THIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PLANTERS' LABOR AND SUPPLY COMPANY.

(Continued from page 7)

SIXTH DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

The meeting was called to order by the President at 10 o'clock A.M. Minutes of previous meeting read and approved.

Mr. Davies, from the committee appointed to wait upon the Government in relation to the question of labor, said that no answer had, as yet, been received, and that he hardly expected one immediately. He thought, indeed, the Government ought not to answer the question in regard to admitting more Chinese without due deliberation. The planters had asked the Government to change its policy, and that was a matter that required grave deliberation.

Mr. J. M. Horner referred to the question he had asked the other day. If Japanese immigration could not be carried on, and the Chinese were not permitted to come, what then? He would say, in reply, that he knew of three plantations that would agree to plant less cane this winter, and thus have need of fewer men to take the crop off; and he thought if the planters generally would adopt this plan it would at least partially solve the difficulty of expensive labor.

Mr. Lydgate thought this plan was hardly practicable. Many plantations had made contracts to plant a certain number of acres of cane, and they could not probably re-arrange those contracts.

Mr. E. M. Walsh referred to the letter signed "Whiteman," published in this (Monday) morning's DAILY ADVERTISER. It purported to be written by a working man. He did not believe such a man wrote it. It was a slur upon the planters to say that they would not employ white men at decent wages. The writer of that letter, if he understood cane-planting, could get $40 per month on Paia Plantation any time. The trouble was that many white men wanted something to do, but do not want to work.

Mr. E. M. Horner endorsed Mr. Walsh's remarks. He had found that in many cases the white men whom they hired were not worth more than a Chinaman. If good "American farm labor" offered itself it would be well paid.

Mr. T. H. Davies spoke of a shipload of white labor that was brought here by Mr. Hart, the shipping-master. Some of these men had turned out well, and received good wages. It is not true that white men cannot get work at decent wages. If they will keep sober, they can do well. Mr. Davies also read an extract from the London *Times*, showing that the beet-root industry in Germany cannot live at present prices any more than the sugarcane.

Mr. Ed. Lycan was invited to speak on the subject of fruit-tree and grape-vine culture. He gave some interesting facts, which we will give our readers at an early date.

Mr. Lydgate reported that a few of the members visited Mr. Jaeger's place on Saturday, notwithstanding the rain, and examined the varieties of cane growing there. They were much interested with what Mr. Jaeger was doing, and, on motion, the Trustees were authorized to place such a sum of money in Mr. Jaeger's hands as might be needed to enable him to have valuable seeds gathered in and about Honolulu for distribution amongst those planters who might want them.

Mr. Macfie spoke of the meeting of the Hawaiian Agricultural Society last Thursday evening, and of his disappointment at seeing so few planters there. He thought every planter should be a member of that society. The annual fee was but $5.00, and he was sure the society was doing a great deal of work immediately interesting to the planter.

Mr. J. M. Horner asked for information in regard to seed cane. He had been obliged to re-plant in some cases, and he could not tell why it was the first seed failed. A number of members gave their experience in the matter. During the discussion, the President announced that a reply had been received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs in answer to the company's request for more Chinese labor.

The following is a copy of the letter addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

HONOLULU, October 24, 1884.

To His Excellency Walter M. Gibson, Premier.

SIR—We have the honor to acknowledge receipt of Your Excellency's letter dated Oct. 22d, which we have placed before the Planters' Labor and Supply Co., and we are authorized to transmit to Your Excellency, as requested, an approximate estimate of the number of laborers required during the next twelve months.

Your Excellency informs us that a conditional immigration of 6000 Japanese may be expected during 1885, but you further state that the Government cannot rely on the fulfillment of the conditions attached to said immigration, and from the verbal communication made by Your Excellency to the committee, we learn that there is no present prospect of the condition being complied with, namely the receipt of sufficient funds outside of the ordinary revenue of the country.

We therefore find that the only provision on which planters can absolutely depend is the first lot of 600 laborers.

