

The Boxer War.

Now picture this state of resentment at past aggression by foreigners, of expectations that it would go on increasingly in the future; consider how it would operate in such a mass as I have hinted at above, and you may appreciate how the Boxer War, with its cry of "China for Chinamen!" to be accomplished by driving out or killing the foreigner, came about.

But some stories, told hereabouts, will give you some further comprehension.

The Viceroy of Shantung (Yuan Shih Kai) received from the Dowager Empress, ten years ago, during the Boxer uprising, "confidential" orders to exterminate the missionaries and other foreigners. As commander of the troops, he had decided in her favor the question of power between her and the Emperor, and was, therefore, in a position of strength approaching independence. He pretended to think that the order was not from the Empress, and sent messengers to enquire. In such ways he gained time. He knew that if there was a general slaughter of whites, the European powers would divide China. I believe there were other viceroys (one or two) who acted in concert with him. It is said that the Empress afterward recognized that he had saved the Empire and rewarded him for his disobedience. She was ready to side with the Boxers, because it was known that they had skill in magic, which protected them against the bullets of the foreign devils. Yuan Shih Kai invited some of the leading Boxers to dine with him. They bragged that no bullets could hurt them. After dinner he insisted on a practical test, putting some of them up as targets for his marksmen, who were armed with European guns. The effect on the Boxers was worse than discouraging. The Dowager also believed in the report that the Boxers could make irresistible soldiers by cutting men out of paper, putting these paper dolls in packing boxes, and taking them out and breathing life into them when the enemy drew near. When her council decided for war against the foreigners on this hope, one man protested feebly, one strongly; the one who protested strongly that the Europeans were superior in wealth, discipline and weapons was the Emperor. When his opinion was overruled, he burst into tears and left the room. He had never been outside of his palace, but he had read all the translations of European books he could find, and he had risen above the superstitions of his people and estimated fairly the strength and superiority of nations whom he had never known by any direct acquaintance. He was a great man, and Yuan Shih Kai is another.

The result of the Boxer War was a great shock. The Boxers did not prove either invulnerable or irresistible; rather their undrilled masses, with their primitive weapons, were swept like chaff before the foreigners, and a few thousand soldiers—twenty-five thousand or thereabouts, if my memory serves me—walked straight into Peking and compelled the payment of indemnity.

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W. M. E.

A land-tax, levied in proportion to the rent of land, . . . will fall wholly on the landlords.—David Ricardo.

MORE CHINESE CORRESPONDENCE.

From a Private Letter.

Tsingtau,* February 9, 1911.

Handling the Plague.

You are no doubt interested in the plague called here "lungpest."† It sure does make short work of its victims, and seems to be readily communicated. The authorities here have resorted to heroic measures to keep it from Tsingtau. The Board of Health, composed of military and naval doctors with one noted bacteriologist among them, have established regulations and have the co-operation of the army and navy in carrying them out. Tsingtau today has a military cordon all about it, the army protecting the land side, and torpedo boats looking to the sea coast. No junk or sampan is allowed to enter the harbor until quarantined ten days. All boats from the north are held up for the same time. There is but one road of ingress and one of exit from Tsingtau open, and those coming in are questioned and examined. If ailing from any cause, they are put into a detention hospital for ten days, and if in good health, and if they have not come from an infected district, their period of detention is about five days. It is practically impossible for anyone to break through this cordon. They have made great preparations to deal with the plague if it should enter, and have established a sort of pest house in the outskirts.

A Single Tax City.

Tsingtau is living and thriving, and is the jewel of the Far East, under the single tax theory and practice. One argument against the introduction of the single tax anywhere is that it would retard the building of fine houses, etc. That hasn't worked out so here, for, all things considered, the houses in Tsingtau are correspondingly finer than in any other place in China. We have a city here equal in point of comfort, municipal advantages, sanitation, etc., to anything of its size in America. This is the living, breathing example of the possibilities of reforestation or afforestation, for it abounds in growing forests, and its experimental gardens would be a delight to you. This is practically a modern, up-to-date city, and I hope you will run in on us some time and let us show you how they can run a city in China, and on the Henry George idea at that.

M. M. M.

*Tsingtau is a seaport on the coast of Shantung, China, in the German territory of Kiao-chau.

†The "pneumonic plague." See The Public of March 10, page 229.

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MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP IN CANADA.

Montreal, March 13, 1911.

