PACIFIC SECTION

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LABOR CONSIDERATIONS.

Notes of the Oriental Influx—Steamship Service to the Far East.

Monetary Times Office,
Vancouver, B. C., November 9th.

The immigration and labor problems, which are closely associated, have assumed new aspects during the past week. With the completion of harvesting operations in the prairie country the farm hands have come on to the coast, since the report has gone abroad that labor is in great demand out here. The trouble is that when labor was urgently required, it was not to be had, and by the time the news got around several months passed, and now we are at a time of year when hands are available, but adjustment is slow.

In the fall, men come in from the Yukon and outlying districts where they have been mining and prospecting, for timber and minerals, and the labor stringency is alleviated to some extent. This year, in addition, has come the slump in copper, and with the reduction of operations in the interior and coast camps more men are to be had than usual. Further, the dullness in the lumber industry and the closing of the shingle mills on the first of the month for an indefinite period, has thrown more men on the market. Consequently, it is not surprising that when sixteen able-bodied laborers applied at the City Hall the other day for work, they were turned away disappointed.

Can Afford to Pay Poll Tax.

Sawmill men when appealed to declined to displace Japanese with whites, although there might be work in the woods for the latter. Despite statements that Japanese are paid as high wages as white men, which some people have published after casual inquiry, your correspondent is able to say that the rate is not the same, and that the Japanese are cheaper.

Although there has been no more large importations of Japanese or Hindus, there is enough on hand to create quite a problem for the winter. In the former case, the boarding house keepers, who hold the laborers from Japan for money-making purposes, will have an expense, since with winter many will come back to the city to await work. With the Hindus, the burden of support will fall upon themselves, and as they are very poor they cannot help but suffer.

The incoming of so many Chinese of late, they paying the poll tax of $500, might lead to the suggestion that the fee might be further increased. Not on the principle of making it higher because more are coming in, but when the tax was advanced to that figure, wages were much lower and now that the price of labor has gone up, it would not be out of reason to increase the tax proportionately. With high wages, the Chinese can far more easily afford to pay the $500 now than he could when the higher figure was fixed, and $750 or even $1,000 might not be too much under present conditions.

Opinions of Board of Trade.

The feeling is by no means confined to a few on the Coast that Great Britain and Canada have been outdone by Japan in regard to what was expected under the treaty which has been so much discussed of late. With the traditions of British probity and integrity in mind, British representatives may have signed the compact without taking into consideration that the other party was the wily Oriental, who, with the instinctive bargaining propensity of the more primitive races, saw a way of evading the treaty. Certain it is, that something must be wrong when 5,000 Japanese, out of 8,000, can come to Canada to remain in one year, when it was understood that only 480 was to be the number. Yet, this is the figure given out by the Dominion immigration official at this port.

A visitor in the city yesterday was Mr. Alex. D. McCarty, of New York, special representative of R. G. Dun & Co. who left for Sydney, Australia, to re-organize and probably extend the company's business there. They have no English competitors in the field there, but two local organizations are in operation.

The Vancouver Board of Trade, at its meeting this week, besides resolving against the unrestricted inflow of Asiatics, took up the matter of an inter-imperial news service. This is a matter of considerable import to the West. Newspapers are, under the circumstances, limited in circulation, yet there is an unlimited call for telegraph news, and particularly of Canada and England.

Steamship News and Notes.

Mr. D. E. Brown, superintendent of the Pacific steamship service of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, is now in Montreal conferring with the official heads relative to the betterment of the service between Vancouver and Victoria and the Orient. The Athenian and Tartar are both about to be removed, having been sold to a Japanese company, and the demand is for faster and better boats to supplement the Empresses, which for years have been the pride of the fleet. There is talk of the Empress of Britain and the Empress of Ireland coming out, but new steamers will have to be built to take their places before this can be done.

Improvement is also being made in the class of boats plying between British Columbia and New Zealand. The Indravelli and the Den of Ruthven will replace the Kazembe and Pondo.

With the increase of the number of industries in New Westminster, great difficulty is being found in supplying homes. Many dwellings were put up this year, but evidently not enough to meet the demand, which is constantly increasing. Business premises are also scarce, and people desirous of opening have had to wait until spring. As a result, several new blocks and many residences will be erected within the next year.

VANCOUVER STOCK EXCHANGE.

"We feel that in the Vancouver Stock Exchange the citizens of Vancouver have an institution which merits support, and which, in course of time will be looked upon and spoken of with pride."

These were the words of President C. D. Rand, of the Vancouver Stock Exchange at the close of the first quarter of the business year of the exchange.

"Wash Sale" Methods Not for Vancouver.

"We did not expect," he continued, "any great amount of business, but outsiders had a way to remedy all that, and we had not been opened a week before certain parties, interested in certain stocks, in which we were dealing, were strongly urging the advisability and necessity for introducing 'wash sale' methods into the exchange, urging that the reported sales of so many thousand shares of this or that stock would not fail to create a greater public interest and induce the public to commence buying. As this exchange was formed for the purpose of doing business on legitimate lines, it is needless to say that suggestions of this nature were quickly resented, and, I think, I am quite justified in believing that no fictitious sales have been made on our board since its opening. We had hardly opened our doors when troubles in the financial world commenced.

Some Petty Opposition.

"As if this was not enough to discourage us, certain of our local brokers, who are not members of the exchange, have taken out their little hammers, and have done their level best to knock stocks in general, and the Stock Exchange in particular, out of existence. In the face of these difficulties and discouragements, it affords me much pleasure to state that the Vancouver Stock Exchange is not at all discouraged. I do not think it is very generally understood that practically all the members of the exchange are prepared to execute either buying or selling orders on any of the leading exchanges in the United States or Canada; but such is the case, and nearly any member of the board is prepared to fill orders for any of the stocks dealt in on the exchanges in New York, Boston, Montreal or Toronto. Several of our local companies have already complied with the conditions required by the exchange before their stocks can be listed, and if the public will take the trouble to look over the records for the past three months they will see that, notwithstanding the great depression and shrinkage which has taken place in outside stocks, nearly all local stocks listed on our exchange have remained steady or advanced. This shows that the public have confidence in the management of local companies.

"Many applications to list stocks of doubtful merit have already been made to the exchange, but have been promptly turned down by your executive, and this policy will be adhered to while we remain in office, I also stated that it would be one of the objects of this exchange to expose wild-cat companies and their methods whenever the opportunity occurred, and the exchange has already, through the press, taken steps in that direction, and I venture to predict that it will not be very long before wild-cat schemes and wild-cat promotors will give Vancouver and vicinity a wide berth when they want to catch the unwary public."