

by treaty or otherwise, with a view to diminish the further immigration of Japanese laborers to the United States.

"Organized Labor," the official organ of the San Francisco Building Trades Council, has been recently engaged in an effort looking to the formation among the union membership of an independent Anti-Japanese League. A convention for the purpose has been called to meet in San Francisco May 7, and the committee of arrangements now announce with pleasure that owing to the great interest taken and the large number of credentials already received from the various unions, they have been obliged to change the appointed place of meeting to a larger hall and otherwise extend their preparations for the accommodation of the assembly.

In view of this, Anti-Japanese League convention, "Oriental Labor" sends out with its issue of April 29 a four-page supplement of reprinted articles on the Japanese question in all its phases, selected from those which have appeared in the Chronicle since its definite espousal of the cause of Japanese exclusion. Barring of course the prejudicial mental attitude and the narrowness of view which must necessarily characterize those who advocate the restriction of acts not in themselves harmful, while ignoring the fundamental maladjustments which make such restrictions appear to be necessary, these articles are very interesting reading and full of food for serious thought. They contain estimates placing the number of Japanese now in California at 35,000 and in the United States at large at 60,000. Four great Japanese emigration companies besides smaller ones are stated to be actively pushing at home the expatriation of coolies mainly to the United States via Pacific coast ports. The arrivals at San Francisco during 1904 numbered 7,800 Japanese, over half of whom were from Hawaii, where the U. S. census of 1900 shows a Japanese population of 61,000. Generally speaking, the proportion of women among these immigrants is something above one-tenth. The hoped-for close of the Russo-Japanese war and the disbandment of armies is expected to swell the influx to an appalling extent unless such threatened calamity be averted by prompt governmental measures.

On their arrival here the Japanese laborers are introduced and handled in gangs by contractors who attend to all the formalities of their employment, wages and payment. The fields of labor earliest invaded were domestic service in the cities and in the country market gardening and fruit picking and handling. One correspondent states that in the famous

Vacaville fruit district "the Japanese are in a position of practical control" and "the white ranch owners and shippers are beginning to realize that in dallying with Asiatic labor they have Orientalized their valley, driven out the better class of white labor and left themselves at the mercy of the Japanese with his coolie system, his degraded scale of living and his utter unscrupulousness of dealing." The correspondent's description continues:

The Japanese organization differs from anything else to be seen in this country, being based upon the existence of what are practically slave laborers, who leave their destinies entirely in the hands of the Japanese overseer. If the Japanese who are working in the fields and vineyards of California were independent and ambitious individuals, striving for their own advancement, the Japanese question would not exist in the form in which it now presents itself. But the fact is that the Japanese laborer, considered individually, is a mere coolie. The rate of wages is of no moment to him. He is not hired by the white ranch owner. He is merely the means whereby the Jap boss fulfills his contract to supply so many days' labor at such a figure. His name, even, is unknown to the rancher. In Vacaville one may go to any store in the Oriental quarter and buy labor as he would buy sausages. The Jap boss delivers the goods f. o. b. the wagon bound for the ranch. He receipts for the check, and all that is expected of the laboring man is to do as little work thereafter as possible.

If the ranch owner objects, the coolies are called off, and he sees his fruit going to decay. If he offends the Oriental powers that be, he finds himself the victim of a boycott, and the next time he approaches an employment agent he will be told with a grin that "boys all busy to-day," or that his Japship has no time to talk. Eventually, if he succeeds in contracting for a certain number of laborers, but half of them will be forthcoming.

"They do not come out plainly and declare a boycott," said a Vacaville merchant, whose former connection with the fruit-growing industry gives him authority to speak, "for that is not their way of doing things. With a Jap, everything is underhand. They will simply cripple the man they do not like until they bring him to terms. What they want to do is to get the ranch into their own hands. This is the most alarming feature of the situation. More than half of the ranches in this valley are to-day rented by Orientals. Five years ago such a thing was not heard of.

"The most remarkable thing about it is the amount of work which a Jap boss can get out of his men. Take the same fellows who have been loafing around the ranch for months, and let the boss get control, and you will see them working even on moonlight nights. By making trouble on the one hand and offering a good rental on the other hand, the Japanese are tempting rancher after rancher to sign over his interests into their hands."

