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THE CHINESE BOYCOTT.

There seems to be a contagion of fear amongst the commercial bodies in the Northwest and elsewhere that the threatened boycott of American goods by the Chinese societies will put us completely out of business. A few of them would like to see the gates of our ports thrown wide open for all comers, because they feel that their station in life has removed them from any dependence upon the under world, and a few others would like to continue our commercial relations with a good market without impairing our own. Then there are people who would like to keep all Asiatics and the undesirable alien emigrants from our shores altogether. Unquestionably there are extremes on both sides, as there always are, who can never settle the question, as it must ultimately fall upon the class of people who are the real conservators of American institutions.

In dealing with the Chinese question, which is the important one under discussion at this time, there is only one equitable way of dealing with the subject, and that is to enforce the law, as President Roosevelt has decided. Under the terms of the treaty, the merchants, students, travelers, etc., are exempt from the operations of the exclusion act. They are therefore entitled to land in this country without suffering the indignities from the inspection officers complained of. There should be no need of complaint in this respect, for it is ungallant and cowardly to humiliate any person, no matter who, who comes here under the provisions of the laws enacted by ourselves. They should be protected instead. Besides there is no especial danger in the arrival of the Chinese merchant, student, or scholar. They will hardly endanger the business of our native merchants, and if they do the commercial bodies will soon change their tune and cry for an exclusion law so drastic that the tides would even find difficulty in following their natural flood.

So far as the Chinese laborers are concerned, we have a law that prevents this class entering our ports, and it is going to stay. In the first place, the people will not submit to an open-door policy, and in the second, the Chinese officials and aristocrats care nothing for the coolie element, which is the danger we need to apprehend. The vigilance of the immigration officers is to be commended, but any discrimination not contemplated in the law should be condemned. There is some reason for defending the officers in their strict application of the rules, and that is, during the time when the department was a little more liberal the Chinese took every unfair advantage in trying to gain admission into this country. If the proper papers are issued on the Asiatic side by duly appointed officers of this government much of this trouble can be allayed.

While we do not anticipate that any other than a strict exclusion law will remain in force against the unrestricted admission of coolie labor, if the commercial bodies should insist too strenuously in favor of letting them in the wage earners could form clubs all over the country and throw their patronage to the Chinese tailor merchant, cigarmaker, shoe

dealer, who can and have turned out as good an article as the white manufacturer for half the cost. This was done in San Francisco many years ago and it was no time until every merchant in the city was 'up in arms' against the Chinese.

Both the business man and the laboring man of California has felt the demoralizing effects of the Chinese, and the appearance in large numbers of the Japanese and Koreans has startled them, hence their recent agitation against the latter classes.

Reports from Philadelphia, Pa., state that 45 of the leading printing firms in that city, anticipating the general eight-hour movement of the printers, commencing January 1, 1906, have declared for the "open shop" and the nine-hour day. This is not surprising, for the reason that the Quaker City is the poorest organized city in the United States. The very fact that the printing employers have taken this action is sufficient argument for the trades union. In St. Louis, Mo., the employing printers declared for the nine-hour day and succeeded in getting an agreement for three years with the union by increasing the wages \$1.50 per week. They said unless the union agreed to this they would enforce the "open shop." This frightened the weak brethren and there were enough of these at a poorly attended meeting to submit to their employers' ukase. This had no sooner been done than a tremendous protest was raised by the stalwarts at home and the printing journeymen abroad, the action of the union was reconsidered, and their former action abrogated. In the face of this the printing firms of St. Louis, where the craft is fairly organized, have not as yet declared for the "open shop." In San Francisco the employing printers have repudiated an agreement for an eight-hour working day of their own making, and from the 1st of July they demand that the printers work nine hours. The union has refused to acquiesce, it has the support of all the important newspapers in the city, and many of the leading citizens, and there is no doubt that the union will be victorious in the stand taken. These instances are sufficient to prove the merits of labor well organized. Where there is little or no organization capital has no hesitancy in declaring for anything they desire, but where there is good organization amongst the workers the employers are not apt to want so much. It does not appear at this time that the employing printers of St. Louis and San Francisco are as eager to have the nine-hour day as they are in Philadelphia.

The anti-Japanese and Korean agitation started in California recently has developed a strong following during the past few weeks. At a public meeting in San Francisco last week Delegate Graham, of the committee on statistics and publicity, submitted a lengthy report, showing the number of Japanese in this country and the increase in their number during the past thirty years. Statistics taken from the official reports of the Japanese secretary to the minister of agriculture showed some startling figures as to the number of Japanese who left the Mikado's country during the year 1900. There were 86,689 laborers, 2851 merchants, 554 students and 52 on official duty. The report of the industrial commission says the number of Japanese laborers in California today is greater than the number of Japanese arrivals shown by the immigration records at all of the United States ports during the past ten years. "How they came," says the report of the commission, "is a mystery. The movement, the coming and going of these Mongolian people are as a closed book to the white races. These figures justify the speculation of the industrial commission as to how these people arrive and how they evade all record and all supervision."

