

The Commoner.

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The Yellow Peril.

It will be necessary for the present congress to take action upon the Chinese exclusion act which expires by limitation May 24, 1902. The Kansas City platform contained the following plank on the subject:

We favor the continuance and strict enforcement of the Chinese exclusion law and its application to the same classes of all Asiatic races.

This plank was unanimously agreed upon by the platform committee, and there was no dissent from it among the delegates. It is to be expected, therefore, that the proposition to extend the Chinese exclusion act will receive the support of all the democrats in the house and senate. The editor of The Commoner received a letter a few days ago from a democrat who complained that the laboring men of the Pacific slope had ignored the Chinese question in the last campaign and suggested that it would only be a merited punishment if the republican party refused to extend the exclusion act. It is not unnatural that some resentment should be felt toward those who supported the republican party in spite of the dangers which republican supremacy involves, and yet no one can justify himself in either supporting a bad policy or in failing to protest against it merely because the policy would punish some who ought to have exerted themselves to prevent it. That many of the republican leaders are in favor of a policy that will flood the country with cheap Chinese labor is true, and that an imperial policy tends to lend encouragement to the cheap labor proposition, is also true, but the failure of the laboring men to see these dangers in advance would not justify democrats in remaining quiet on this subject, although the republicans are in power and are responsible for legislation.

The Chinese question is one that affects the entire country, not the Pacific Coast alone or the laboring men alone. It is true that the Pacific Coast would feel the evil effects of Chinese emigration first, and it is also true that the laboring men would come into immediate contact with oriental labor, but in its ultimate influence the subject touches all parts of the country and reaches all classes. The question is whether we are going to build up a strong, independent, upright and patriotic people and develop a civilization that will exert a helpful influence on all the world, or whether we are going to be a greedy, grasping nation, forgetful of high ideals and concerned only in the making of money.

Chinese emigration is defended by two classes of people. First, by those, comparatively few in number, who believe that universal brotherhood requires us to welcome to our shores all people of all lands. This is the sentimental argument advanced in favor of Chinese emigration. There is no more reason why we should construe brotherhood to require the admission of all people to our country than there is that we should construe brotherhood to require the dissolution of family ties. The family is a unit; it is the place where character and virtue and usefulness are developed, and from the family a good or evil influence emanates. It is not necessary nor even wise that the family environment should be broken up or that all who desire entrance should be admitted to the family circle. In a larger sense a nation is a family. It is the center for the cultivation of na-

tional character, national virtue and national usefulness. A nation is under no obligation to the outside world to admit any body or anything that would injuriously effect the national family; in fact it is under obligation to itself not to do so. The influence of the United States will be much more potent for good if we remain a homogeneous nation with all citizens in full sympathy with all other citizens. No distinct race like the Chinese can come into this country without exciting a friction and a race prejudice which will make it more difficult for us to exercise a wholesome influence upon the Chinese in China, not to speak of our influence on other nations.

Let us educate the Chinese who desire to learn of American institutions; let us offer courtesy and protection to those who come here to travel and investigate, but it will not be of permanent benefit to either the Chinese or to us to invite them to become citizens or to permit them to labor here and carry the proceeds of their toil back to their own country.

The second, and by far the larger class, embraces those who advocate Chinese emigration on the ground that it will furnish cheap labor for household and factory work. There is no force in the argument that is made by some that it is difficult to secure girls to do housework. If domestic service is not popular as compared with other work, it is because the pay is not sufficient to make it attractive and the remedy lies in better wages. Labor can be secured for any and every honorable position when the price is sufficient to attract it, and the demand for Chinese servants comes with poor grace from those who often spend on a single social entertainment as much as a servant's wages would amount to in an entire year. At this time when skilled and intelligent American labor is able to compete in foreign markets with the cheapest labor of the world, it is absurd to talk about the necessity for cheap factory hands.

The increase in Japanese immigration, or rather importation (for large numbers of them are brought for specific purposes) has been referred to in a former issue of The Commoner. It was there suggested that the Japanese government would doubtless, if asked to do so, place restrictions upon Japanese emigration that would make it unnecessary for us to deal with the subject by legislation. This matter should at once be brought to the attention of the Japanese authorities, and unless sufficient and satisfactory action is taken by the home government the Chinese exclusion act should be made broad enough to extend to Japanese of the same class.

The subject of oriental emigration cannot be discussed without giving some consideration to the danger of cheap labor from the Philippine islands. It will soon be necessary to legislate on this subject. If the Filipinos are permitted to come here there is danger that the Philippine question will become only second in aggravation to the Chinese question. If, on the other hand, the Filipinos are prohibited from coming here (if a republic can prohibit the inhabitants of one part from visiting another part of the republic), will it not excite a just protest on the part of the Filipinos? How can we excuse ourselves if we insist upon opening the Philippine islands to the invasion of American capital, American speculators, and American task-masters, and yet close our doors to those Filipinos who, driven from home, may seek an asylum here?

The democratic party should take a strong and aggressive position on this question. It can afford to oppose Chinese emigration and insist upon the unity and homogeneity of our nation. It can afford to insist that Japanese laborers shall be treated the same as Chinese laborers and excluded, by agreement with the Japanese government if possible, by congressional legislation if necessary.

The democratic leaders should further point out that the Philippine question involves the same menace to our country, and that as we can neither afford to admit the Filipinos nor yet make a distinction between different parts of the republic, we should at once declare our purpose to give the Filipinos independence as soon as a stable government can be established.

Can it be.

Referring to the great railroad trusts, the Chicago Tribune says:

An issue of tremendous consequence is thus being brought to the whole country. It is a matter for conjecture if these railroad and financial manipulators comprehend what this issue is. The failure of full and effective government regulation which the roads have so far succeeded in breaking down means government ownership, nothing less than that. And toward just that conclusion the combinations are forcing the country. It will be a great mistake to suppose that the present patience of the people with the growing domination of monopoly is a test of what the public temper will always prove to be.

What right has the Tribune to "contribute to the disquiet of the people?"

What right has the Tribune "to seek to make the people discontented?"

What right has the Tribune to "attack property?"

Does not the Tribune know that trusts are "indispensable to progress," that "consolidation is the decree of destiny," that a railroad octopus for the United States of America will make us what we so long have wished to be, "a world power?"

The Tribune threatens government ownership, which the Tribune and other republican newspapers have so often denounced as a populist fallacy. What is the world coming to when so strong a republican newspaper as the Chicago Tribune finds it necessary to raise its voice in protest against monopoly and goes so far as to threaten a populist remedy for a republican disease?

Can it be that after all there is evil in the trust system? Can it be after all that consolidation and destruction of competition are not good for the public welfare?

Let Our Ideas Conquer.

One of the presidentes of Lipa, Batanzas Province, P. I., has addressed a letter to the "Presidentes of the Province" inviting them to join him in sending two young men, to be selected from the students by competition, to the United States for the purpose of studying American institutions. He offers to give thirty dollars (Mexican money) a month, and asks the other "Presidentes" to contribute a like proportion of their salaries.

It is a worthy precedent, and it is to be hoped that it will be followed in other provinces. Of course these Filipino boys cannot come here to study our institutions without becoming aware of the inconsistency between our professions at