The Planters' Company fully appreciate the reluctance of His Majesty's Government to remove the restrictions at present operating against Chinese immigration, and they realize the necessity of the careful deliberation which Your Excellency justly states should be made before undertaking to remove these restrictions in the event of the necessity for such removal being shown. The Company therefore note with gratification the intimation that in the event of the necessity being shown, His Majesty's Government is prepared to consider the question of such removal.

We believe that the statement made by the committee yesterday, must have convinced Your Excellency that the very gravest necessity exists for the partial or temporary removal of the Chinese embargo, inasmuch as without a measure of relief of considerable extent and early application, the planting for the coming season must be seriously crippled.

The Company have authorized this Committee to present to the Government a statement showing the extreme necessity which they feel exists for an early modification of the Chinese restrictions.

Within two months the grinding season will commence, and will require more than our present available labor for the following six months. Within the same time clearing and ploughing for the planting of 1885 will commence, and for this there is no provision without encroaching on the labor required for taking off the present crop.

It is estimated that beyond the 600 Japanese expected to arrive here in November or December, 4000 men will be needed within the next twelve months, of whom 2000 should arrive here before the end of January; and we beg to state that an immediate issuance of permits for, say two thousand of Chinese to come here, would probably be sufficient to prevent a labor panic during the time necessarily required for the proper settlement of other Japanese schemes.

In the event of satisfactory terms being arranged for a continuance of Japanese immigration, it is possible that this single suspension of Chinese restrictions might be sufficient for one year.

We beg to ask that your Excellency will take into consideration the very serious statement we have the honor to present, and that we may receive as early announcement as may be convenient of the steps which His Majesty's Government can adopt for the relief of an interest so closely connected with the prosperity and well-being of this nation.

We have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellency's obedient, humble servants,

(Signed) JONA. AUSTIN, President.
JNO. M. HORNER.
A. UNNA.
THEO. H. DAVIES.

Mr. Davies read the reply, which was as follows:

DEP'T OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HONOLULU, Oct. 27, 1884.

Messrs. Jona. Austin, President, and Jno. M. Horner, A. Unna and Theo. H. Davies, representing the Planters' Labor and Supply Company.

GENTLEMEN—I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 24th inst., in which you inform me that, in addition to the 600 Japanese expected next month, the plantations need 4000 men wtihin the next twelve months, of whom 2000 should arrive here before the end of January, and that an immediate issuance of permits for, say two thousand Chinese, would probably be sufficient to prevent a labor panic during the time required for making other arrangements, and asking me for an early announcement of the steps which the Government can take for the relief of the planters in the matter of labor.

From my conversation with you on Friday last I gathered that you only see one remedy for the difficulty in what the planters appear to be placed, viz: The invitation by the Government of 2000 voluntary immigrants from China, in addition to those who are entitled to come under the existing regulations; also that you wish the Government to take that course.

In reply, I have to say that His Majesty's Government has, after careful deliberation, decided that it cannot take the serious step which you urge. The anxiety manifested by many members of the Planters' Labor and Supply Company, and so forcibly expressed in your letter, renders it my duty to state to you the reasons which lead the Government to this decision.

I will deal first with the argument set forth in your communication. You say that 2000 men are wanted before the end of January, and express the opinion that leave for 2000 Chinese coolies to come here immediately would probably be sufficient to prevent a labor panic. You also erroneously infer that "the only provision" (for the supply of labor) on which the planters absolutely depend is the first lot of 600 (Japanese) laborers.

I think the planters who desire relaxation of the restrictions on Chinese immigrantion are "reckoning without their host," in supposing that such a course would result in the introduction here of any considerable number of Chinese "before the end of January;" and, judging by the past, it would appear to be very doubtful whether, if even the number spoken of should come, the planters would secure the service they need on their arrival.