In the account of the electric light fight at Westmount, Que., in the last issue of your very interesting paper (page 223), your correspondent makes a mistake in speaking of the "new company, the Westmount Electric Plant and Refuse Destructor Company." There is no such company; the refuse destructor and the lighting plant connected with it are both run by the City of Westmount, on the Municipal Ownership plan. I may add that when the

accounts are made up, the proper charges are made for lighting the streets and public buildings, and only the proper heat values are allowed for the refuse destroyed, so that the profits are definite and unimpeachable.

When the "inside influences" attacked the statement of the first year, which showed a profit, and which was worked under the management of the engineers, Messrs. Ross & Holgate, the engineers, to prove their good faith, offered to take over the plant and run it for five years, paying the City the sum of ten thousand dollars a year as rent. The City did not accept this offer, and the first year of the city's operations shows profits of nineteen thousand dollars, or nine thousand more than had been offered by Messrs. Ross & Holgate.

The amalgamated companies referred to by your correspondent have been beaten in Westmount, which has proved once more that municipal ownership, with the proper men in command, is a paying proposition.

H. BRAGG,

Editor The Canadian Municipal Journal.

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PROTECTION FOR WHEAT.

Atlantic, Iowa, March 18.

I wonder why The American Economist * does not compare prices of wheat between Winnipeg and Fargo. One is almost due north of the other. Fargo is on a direct road to Chicago, and much nearer to it than Winnipeg. I would naturally expect the price of wheat to be lower in Winnipeg than in Fargo, but I have always found it higher. And why does not the Economist call attention to the fact that wheat at Fargo is always 10 to 12 cents lower than at Minneapolis? I know of no reason why wheat should be higher in Minneapolis than in Fargo or Winnipeg, except that Minneapolis is nearer to market, and that there are great mills located there which put the wheat in more salable shape at a lower cost than any other mills on this continent if not in the world.

HENRY HEATON.

*See The Public, this volume, page 244.

NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article, on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Tuesday, March 21, 1911.

Constitutional Amendments in Illinois.

The Association of Commerce of Chicago has come out in support of the Civic Federation (vol. xiii, pp. 1180, 1186; vol. xiv, pp. 121, 129) in urging priority for the tax amendment proposed by the John P. Wilson Commission of Illinois (pp. 125, 131) over the direct legislation amendment. The

executive committee of the Association of Commerce proposes with reference to the Initiative and Referendum that a commission be appointed to "report at the next session of the General Assembly its conclusions as to the nature and extent of the questions which may be safely and justly determined" by Initiative and Referendum.

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Opposed on grounds of public honor to the action of the Association of Commerce and the Civic Federation is the City Club of Chicago, which recommends the tax amendment but urges that the amendment providing for the Initiative and Referendum has the right of way over any other Constitutional amendment. Interviewed on the subject, the Civic Secretary of the City Club, George E. Hooker, said on the 19th:

After the voters of Illinois have so emphatically stated their wishes in regard to the Initiative and Referendum, no individual or clique influence should make opposition. The City Club adopted a report only last week in regard to this matter. It was not proposed then to make the report public, but now that the Chicago Association of Commerce has declared itself so unmistakably, we want it distinctly understood that the City Club does not take the same position, although we are in favor of the proposed new tax law amendments. There are two questions in this situation. One is as to whether a solemn and decisive vote of the electors of the State on a fundamental political question should be heeded or should be disregarded by the legislature, especially when a majority of its members pledged themselves in advance to abide by that vote. It does not seem to me right or expedient to treat this formal popular verdict in an irresponsible, much less a defiant, manner. Indeed, I cannot but consider it a breach of civic morals for civic bodies to try to induce the official representatives of the State to disregard that verdict and violate their pledges. I regret the powerful pressure which has been and is being brought to bear upon agencies of publicity and upon the representatives at Springfield to constrain their action on this subject. Of course, the common people are only partly aware of the ways in which this pressure is being exercised. The second question involved in the case is as to the merits of the proposed Initiative and Referendum amendment. The present effort to induce the legislature to disregard the 3 to 1 advisory vote of last November rather impresses me as a decisive argument for a mandatory Initiative and Referendum.

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Resolutions by the Chicago Federation of Labor were adopted on the 19th, protesting against the action of the revenue committee of the House in reporting out the tax amendment in order to defeat the Initiative and Referendum. The resolutions were presented by Margaret A. Haley of the Chicago Teachers' Federation.

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Woman Suffrage in Illinois.

The Brown bill granting limited woman suf-