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CHINESE QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN CANADA.

have a "Chinese Question" arising and coming front in Canada, but so far neither our legisla- nor the general public appear to have realized it. For three years the public mind has been occupied with other matters that this has escaped notice; but the time is fast approaching when it will compel our best regards, and not with any gentle knock, either, but with the hard knocks of un- experienced. In 1878 we were occupied with the general election, to the comparative exclusion of public issues. Soon after the opening of 1879 we were busy wrangling away until near the close of 1880. Then the Pacific Railway question came to the front as the great issue of the day, and it has since been the absorbing topic of public discussion. During all this time a question has been growing upon us, in the Province, but we have been too much occupied with other matters to notice it. We had better notice it, and give our attention to it, otherwise some unpleasant reminders of our neglect may follow. We are sleeping over our Chinese question, our ears are wide awake and bringing theirs to a point. Early in the present month General and Mr. Tasscor, American Commissioners, had been sent to China to negotiate, along with the American Minister resident there, a treaty, arrived at San Francisco, bringing with the draft of what had been agreed upon; and two weeks ago the treaty and supplementary articles connected therewith were laid before the Senate at Washington. These documents include a list of the negotiations from the first day of the last, when the representatives of the two countries met in Peking and exchanged full powers, to the departure of the two American Commissioners. On the 13th of that month, after a long day of talk and written communication had been had, the American Commissioners laid before the Senate the following minutes of each day of the negotiations as was thought proper to secure the object of the mission:—

First.—The United States of America and the Empire of China recognize the mutual benefit which results from the proper intercourse of the citizens and subjects of the two countries, and, in order to encourage such intercourse, the two countries, agree that citizens of the United States residing in China, and subjects of China residing in the United States, for the purpose of study or curiosity, shall enjoy in the respective countries all the rights, privileges, immunities and exemptions granted by either country to the citizens and subjects of the most favored nation.

Second.—Whenever, in the opinion of the Government of the United States, the coming of Chinese laborers to the United States, or their residence therein, affects or may affect the interest of that country, or to endanger the order of the said country, or of any locality or territory thereof, the Government of the United States may regulate, limit, suspend or prohibit such coming

or residence, after giving timely notice of such regulation, limitation, suspension or prohibition to the Government of China, and the words "Chinese laborers" are herein used to signify all immigration other than that for teaching, trade, travel, study and curiosity heretofore referred to, and authorized and provided for in existing treaties.

Third.—But it is distinctly understood between the contracting parties that all Chinese subjects who, under the faith of existing treaties, have gone into or are now residing in the United States shall be guaranteed all the protection, rights, immunities and exemptions to which they are now entitled under the provision of said treaties.

From the experience of the American Government in dealing with the Chinese, we may learn something that may be useful to ourselves, and, therefore, we think that a brief account of what passed may be of interest here as well as in the States. On the 23rd of October another interview took place, at which there was a full discussion of the foregoing project for a treaty, and a memorandum presented by the Chinese Commission in reply. There were three points of difference. The Chinese Commissioners proposed that the treaty should apply only to Chinese immigration into California, that the limitation should apply only to the entry of such immigrants, and should not impose penalties or disabilities of any kind, and that artisans should not be included in the class of immigrants prohibited. The result of this interview was regarded by the American Commissioners as satisfactory. On the 31st of October, the Chinese Commissioners submitted a project for a treaty in brief as follows:—

First.—The United States to limit, but not prohibit, the entry of Chinese immigrants into California ports, only such immigrants to be included in the limitation as should be actual laborers; no disability of any kind to be imposed upon such laborers, and regulations to be of such a nature only as to hinder the entry of such laborers.

Second.—Chinese laborers to be accorded free entry into all parts of the United States except California; all other classes—teachers, students, travellers, traders or artisans—to be allowed free entry into California, as well as other States, and all Chinese laborers now in California to be protected and not included in limitations.

Third.—All Chinese laborers permanently or temporarily residing in California to be protected, and the United States to exert all its power to secure to them the same privileges, immunities and exemptions that are enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation.

Fourth.—Limitations placed upon immigration of Chinese laborers to be temporary in their nature; the number of immigrants allowed not to be excessively small, nor the term of years excessively long; the limitations to apply only to Chinese laborers employed by American citizens.

Fifth.—Provides that regulations shall be submitted to the Chinese Government for its approval.