In July, 1883, in consequence of representations similar to those now made by you, and at a time when the Government was still in suspense as to the prospect of immigration from Japan, permission was given to the Pacific Mail S. S. Co. and the Occidental and Oriental S. S. Co. to introduce Chinese laborers to the extent of 600 every three months. Notwithstanding the interest these corporations had in the profits of transportation, six months elapsed before they were able to bring the first immigrants obtained in consequence of this permission; and when, in March and April last, a large number of Chinese arrived in rapid succession by their boats, after the permission had been withdrawn, the Government felt constrained to admit them in consequence of the circumstantial statements made by the agents of these companies, that laborers could only be successfully recruited during the earlier months of the year, that a large number of traveling agents are required to get them together, and that the men then arriving had really been secured in pursuance of the original permission, and could not be earlier shipped. [See the appendix to my report to the Legislature, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1884, p. 105.] The most, therefore, that could be expected from the relaxation of existing rules would be the arrival of immigrants in March and April next, with probability of even further delay.

The experience of last year has further shown that the admission of between 2000 and 3000 Chinese was of no immediate benefit to planters. Although detained by the Government for some days, first for necessary quarantine, and afterwards for the production of assurances that they would not become vagrants, none of these immigrants would enter into engagements to work for planters, and it was only after some time and after the arrival of a number of Portuguese immigrants, that the labor market was affected by their presence. It appears, therefore, doubtful whether the admission of 2000 Chinese would give to the plantations an increased service of 2000 laborers or anything like that number.

On the other hand, it appears to be certain that, with proper effort, the number of laborers you speak of as being needed may be obtained from Japan, and that too, more promptly than from any other source. I have already stated that your inference in respect to the proportion and progress of this immigration is an erroneous one. In my former letter I gave you the assurance that as many Japanese will be brought here as the means at the disposal of the Government will allow. It may fairly be assumed that, without any pecuniary assistance from the planters, two or more shipments in addition to the one now expected, could be brought in during 1885. To the number thus obtained must be added at least one shipload of Portuguese immigrants (a large number having been left behind by the S. S. Bordeaux); also the returning Chinese. The latter, judging from the demand for passports here and at Hongkong, will probably exceed 1000 in number during the year. Now with the active co-operation of the planters, who can no doubt readily provide a considerable credit to be drawn against for this purpose, and by using the cable to promote dispatch, I think that all the requirements you set forth can be met more certainly and much more promptly from Japan than from any other source. Our Commissioner of Immigration, Mr. Irwin, will be here shortly, and aided by his knowledge of the details of the subject, the Government will be ready to concert any measures in which the planters may desire to co-operate in the manner I have indicated.

While thus explaining why the Government is not convinced that the step you ask it to take is the necessary or proper one under the circumstances disclosed, I must frankly say that it is the nature of the step itself, as a matter of national policy, which obliges the Government to abstain from the action you propose. It is unnecessary for me to enter into the reasons which render the further influx of Chinese coolies injurious to the welfare of the country. These are well known to you, more especially that which arises from the present disproportion of the sexes in the country. I believe that whilst asking for the admission of Chinese laborers as a means of present relief to themselves, a majority of the planters acknowledge that it is a course which only what they deem a great exigency could justify. Indeed, in a communication I received from a committee of the Planters' Labor and Supply Company last year, a committee of which two of you, gentlemen, formed a part, the opinion of the planters, on even the narrower question of the Chinese viewed as laborers, was expressed in a distinct manner as opposed to an "unregulated addition to the present floating Chinese population."

The Chinese Government is either unwilling to permit this country to regulate immigration from its territory, or is too much absorbed by more important cares to give the necessary attention to our requests, though endorsed by their able representative at Washington. The immigration which the Government could open the door to must, therefore, be one entirely "unregulated," and to secure by its means 2000 Chinese laborers for sugar plantations, very many thousands in all would have to be let in, which would be a national disaster, the effects of which could not be measured beforehand. In this connection, I may remind you that the Japanese, who are about to be brought here, can all be relied upon as additions to the supply of labor for sugar plantations, with the exception of the few who may pass into domestic service.

