

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"The Dominion Trades and Labor Congress, at its recent session, came out flat-footed against Chinese immigration," said Brown. "The Congress don't want to see that class of immigrants coming to this country at all and it asks, point blank, that no Chinaman be let into the country under any circumstances. Now, this question involves a great principle which, evidently, the Congress lost sight of. Why, I can take you to houses in this city which are so filthy and their occupants so dirty that a Chinaman and his cabin would be considered a model of cleanliness in comparison with them. But they are immoral; they frequent low dens of prostitution, and they smoke opium, and they are withal affected with horrid diseases which may not even be mentioned to ears polite. And, pray, have we a right to object to them on that account? Has not the ravaging of children become an almost everyday occurrence among us? Don't our criminal and police court records show the existence of dens of infamy and prostitution as low as any to be found on the sandlots of Frisco or among the Chinese of Vancouver? As for the rest, ask any reputable physician and he will tell you that the proportion of the population of our large cities afflicted with diseases peculiar to the habitues of these dens of infamy is perfectly appalling. And is the opium habit any worse, or is it as bad, as the liquor habit? Is not the traffic fostered and protected more than any other calling, and do not the drunkards very often move in our so-called 'best society'? Then, why exclude the opium smoker? But Chinese are lepers. Great Scott! Haven't we a leper settlement of our own? and it don't contain a single Chinaman either. But they work so cheap that we cannot compete with them! True, but are they to be excluded on that account? I suppose that a Chinaman has as great a right to life as any other man, yet here we have Labor's Parliament denying him this right by preventing him from earning a living in Canada. Either Chinamen have the right to live, and then the action of the Congress was wrong, or else they have not the right to live, and then it is in order to extirpate every living Chinaman on the face of the earth; there is no other way out of it that I can see."

"It is not fair for you to argue this question in the abstract," said Phil, "because we must apply our principles to conditions as they exist and not as they should be. The delegates to the Congress recognize fully the right to life inherent in every man, but they also understand that capitalism is continually encroaching upon this right and that the importation of Chinese and cheap pauper labor is but another move on the part of capital to make labor more dependent and submissive; hence this opposition. And it is but doing justice to itself in demanding the total exclusion of Chinese and pauper labor. It is but doing what capital has done, and still continues to do every day. Has it not placed a duty on the products of labor until foreign manufacturers are practically excluded from the country; has it not manipulated Parliaments and Legislatures until it holds the country in its vice-like grasp, and where or when has it ever paused to consider whether its actions were morally right or whether it abridged or abrogated the rights of others. And, until you can prove my contention wrong, I maintain that the action of the Congress is not only justifiable but that the Chinaman cannot even be held to have been wronged by it. The Dominion Trades and Labor Congress has not created the conditions under which we live and which forced it to the action you seem to deplore; the responsibility for the anti-Chinese resolution rests,

not with the mover or seconder of it or yet with the delegates who voted for it, but with those who created a condition of things which made it necessary. In this struggle for existence the 'interest' which does not look after itself is going to get left."

BILL BLADES.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE CIGARMAKERS.

To the Editor of THE ECHO.

SIR,—It will be remembered by those who are in the habit of reading "Scraps" that an appeal was made against Union 226 by an officer of the Union who for some narrow-minded reason claimed that the acceptance of a card from a member who had deposited the same on his arrival in town with Union No. 58 could not under the present constitution be admitted in Union 226. The appeal was sent on to head quarters, and the Union received instructions to send in their reason why the appeal against the Union should not be sustained. A committee of three was appointed and their reasons forwarded to head quarters. The decision is being anxiously awaited for.

This appeal caused considerable trouble among the members, and the party who the appeal was made against swore vengeance on the appellant and would have him disqualified from holding any office of trust in this or any other Union.

At last meeting the threats were made good; his protest against the party who he vowed vengeance on was read and placed before the Union for action, and it is here that I want to call his particular attention and the members in general. In his explanation he stated that he could prove his assertion by a member of No. 58 who now held a retiring card and who it appears he had asked for information relating to this particular question, and construed it in such a way as to bring the above named party in anything but a favorable light.

This I claim is not fair and if this is the manner in which he proposes to remedy existing evils the sooner he is called to time the better. Again I would call the attention of the members to the fact that a person really interested in the Union and who really wants to see justice done should not wait for two or three years, or until such time as something offends him, before bringing forward his charge.