Some of the propositions contained in this project the American Commissioners decided to be entirely inadmissible, and on the 2nd of November they submitted a treaty project of their own, which, in every essential particular, was finally embodied in the treaty signed on the 6th of November. The only concession made by the American Commissioners was to substitute the phrase: "The Government of the United States may regulate, limit or suspend such coming," etc., for "The Government of the United States may prohibit," etc. In return for this, the Chinese Government concedes to the United States the right to use its own discretion as to what regulations shall be made within the provisions of the treaty. Much interest attaches, also, to that part of the treaty which deals with commercial relations between the two countries; and, according to the American Commissioners, two points have been gained, namely:—

First.—It makes the Imperial Government directly responsible for any maladministration of the Chinese customs laws and regulations.

Second.—It tends to diminish the power of provincial officers, and increases that of the Imperial Government, in the administration of the customs laws. These concessions obtained in the first article of the treaty would not have been secured had it not been for the anxiety of the Chinese Government to have an additional article adopted prohibiting the traffic in opium. There are still other questions relating to commercial intercourse between the United States which remain unsettled, and which are the subjects of discussion at the present time between the Chinese Government and the representatives of the various treaty-making powers in China. The principal subject of discussion now remaining is that of the tariff, including the system of transit passes and kindred regulations. The Chinese Government seems disposed to accept the rule that the import duty, once paid at the port of entry, shall protect foreign importations from any other duties in the interior, no matter where the goods may be sent. There is a wide difference between the Chinese Government and the representatives of the foreign powers to what the amount of such duties shall be.

The New York Tribune says that in the report of a conference between Sir Thomas Wade, the British Minister, and the Chinese authorities, held on the 13th of November, the British representative was pressed to indicate what was the utmost increase of tariff duty that foreign representatives might consent should be imposed. He replied that taking the tariff duty and the half duty at a rate of one-half of 1 per cent, or, at the most, of 1 per cent, would be regarded as a very liberal concession. An addition of one-half, of 1 per cent would have

been given in 1879, a total of 3,619,677 taels, of 1 per cent 3,847,900. The Chinese Ministers were confident that this arrangement would not be satisfactory to the Provincial Governments, and if not that it would fail of its end. In some provinces, at this time the Li Kio equalled three tariff payments, that is to say, including the tariff, imports paid 29 per cent. In other provinces they paid 15 per cent. Finally, the Chinese Ministers expressed the belief that 12 per cent was the minimum that would satisfy the provinces. A Tribune correspondent was assured by a Senator that the treaty would undoubtedly be ratified, and he made the significant addition—that soon after ratification a Bill would be introduced, limiting Chinese immigration in accordance with the new treaty. Our neighbors will lose no time in acting upon the freedom from the obligations of the old treaty which they have just gained, after much and wearisome "haggling" with the diplomatists of the Flowery Land. One of the Commissioners, it may be mentioned, decried the report that the Chinese met the American negotiators half way, and says that the points demanded by himself and colleagues were only gained by persistent efforts. As for the prevailing public opinion outside of Congress, it is to the effect, not that the treaty gives too much power to the American Government to limit or to stop Chinese immigration, but that it is not sufficiently definite on this point and does not go far enough. The feeling among Californians is indicated in the following despatch from Washington:—

"The California delegation in Congress is divided in opinion as to the merits of the proposed new Chinese treaty. The Democratic members from the Pacific Coast, however, are united in their opposition to it, and seem disposed to oppose the treaty from partisan grounds. They do not wish to have it appear that any branch of the Republican Administration can do anything to settle the Chinese question in a manner that shall be satisfactory to the Pacific Coast. It appears also that Republican Congressmen from the Pacific Coast are not wholly in favor of the measure. They point to what they consider two defects in it: first, the possible construction of the word 'laborers'; second, the fact that the treaty in effect permits the naturalization of the Chinese. The word 'laborers,' as used in the treaty, some of the Republican members from the coast say, is not sufficiently specific, and it might be so construed as to give rise to misunderstanding or to defeat the real object of the treaty."