While abstaining from entering more fully into the general objections to the further admission of unregulated Chinese immigration, I wish to draw your attention to two aspects under which change of policy in regard to it would, even if only temporary, appear to be a grave national mistake.

First: That policy has already twice received the emphatic approval of great and friendly Powers which take a deep interest in the welfare of this Kingdom. I desire, in this connection, to draw your attention to the correspondence with the representatives of the Governments of the United States of America, Great Britain, France, and Portugal, which was published in the Apendix to my Report laid before the Legislature; and I especially ask you to note that the impression at one time formed that the Government was disposed to recede from that policy was the cause of evident dissatisfaction to these Governments.

Second: To permit the influx of Chinese, which you now ask for, would be highly offensive to, and tantamount to a breach of faith with, the Japanese Government, which has so generously listened to our appeal for immigration, whilst refusing that boon to many important States with which it has long had treaty relations. One of the main reasons given to the Japanese Government for our urgency, was the policy which had been adopted in regard to Chinese immigration. We appealed to that Government to assist us in maintaining that policy by no longer postponing a concession which, it had been stated, could not be granted till after the revision of the treaties between Japan and the Western Powers. We have reason to know that this appeal had much effect in bringing the negotiation to its fortunate issue. We cannot, therefore, after the generous treatment accorded to this country by the Japanese Government, after it has gone out of its way to oblige us, now—before the first Japanese laborer has been landed here and with the highly satisfactory report of our Commissioner before us—honorably open the door to a competing host of Chinese. I feel convinced, gentlemen, that such a course would not only be a breach of faith, but would be eminently disastrous to our prospect of any further immigration from Japan.

I have the honor to be, gentlemen,
Your Most Obedient Servant,
WALTER M. GIBSON.

This letter was ordered to be received and placed on file.

Mr. W. O. Smith said that it seemed to him to be almost impossible to help taking this line of thought. The letter just read was correct in the main. It was logical, and laying aside the present necessity, was sound. They all knew that if it were not for the present urgency of the case they would not want more Chinese brought into the country. What seemed strange to him, was, that, after the year of prosperity just expired, the Government had not funds to carry out the Japanese scheme. That they were not able to raise the few thousand dollars needed to bring Japanese here.

The President thought it would not be best to discuss the matter then, and on motion the meeting adjourned to this (Tuesday) morning at 9 o'clock.

Blaine on the Chinese.

The following is an extract from a speech by Mr. Blaine, made in the U. S. Senate in 1879:

"I am opposed to the Chinese coming here. I am opposed to making them citizens. I am unalterably opposed to making them voters. There is not a peasant cottage inhabited by a Chinaman. There is not a hearthstone, in the sense we understand it, of an American home, or an English home, or an Irish or French home. There is not a domestic fireside in that sense, and yet you say it is entirely safe to sit down and permit them to fill up our country, or any part of it.

"Treat them like Christians, say those who favor their immigration, and yet I believe the Christian testimony is that the conversion of the Chinese on that basis is a fearful failure; that the demoralization of the white is much more rapid by reason of the contact than is the salvation of the Chinese race, and up to this time there is not an authentic case of a Chinese conversion.

"I have heard a good deal of their cheap labor. I do not believe in cheap labor. I do not believe that cheap labor should be the object of legislation, and it will not be in a republic. I undertake to repeat that I say that you cannot permit the wealthy classes in a republic were suffrage is universal to legislate in the interest of what is called cheap labor.

"Labor should not be cheap. It should have its share, and will have have its share. There is not a laborer on the Pacific Coast to-day who does not feel wounded, and grieved, and crushed by the competition that comes from this source. It is servile labor; it is not free labor, such as we intend to develop and encourage and build up in this country. It is labor that comes here under a mortgage. It is labor that comes here to subsist on what the American laborer cannot subsist on. You cannot work a man, who must have beef and bread, and would prefer beer, alongside of a man who can live on rice. It cannot be done. In all such conflicts, and in all such struggles, the result is not to bring up the man who lives on rice to the beef and bread standard, but it is to bring down the beef and bread man to the rice standard.