Unlike many other industries the iron and steel business requires the investment of extensive capital, and the members of the San Francisco Machinists' Union propose to help the manufacturers in the West to compete with their Eastern competitors upon equal terms so far as labor is concerned. Through their delegate elected to attend the convention of the International Association, to be held in Boston, Mass., in September, the union decided to agitate before the convention the passage of a law that the working day in the Eastern shipbuilding concerns be

nine hours, so that the local plants which have been operating on the shorter workday will no longer be at a disadvantage. The Eastern plants all work ten hours, and the local establishments find it difficult to successfully compete with them. It was also resolved that a resolution should be submitted abolishing the piecework system, which prevails principally in the East.

President Shea's exalted position in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters is threatened by the executive board. They do not like the way in which Shea called and conducted the Chicago strike. They charge him with violating the laws of the organization, and do not think he is a fit person to direct the affairs of the union. He has succeeded in getting the strike affairs in Chicago in such a tangle that it is difficult to unravel it. The executive board has been hard at work for two days to adjust the trouble, and while there seems to be a prospect, nothing definite has been accomplished. The Labor Press has been opposed to the Shea methods from the start, and the action of the executive board makes us feel that our apprehensions were right. Shea appeared to us to be a "wind jammer" instead of the determined soldier fighting for his rights, as John Mitchell did in the strike of the coal miners a couple of years ago.

The Building Trades Council of San Francisco has decided that local unions should give boys every opportunity to become mechanics, and requested that the apprenticeship laws should be framed on liberal lines. The question of apprentices and the teaching of the boys was discussed fully by P. H. McCarthy, O. A. Tveit-moe, George Keily and S. T. Arnold and others, the speakers all supporting the proposition of liberal rules by which young men could be given every chance to gain a livelihood and become useful mechanics and citizens. The question came up at a recent meeting through the apparent attempt of an affiliated union to keep boys from learning the business. And yet the Citizen's Alliance has been telling the world that labor unions deprive the boy from learning a trade whereby he can in after years earn an honest living for himself and those dependent upon him.

Henry Gassaway Davis, the venerable running mate of Judge Parker in the late presidential election, says the merchants, capitalists and farmers change their political convictions very little, but he warns the people to look out for the laboring men. He says: "In local elections the laboring classes are naming their own candidates, and often state and national officers are elected, while the party to which they belong does not carry the local ticket. The laboring element is shifting rapidly and its unions are becoming factors in politics. In Massachusetts there was a good example of the influence of the labor element. The state went for Mr. Roosevelt, yet elected a Democratic governor by 35,000 majority. I saw Douglas afterward and asked him how he did it, and he replied: 'I worked with the laboring element.'"

The new industrial labor institution that was to be created in Chicago on June 27 by the American Labor Union and its agencies, or what is left of them, was pulled off on schedule time, but from reports the representation was disappointing, and the future without promise. Instead of being a convention with the purpose of dealing with the material and moral improvement of the working people, it seems to be a partisan political gathering. How this scheme is received in the Eastern states is well illustrated in a statement made in a labor paper published at Pittsburgh, Pa., which said: "The efforts of the agitators of the industrial organization movement for the support of trade unions in the Pittsburgh district made a canvass of the many local organizations here declared yesterday that not one will be represented at the convention to be held in Chicago on June 27."

The profit scheme which is being promoted by some of our well known citizens, wherein, the laborer shall receive the full profits of his or her labor, is so big that we refrain from offering an opinion upon the enterprise for a time, until we have an opportunity to study it more fully. The plan given out seems feasible,

and under business regulations and directed by men of large affairs, as it is proposed, there is scarcely any reason to doubt its possibilities. The scheme to float the project by the issuance of bonds is no different than that employed by railroads and large corporations, which return immense revenues and dividends. The scheme certainly seems rational.

Substantial Benefits.

The quarterly reports of the secretary-treasurer of the Iron Molders' Union of North America has been submitted to the members. The financial statement is most interesting and instructive and members are advised to give it careful attention. John P. Frey of the official journal of the union has prepared a summary of the reports, in which he says:

Financier Metcalf's circular, dealing largely with the statements relative to the sick benefit and out-of-work funds, as usual, contains some wholesome suggestions. The sick benefits disbursed for the first quarter of the year were very heavy, \$52,319 having been paid out, and as the receipts to this fund for the quarter were but \$44,440.32, there remains a deficit for the quarter of \$7,878.68. The first months of each year always show the heaviest drain on this fund, and while every member entitled to this benefit should receive it promptly, it devolves upon the local unions to see to it that this fund is not imposed upon, and that no sick benefits are paid out except in strict accordance with the constitutional provisions. The sick benefits paid out for the first quarter added to those disbursed since the fund was established in 1896, make a grand total of \$955,860.25, which would indicate that before the close of the year the Iron Molders will have paid out over \$1,000,000 in sick benefits in less than nine years. There remains a balance to the credit of the sick fund in the hands of the local unions of \$22,260.60.

One very encouraging feature of the report is found in the statement of the out-of-work fund. During the quarter but 11,238 out-of-work stamps were used, which, compared with 40,647 used in the first quarter of 1904, indicates the improvement which has taken place in the foundry business.

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