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THE SASKATCHEWAN LABOR'S REALM

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Justice, Truth, Fraternity. "Labor Omnia Vincit."

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EDITOR.

CARPENTERS' DISPUTE

Regina Carpenters demand Recognition of Their Union—Number of Men Involved

The first dispute to occur in the history of the Regina Trades and Labor Council between employers and employees took place on Monday last when the conjoint council of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and the Brotherhood of Carpenters decided to withdraw their men from all unfair jobs on which they were employed. The demands of the men are extremely fair and moderate. They demand neither a reduction of hours nor a raise in pay, but simply ask for recognition of their union and the employment of union men wherever procurable.

The Contract

The contract which the union men ask the firms to sign calls for the following rules:

1. Employment of union men only when procurable.
2. Minimum rate of wages 35c per hour.
3. A working day of ten hours, from 7 to 12 a.m., and from 1 to 6 p.m. All overtime to be paid at the rate of time and a half.
4. All carpenter foremen employed to be union men.
5. Rules to remain in force to June 1, 1908, either side desiring an alteration, to give three months' notice in writing.
6. Rules to take effect within two mile radius of the city hall.

Some of the contractors, notably Smith Bros. & Wilson, the Construction Company, and several others, signed the rules Tuesday morning, and their men are still at work.

There are five firms affected, namely, Snyder Bros., Adkison, Regina Construction Company, Murphy & Martin and McGregor.

There are between 250 and 300 carpenters in the city, and as there are only some 40 affected the dispute is not likely to be of long duration or of serious consequences to those directly concerned. The building progress of the city will not be materially interfered with as the great proportion of carpenters are still in active employment, an amicable understanding between employer and employee having been arrived at.

A report in one of our local newspapers gives a description of the walk-out from a master's point of view but the true facts of the case hardly coincide with the statements there declared. To say that the masters were interviewed by the men and an answer demanded in an hour's time is about as near the truth as it is generally considered necessary to go when the master's interests are apparently not identical with those of the men.

A deputation consisting of members from both organizations of carpenters waited upon the employers on Wednesday, Sept. 18, and twelve out of the eighteen firms in the city consented at once to the petition of the men. Another firm has since signed the contract leaving five firms still running the open shop. Included amongst the latter is the firm of Snyder Bros. who refused to sign the contract on the ground that they were not prepared to coerce their foreman into joining the union as they were satisfied with the men and would not therefore compel them to do anything against their will. The business agent of the Brotherhood of Carpenters immediately interviewed the foreman in question, all of whom consented to join the union in order to avert the disaster of a strike. The

only barrier to a speedy settlement of the dispute so far as this firm was concerned was apparently removed by the action of their foremen, and yet, on being approached again by the representatives of the carpenters' union the firm still declined to recognise the union. The firm was again interviewed on Monday last and were granted another hour to decide whether they would recognise the union or not. A decision in the negative was rendered so that the only course open to the carpenters was to withdraw their men from jobs that were being run contrary to their constitution and by-laws. These are the true facts of the case.

Forty men have been withdrawn altogether, and the men are confident of an early settlement of the dispute, being convinced of the justness of their demands which seeks neither a reduction of hours nor an advance in wage, but simply calls for recognition of the union and the employment of union foremen.

Mr. Willoughby, of the Regina Construction Co., stated that his men were withdrawn without notice whatever. Probably he does not care to remember the several conferences that took place between himself and the men, or his ultimate refusal to have any further negotiations with them, and his final summing up of the matter by telling the officers of the union to draw their men off the job. His statement that he is obliged to seek competent men to act as foremen outside the ranks of unionism requires no comment. The union stands for efficiency and the best men obtainable in every branch of industry are found in the ranks of trade unionists.

The Winnipeg papers have been slightly misinformed with regard to the carpenters' dispute here. There is no dissension whatever amongst the carpenters on strike; they are confident of the justness of their demands, and are looking forward to a speedy settlement of the trouble.

REV. DR. SPARLING AND IMMIGRATION

Methodist Minister on European and Japanese Immigration—Says Japanese are Necessary

The Rev. Dr. Sparling's address on Monday night last was nothing more nor less than a direct assertion that the 150,000 trade unionists of Canada are a deluded, foolish and misguided body of men. In grandiloquent terms he extolled the virtues of the Chinaman, the Jap, and the Hindu, and with a bitterness that would have done more credit to a heathen than a minister of the gospel, he scathingly denounced the European immigration as consisting mainly of the scum of humanity—the veriest off scourings of the earth.

