an important character which have only occurred since the *Eight Hours Day* was published. In more than one point we must be indebted to Messrs. Cox and Webb's book, and hereby gratefully express our obligations.

It remains to remark that part of Chapter IV. was first published (anonymously) by H. de B. Gibbins in the *Westminster Review* of July, 1889, and that R. A. Hadfield's part of the book—especially Chapters VI. and VII.—is partly taken from his paper, read at Sheffield on March 5th, 1892, at the Conference of Employers and Workmen arranged by the Sheffield Federated Trades Council.

H. DE B. GIBBINS.

R. A. HADFIELD.

September, 1892.

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