

THE CHINESE QUESTION AND ITS IMPORTANCE

BY A WORKINGMAN

(Mr. Editor.)—The workingmen of our city have recently begun to take steps looking to a re-enactment of our present Chinese exclusion laws, and also to the enactment of laws of the same kind against Japanese and other undesirable Asiatic immigration. The question thus coming up, and likely to give rise to much agitation, is a question of vast and wide-reaching importance. If these laws are to be permitted to expire, as they will by their own terms in 1902; if we are to have no more legislation of that kind; and if the Chinese, Japanese and all other Asiatic people, generally, are to be allowed to come to our shores without let or hindrance, it won't be more than a few years at best till there will be in the most bitter and relentless competition with our mechanics and laborers all over the country. And such competition, as will be shown later on, must, in the very nature of things, result in forcing the wages of our workingmen down to the low degrading level of the servile, Oriental standard, throughout the length and breadth of the land. What does this mean? Its dreadful consequences in the aggregate and in the completeness of perfect detail can not, probably, be fully foretold. But among other things, it may be said to mean the following:

It means that our laboring classes everywhere would have to wear more scanty, less comfortable and less desirable clothing. It means they would have fewer articles of diet—that their food would be less in quantity, less palatable, and, in many instances, less wholesome. It means they would have to live in smaller, less convenient and less attractive houses. It means that their children would be less educated, less refined, less comfortably clad and less provided with many of the things necessary to prepare them for the duties of manhood and womanhood awaiting them in the future. It means that many of the little things that tend to make the home the dearest and most sacred place on earth—that tend to entwine it with all the affections of the heart—with the most ennobling aspirations of the soul—it means, I say, that many of these things would be gone, and gone forever. It means that there would be a blighting, a withering, a crushing out, so to speak, of many of the hopes, the prospects and the ambitions which have heretofore moved our toiling millions to the most heroic efforts in the achievement of useful ends, in the furtherance of praiseworthy objects.

It means grave misfortunes for our small dealers and for many of those belonging to our professional classes whose welfare is so largely dependent upon the prosperity of our toiling masses. To a much greater extent than we may think, it means a menace to the permanency of many of our social, fraternal, humane and educational institutions—a threatening of some of the best features of our civilization—a tendency in the ultimate toward the overthrow of our republican form of government, and a frowning of danger upon our prestige, our greatness and our glory as a nation and a people. And finally, in so far as by reason of these things, we have been able to exert a beneficial influence upon other governments and other countries in the past, to that extent, at least, does the question here in hand involve the welfare of the world in the future—the destiny of all mankind through the ages yet to come.

Thus impressed, it is my purpose with these lines to commence a series of short articles dealing in a somewhat general way with some of the more important branches into which the subject naturally resolves itself when viewed through analytical eyes. And in the remainder of the letter, I

shall content myself with a few brief statements touching the past history of Chinese immigration into the United States. During first half of the present century now so near its close the number of "Celestials" who took up their abiding place in our country was comparatively small. The census, as compiled by the government for 1860, shows that we had 758 in 1850 and 35,565 in 1860. The abstract of the 11th census shows we had 63,199 in 1870, 105,465 in 1880 and 107,475 in 1890. What their number is at the present time I have not been able to ascertain. As I propose to insist upon the same legislation against the Japanese as against the Chinese, I ought to say further that the same abstract shows their number among us has been as follows: In 1870 it was 55; in 1880, it was 148, and in 1890 it was 2,039. How many we have now I do not know; but that they have been pouring in upon us very rapidly during the last ten years there is much evidence for believing. For the relief of the reader, I wish to say there will be but few statistics in any of the articles to follow this one, and in most of them none. Let me therefore admonish him thus:

From vexation of spirit,
I pray you refrain,
I propose no statistics
To puzzle your brain.

J. T. MORGAN.
(To be continued.)

LABOR CONVENTIONS.