But these rural triumphs have, it appears, only whetted the Japanese appetite for industrial conquest. Another correspondent offers "a definite instance of a city trade which has been passed under the harrow and of which the fate is an illustration of the various processes of Japanese combination."

The trade in question is that of boot and shoe repairing, and it may be something of a revelation to many to know that in San Francisco alone there are nearly 200 establishments owned and operated by Japanese. This, of course, means that a precisely corresponding number of American skilled workmen have been dispossessed, that wages have been lowered throughout the whole industry, and that an American organization has been disorganized and discouraged. These are serious matters, and they become still more serious when we realize that the Japanese boot and shoe repairers practically constitute one single trade unit, and that their calamitous activities are directed and governed by one brain, and in one interest.

It seems that there is, in Japan a certain capitalist named Nishomura who had amassed a fortune in the boot and shoe trade, and whose factories were numerous throughout the whole country. Practically controlling the trade in Japan, he sought for further fields to conquer, and naturally decided that the conditions in America were precisely adapted to alien trade invasion. His emissaries arrived forthwith in California, and the Japanese boot and shoe repairing industry, as we now find it in San Francisco and elsewhere throughout the State, is practically the property of the Japanese capitalist, controlled by him in every detail, and governed with that paternal solicitude under which the Asiatic thrives and grows fat, but which the self-respecting white man could not tolerate for ten minutes.

The method of Nishomura and others of his type—and they are increasing and multiplying in the land—is simplicity itself. The new man who wishes to do business in San Francisco applies, in the first place, to the representatives of the Japanese capitalist and indicates the location in which he would like to settle.

If this location would involve competition with some other Japanese tradesman, the application will be refused. There must be absolutely no competition except with white men. If it seems, however, that no competition with his countrymen will ensue, the application is granted, a fee of \$25 is exacted, as well as 50 cents per week for sick benefits, and the new shop is opened.

The Japanese capitalist has, however, by no means finished with him. In addition to his regular contributions to the union he must purchase all his trade supplies from his commercial godfather. At first these supplies were bought in the ordinary manner from the local dealers, but that Japanese money should be allowed to enter American pockets was in every way contrary to the guiding commercial spirit of that interesting nation, and a Japanese establishment for the supply of trade material was accordingly opened, so that no money whatever might leave Japanese channels after it had once entered them. The country, the laws, the customers and the competitors were all American. The profits alone must be Japanese.

The next step is to furnish the shop-owner with a Japanese apprentice, in order that the process may not languish for the lack of human raw material. As soon as the apprentice is taught the rudiments of his trade he is started on his own account with his own shop and his own apprentice, and so the game is played in ever-widening circles, and to the ever-increasing profit of the capitalist and precisely commensurate loss to the American.

The Japanese repairer will always work for a little less than the white workman, who has his own union and his own standard of prices. The result is that the white man in his desperation, and perhaps with thoughts of his wife

and family, is finally tempted, and indeed compelled to depart from union prices and union rules, and his organization is at once threatened with dissolution. The 200 Japanese repairing shops flourishing in San Francisco to-day are alike witnesses to the success of the marauders, as well as to the patience of the white man, under a provocation which long ago reached a point where patience ceases to be a virtue.

Taken together this supplement would seem to show that the clever and adaptable Japanese has made good use of his opportunities for the study of American aims and methods not only in education and in military science but also in our industrial and commercial activities. We should not withhold our tribute of admiration for the little brown man's aptitude as a captain of industry, great as must be our disapproval of the imitations wherewith he sincerely flatters us.

The watcher on the tower, weary these many years with seeing the useful classes look to restrictions for the industrial independence and ease which are the gift of Liberty alone, still eagerly scans the horizon to see what matters of political and industrial moment lie within view, and as to each in turn he asks himself what and how great are its possibilities for turning the current of common thought in the direction which it must inevitably take at last. And seeing how organized labor, and through it the general public, is now aroused and excited locally over the Japanese "invasion," the question recurs whether it may be perhaps from this that the necessary pressure is to come to open the eyes and ears of workmen to the facts of their case and compel them at last to use fearlessly in their own behalf their own reasoning powers. Our industrial atmosphere rings now with the question: Through what strange inversion does it come about that those who would produce wealth for us cheaply must be treated as public enemies? But the question still falls on closed ears.