Yours,

A MEMBER OF 226.

OUR AUSTRALIAN LETTER.

Success of Labor Candidates—A Review of the Labor Struggle.

MELBOURNE, July 29, 1891.

Since last writing you great things have happened out here. Labor has secured the balance of power in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, having, at the recent general elections, sent 36 candidates to represent them. They organized themselves into a "Labor Electoral League," nominated candidates by an exhaustive ballot, and then supported them to a man. One of the successful candidates is a Knight of Labor, he is the smallest man in the House, but what pleases him most is the fact that he beat the largest man, G. B. Dibbs, the leader of the Opposition, who unsuccessfully tried to oust the present government by a non-confidence motion, but Sir Henry Parkes bid highest, or, in other words, he offered to do more for the Labor Party than Dibbs would, so they supported him. As soon as they find that Parkes will give less than Dibbs then they will shift allegiance to the Opposition. The principle that we are fighting for now is "one man one vote." New Zealand and South Australia have got it, and I expect, in the course of a few months, that we will all have it. One prominent measure that is likely to come before the N. S. W. House very soon is local government, and embodied in the bill is the taxation of land values apart from improvements. If this is passed Australia will indeed be the "paradise of the workingman."

In Queensland the Labor party have exposed the terrible amount of corruption that was going on at the time of the shearer's strike there, showing how the Government (composed of the Squatocracy) gave the President of the Pastoralists' Union permission to use the telegraph lines at his pleasure, but did he give the same privilege to the President of the Shearers' Union? I guess not. However, I expect there will be a committee of enquiry and they will, I hope, bring the true light to shine on their actions.

In Victoria we are forming Progressive Political Leagues all over the colony, but I do not expect so much here as from New South Wales. Protection is the big bug-bear, the majority of the workers still being under the impression that they want just a little more protection, and you see this blinds their eyes to the fact that as long as the natural opportunities are monopolized, and that man has to

ask his fellow-man for permission to toil and then give him the largest share of the proceeds of his labor in the shape of rent, that he must be a slave. One thing brought this out more clearly to my mind not long ago. A municipality in New South Wales bought out the Gas Company to run the concern themselves, but did the people materially gain anything by it? only one way, they get purer and better gas, for when the price of gas went down, the rents went up. Federation is not causing much of a stir, and there is a possibility of it not being accepted, although I think it is safe. I believe we are to have the referendum on it.

In conclusion let me urge every workingman to put his shoulder to the wheel of progress and help it on, not be an impediment. I am sorry to see that a good many of your correspondents seem to think that a shortening of the hours of labor and a raise of wage is the cure-all for this great social disease. The Knights of Labor are getting in some good work and increasing every day in New Zealand. They have two District Assemblies and seem to hold the balance of power with the government. Over there the Government have adopted a tax on land values but where they have made their mistake is taxing improvements. This of course is a tax on industry, and is not just, but I think before long they will be forced to come to the same conclusion.

Sir Geo. Grey is back there again and as usual pushing all measures for the benefit of the people to the front, trusting the workers of Canada and especially Montreal, where I spent the four happiest years of my life, will follow the example the Antipodes are setting them, I remain, yours,

W. W. L.,
Box 279, Melbourne.

A TERRIBLE DEATH.

Suffocated in a Coal Bunker of a Steamer.

A dirty, blackened mass, bearing but little resemblance to a human form, emitting a most horrible stench, was what the workmen searching the starboard coal bunker of the steamship Fremona found on Thursday morning, after a prolonged and disagreeable search.

The firemen of the steamship Fremona, of the Thomson line, noticed as they were coming up the river a horrible stench proceeding from the starboard coal bunker, and a few miles below Montreal they found a portion of a human foot. The fact was reported to the coroner immediately on the steamer's arrival in port, the foot sent to the morgue and a search ordered for the remainder of the body, supposed to be lying under the immense mass of coal filling the bunker. After a long search the decomposed body of a man was discovered lying buried under eighteen feet of coal. It was tenderly removed, placed in a box and sent to the morgue.

The remains are those of a coal handler named Stephen Dickson, who had been employed in helping to fill the coal bunkers of the ship while she lay in port in North Shields, and who had been reported missing by his fellow workmen. The coroner held an inquest and the jury brought in a verdict of "Found dead under the coal in the starboard coal bunker of the steamship Fremona."

A further enquiry will, no doubt, be held in England.

Every Workingman

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