Among public men of the first rank in the United States, no one has taken so conspicuous a stand against Chinese immigration as Mr. BLAINE. Current rumor says that he will almost certainly be Secretary of State in the new Administration, and, should this prove true, we may depend upon it that the powers of limitation or prohibition will be exercised to the utmost verge that the letter of the treaty allows. Now, has this important change in American policy, with regard to Chinese immigration, no bearing at all on the same question with ourselves? We believe that it has a very important bearing indeed on the Chinese question in British Columbia, and that no very long time will be required to demonstrate the fact. The American Government has been taking steps to secure a new treaty with China for the express purpose of getting rid of the disagreeable obligations of the old treaty, under which Chinamen had the privilege of coming into the States in numbers unlimited. The effort has been successful, and no time will be lost in making use to the full of the power of limitation, or even prohibition, which the new treaty confers. These being the circumstances, what would any reasonable man expect to follow? This, without doubt: that the tide of Chinese immigration, turned back from the United States, will begin to flow in upon Canada, at a rate to which our experience of the last few years will bear no comparison. Shut out from California, the Celestials, "like grasshoppers for multitude," will pour their tens or even hundreds of thousands into British Columbia. This is no mere bugbear of the imagination, but something that our cool common sense must regard as a reality near at hand, if we do not take efficient measures of prevention. Further, the building of our great national railway, and the expected impetus to the development of the Pacific Province in consequence, will be like a loadstone to draw armies of Chinamen to our shores. It will be said by some amongst us—let them come; we shall then have plenty of cheap labor to build the railway. The reply is, and should be, that we do not want cheap labor, and that cheap labor, with workmen living on a miserable pittance, is a curse to any civilized country. A country where labor is cheap may be a paradise for a few rich men, but we want to make this a desirable country for the masses of the people to live in. In proportion as high wages and a high standard of living are maintained in any country, in just such proportion is the ideal of a perfect State and a truly civilized people realized. Millions of miserable toilers, kept down with their noses to the grind-

stone, and offered by a small class of wealthy educated men, do not constitute a perfect State; nor do they, in the proper sense of the term, constitute a civilized community at all. Compared with what people claiming to be civilized ought to be, they are in a condition of urban barbarism—the barbarism of the city, which is scarcely any more desirable than that of the forest or the prairie. The objections which this position suggests are obvious enough, and they are plausible, too; but the show they make is upon the surface merely. Unless we have cheap labor, it will be said, farewell to all our dreams of manufacturing for foreign markets. The reply to which is that we had better not dream too much of manufacturing for foreign markets, except in a few specialties. If the existence amongst us of a wretchedly paid and overworked factory operative class be a necessary condition of our having a large foreign market for factory products, then, we say, far better that we should manufacture for ourselves only, and maintain a high average status of comfort and character together in our community. "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay," says the poet. Better five or ten millions of intelligent Canadian freemen, than fifty millions sunk down to a level approximating to that of Chinamen. And let us not fail to grasp this tenth, that any great influx of Chinese amongst us would infallibly lower the general level of the community, and that most seriously. The mere pecuniary loss to our working people, through the lowering of wages, would not be the only or even the principal evil. There would be, besides, the greater evil of a lowering of the character and moral of our whole working class—the deterioration of the average man amongst us—a process exactly the reverse of the development of man on the Darwinian theory. We want no such backward departure from civilization and progress; and therefore we want no Chinese amongst us to lower our general character and standing as a community. Again, it may be said: You condemn urban barbarism, but yet you are seeking, through protection to home manufactures, to develop this very thing. It is infinitely more desirable that we should be a nation of independent farmers and owners of the soil, than a nation of factory operatives. True enough, we admit. Of the two alternatives, the former is the better one by all odds. But we are not pinned down to any such alternative. We are so happily situated as to have it within our power to develop that desirable combination of both conditions, with sufficient variety of employment to suit all individual adaptations; in other words, a rightly divided and well proportioned community. Pictures have been drawn of Canadian cities and factory towns, densely peopled with poorly-paid operatives, and in a condition resembling that of some towns in the old country, where social phenomena of the most unwelcome kind drive statesmen and philanthropists to their wits' end. But, to show how visionary all such apprehensions are, let us suppose a case. Let us suppose that manufactures in Canada had reached the point of supplying all our own consumption of articles produced in mills, factories and workshops of all kinds. Would the mass of operatives congregated in these establishments bear any very alarming proportion to that of the whole population? We know that even then it would not, in fact Free Traders make this one of their points—that with any possible development of manufactures in Canada, the number of persons employed in them must be very limited indeed, as compared with the whole population. Where they go wrong is, in not taking into account the far greater number of persons to whom home manufactures in prosperous condition bring employment indirectly; a consideration to be full justice to which would require volumes. And let it be noted that those to whom factories bring indirect employment need not be, except from choice, afflicted with any of those peculiar evils, the development of which has been charged upon factory life. Again, the case of a people of whom only one-tenth are directly employed in mills and factories, is materially different from that of another people, of whom half or more are so employed. Not only is the case different as regards the average of the whole mass, but the case of the factory operatives themselves is different. Being comparatively few in number, and living among the far larger mass of people of other occupations, they take on more of the desirable average character than would be the case were their numbers in excess. We come to this practical conclusion, that under no circumstances can the number of factory operatives in Canada increase beyond what is necessary to give sufficient variety of employment within our own borders, and to maintain a happy balance of occupations in the community—agricultural,