E. P. ROUNSEVELL.

BUFFALO.

Buffalo, N. Y., May 2.—John Z. White, the national lecturer of the Henry George Association, delivered eleven addresses to schools, business men's organizations, churches, church clubs and municipal bodies in this city. The secretary of the Municipal League, organized some months ago to improve the city government, said to me that the League would like to have Mr. White spend a month before our municipal election delivering speeches to arouse the voters to their duties as citizens. In nearly all his addresses Mr. White warned Buffalo people against the danger of electing merely "good" men to city office. In order to be effective, he said, officials must stand

for something definite and be pledged to carry it out. He instanced the experience of Chicago, where the vulgar boodlers or "gray wolves" had been driven out of office by the assistance of the Voters' League; but the abler and presumably more honest aldermen elected in their places attempted to extend the street railway franchises, the very issue on which the "gray wolves" had been defeated.

The Municipal League here, whose objects are in the main similar to those of the Chicago league, is preparing to act upon the advice of Mr. White. It will not merely strive to put more competent candidates in the field, but see to it that they are pledged to support a municipal programme that means protection from corporation monopoly.

Prof. Arthur Detmers, principal of the LaFayette High School, one of Buffalo's important educational institutions, was delighted with Mr. White's lecture to his pupils. "If Mr. White comes to Buffalo again," said he, "or any speaker like him, be sure and let us have him. He made a great hit at our school." Mr. White spoke on "Civic Righteousness" at the Universalist Church on a Sunday morning, and after the regular service more than half the congregation assembled and asked questions on the single tax. It was a new and inspiring spectacle to see church people so much interested in social regeneration as to form themselves into a civic Sunday school class for their own edification. Much of the credit is due to Rev. Levi M. Powers, the minister, who for six years has constantly kept these ideals before the people as an essential part of Christianity.

Another important meeting addressed by Mr. White was one of the Federation of Catholic Societies, an organization of men of all ages whose special purpose is education in economic and governmental problems. His speech was an eloquent plea for justice in our political institutions. Three priests of neighboring parishes, Congressman William H. Ryan and other prominent members were present and cordially congratulated the speaker at the close.

JAMES MALCOLM.

NEWS NARRATIVE

Week ending Thursday, May 11.

The Teamsters' Strike in Chicago.

From present indications, the labor disturbances in Chicago (p. 70) are quieting down. In fact there has been no evidence at all of actual riot upon any thing like a large scale, except the outcries of alarmists and the "scare-

heads" of newspapers. Although there has been an inflamed state of the public mind, which might at any time have produced an explosion, and while there have been disorderly and lawless acts on both sides, but few mob demonstrations have occurred, and these have been apparently unpremeditated and certainly without extensive damage either to property or person. The whole police force has, indeed, been on strike duty; but this is because the disturbances are not localized, as they would be with most strikes. The whole vast area of the city has to be guarded, because teams may encounter trouble at any point on any one of the great network of streets, from the "loop" to the city limits. In the very heart of the city, however, crowds of women, children and men move about as usual, without fear; and seldom is there any indication of danger except as an occasional wagon, manned with a driver, a uniformed policeman or two, and a private detective or two armed with revolvers and rifles, weaves its way through the throng.

To continue our classification of the newspaper reports of casualties (p. 71), we find that since the 3d they have been as follows:

Policemen injured by parties unreported, 4; policemen injured by strikers or sympathizers, 5; persons whose relation to the strike is unreported, injured by parties unreported, 15; persons on employers' side injured by parties unreported, 4; persons on employers' side injured by strikers or sympathizers, 16; persons on employers' side injured by persons on same side, 5; non-unionists injured by parties unreported, 5; white men mistaken for strike breaker, 4; Negro non-unionists injured by mob, 8; persons whose relation to strike is unreported, injured by Negro strike breakers, 3; persons whose relation to the strike is unreported, killed by Negro unionist, 1; persons whose relation to strike is unreported, injured by private detectives, 1; unionists injured by parties unreported, 2; unionist killed by special deputy sheriff, 1; special deputy sheriff injured in street fight, 1; injured by accident, 4; striker injured by strike breakers, 3; struck in crowd by a policeman, 1; schoolboy shot by private detective, 1.

Of the casualties summarized above from the newspaper lists of "strike victims" for the week,