That the government is not doing all that it might be doing towards inducing the best possible immigration from Europe, and firmly barring the way against the many undesirable immigrants who find their way to these shores, we will frankly admit. We will go further and say that the government purposely closes its eyes and indirectly sanctions the actions of the big shipping companies of Europe who have made competition amongst themselves so keen that they are prepared to take almost anything in the shape of humanity standing on two legs

to help swell their coffers. In common justice we must admit that many of these are refused admittance and returned. A small portion of the dregs of European humanity may find its way to Canada. But the conditions of life here are so far removed from what they have been used to at home. The opportunities to work and improve themselves are so great that even the so-called off-scourings of the earth have hope and take heart, and in spite of the fact that the conditions of society makes fiends of some and angels of none, the vast majority of European immigrants eventually become honorable, upright, law-abiding citizens. Are we to understand that the reverend gentleman considers the toiler, the slave of a daily wage, to be the scum of the earth? Was his eloquent discourse on Christian brotherhood merely a burst of rhetoric—a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal? "When," he exclaimed, "should there be clasped hands over racial distinction and the divisions of human life?" Yes, when indeed. Probably when the lion will lie down with the lamb, when the capitalist ceases to grind the life out of his employees, when the ministers of the Gospel descend from their high estate and realize that the very men who sweep the streets and built their churches are made of similar clay, whose lowliness and outward coarseness are not of a necessity the insignia of the earth's scum, but are the outcome of environment and lack of education.

Waving a lofty farewell to the scum of Europe he proceeded to pay tribute to the intelligence, the uprightness and trustworthiness of the Orientals. "I have found them," he said, "in the shipyards, in the canneries, in the saw mills, everywhere that work was being done, and to my astonishment I have found them in many places of trust and responsibility." That Orientals were employed in the various branches of industry referred to is no guarantee that they were executing their work any more nobly or well than the white man whose place he has usurped would have done. The Asiatic requires no champion as a worker. He is capable of worming himself into the affections of any employer whose object is the acquirement of cheap labor regardless of the morality or the living standard of the man. He can exist on a weekly wage that would not keep a white man alive for more than a few days, and if the Japanese, the Chinese and the Hindus are absolutely necessary to the development of the western country, then indeed is Western Canada in danger of disintegration.

One may have to go to the western country to understand the possibilities open to these Asiatics, but one has only to listen to the opinions of those who live by toil who come from the Pacific coast to fully realize the danger to the white worker which lies in the policy of encouraging the immigration of Orientals. Wherever the Oriental has been given a foothold he has overrun the land. The delegates from the coast to the Trades Congress of Canada held in Winnipeg last week threw considerable light on the Asiatic question. They told us how the white man was being pushed back and ousted from every position to make room for the yellow and the brown man who could and would work for less than a living wage. They cited instances of immorality and degradation; Chinamen herded together like vermin, living in a state of savagery and filth, and these people cook and wash for us. Dr. Sparling pleads for a high standard of citizenship and advocates the immigration of Orientals. He pleads for the abolition of racial distinctions and differences and condemns a great part of our white immigration as the scum of Europe, in short, acting up to the ancient traditions of church and state, he casts in his lot

with the capitalists and disregards the needs and rights of the common people with whom Christ himself worked and labored.

We have no war with Orientals as Orientals, they are men as we are men, but they are separated from us by centuries of superstition and stagnation. The yellow and the brown races have remained stationery whilst the white races have advanced and there is just as much likelihood of them assimilating with the white people of Canada, as there is of oil mixing freely with water.

The following item from the London Free Press may help to disabuse the mind of the Reverend Dr. of the hallucination that the Orientals are necessary on account of their willingness to do labor which a white man refuses to do:

"Already the Japanese enter into every class of work. They are beginning to be the masters of employment as well as servants. It is a condition which the Anglo-Saxon population of British Columbia must find intolerable. For the strangers will not remain, like the blacks of South Africa, subjective. They will assert the pride and privilege of a free and dominant race." — London Free Press.

From this it is to be seen that the whole of the brown race are not likely to remain subservient to the white people long, for Japanese capitalists are in evidence in British Columbia. They have already acquired extensive fishing, mining and other interests, and they will acquire more. When that time does arrive, instead of the wage earners and trade unionists of the Dominion crying aloud for relief from such unjust and unholy competition, we will have the capitalists calling for legislation to put an end to the evil consequences of Asiatic immigration.

Mayor Bethune's wire to Sir Wilfrid Laurier asking for information regarding the disposal of the Hindoos who arrived on the Montague was a question of vital importance. What, indeed, is to be done with the vast hordes of Asiatics now flooding British Columbia. Can the government make provision for them or supply them with employment without displacing the white populace already there? If so, all is well, but the cry of the unfortunate toiler who is unable to compete with Mongolian labor on his terms is already heard, and the white man is compelled to fall back, to forsake his home, to seek employment elsewhere, to make room for the multitude of undeveloped, untaught, cheap Orientals who are flocking to take his place. If it is to be a choice between the meanest born of Europe and the children of the flowery land then give us the meanest born; they are of our own race, our own color and our own creeds. They are nearer akin to us, and the only apparent cause for preferment against them is their inherent spirit of independence and their steadfastness in maintaining a perfect right to a living wage for a fair day's work.

A vast number of the immigrants of Europe bring with them their wives and families, poor though they be, they suffer the hardships of homestead life, they till the soil, they work early and late, bravely facing adversity and misfortune until they at last conquer toil and become producers, contributors to a nation's wealth, an asset not to be lightly discarded.

And our Mongolian friends—what do they produce—as yet, nothing at all—unless opium dens and houses of ill fame can be called productions, and the money they earn, is that spent in the country? Why no. Just sufficient to supply them with the barest necessities of life, the rest finds its way across the Pacific to be spent in another land. Mongolian labor from more points of view than one is anything but a valuable acquisition to the country.