The following is a list of the conventions to be held during the next two years, as compiled by the American Federationist:

- In 1901—
January 21, Indianapolis, Ind.—United Mine Workers of America.
January —, city not decided—Watch Case Engravers' International Association of America.
April 8, Columbus, O.—Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' International Association.
April 9, Ishpeming, Mich.—Northern Mineral Mine Workers' Progressive Union of America.
April —, Milwaukee, Wis.—Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers and Brass Workers' Union of North America.
May 6, city to be decided by executive board—International Union of Textile Workers.
May 6, city not decided—Amalgamated Association of Street Railway Employees of America.
May —, Milwaukee, Wis.—Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen.
May 6, Philadelphia, Pa.—The Chartered Society of Amalgamated Lace Curtain Operatives of America.
May 6, Toronto, Canada—International Association of Machinists.
May 9, Cleveland, O.—Tin Plate Workers' International Protective Association of America.
May 14, St. Paul, Minn.—Order of Railway Conductors of America.
May 14, St. Louis, Mo.—Hotel and Restaurant Employees' International Alliance and Bartenders' International League of America.
May 14, Denver, Colo.—American Federation of Musicians.
May 21, Milwaukee, Wis.—Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers.
June 3, Washington, D. C.—National Association of Steam and Hot Water Fitters and Helpers.
June 2, Philadelphia, Pa.—The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.
June 10, Buffalo, N. Y.—Mosaic and Encaustic Tile Layers and Helpers' International Union.
June 17, Washington, D. C.—International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union of North America.
June 17, Detroit, Mich.—Boot and Shoe Workers' Union.
June 19, Chicago, Ill.—National Steel and Copper Plate Printers' Union.
Whitsuntide, city not decided—Amalgamated Society of Engineers.
July 8, Atlantic City, N. J.—American Flint Glass Workers' Union.

July 8, Milwaukee, Wis.—Glass Bottle Blowers' Association of the United States and Canada.

July 8, Toledo, O.—International Longshoremen's Association.

July 8, city not decided—Upholsterers' International Union.

July 10, city not decided—National Brotherhood of Operative Pottery.

July 10, Hamilton, Ontario—The Stove Mounters and Steel Range Workers' International Union of America.

July 11, Buffalo, N. Y.—Retail Clerks' International Protective Association.

September 10, Kansas City, Mo.—Brotherhood of Railway Car Men of America.

October 1, Boston, Mass.—National Spinners' Association of America.

October 7, city not decided—International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths.

October 7, Saginaw, Mich.—Journeyman Barbers' International Union.

October 8, Springfield, Ill.—National Brotherhood of Coal Hoisting Engineers.

October 8, North Baltimore, O.—International Brotherhood of Oil and Gas Well Workers.

October 14, San Francisco, Cal.—Order of Railroad Telegraphers.

October 21, St. Louis, Mo.—International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

December 2, Detroit, Mich.—Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America.

December 26, city not decided—Trunk and Bag Workers' International Union of America.

In 1902—

May 14, Norfolk, Va.—Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

May 19, San Francisco, Cal.—Horse Shoers' International Union of the United States and Canada.

June 2, Chicago, Ill.—Pattern Makers' League of North America.

June 10, city not decided—International Brotherhood of Bookbinders.

September 15, Atlanta, Ga.—United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

July 15, Toledo, O.—National Alliance Theatrical Stage Employes of United States and Canada.

July —, Buffalo, N. Y.—International Jewelry Workers' Union.

July 20, Belleville, N. J.—American Wire Weavers' Protective Association.

August 5, Pittsburg, Pa.—Chain-makers' National Union of America.

August 7, Louisville, Ky.—Journeyman Tailors' Union of America.

August 12, Birmingham, Ala.—International Typographical Union.

August 19, Buffalo, N. Y.—United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada.

September 7, Holyoke, Mass.—United Brotherhood of Paper Makers of America.

September 8, Philadelphia, Pa.—National Union of United Brewery Workmen of the United States.

September 9, Toledo, O.—International Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen.

September 9, Baltimore, Md.—Cigar-makers' International Union of America.

September 9, St. Paul, Minn.—International Union of Steam Engineers.

September 9, Chicago, Ill.—Team Drivers' International Union.

September 9, Easthampton, Mass.—Elastic Goring Weavers' Amalgamated Association.

September 15, Chattanooga, Tenn.—Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen.

September 24, city not decided—Core-makers' International Union.

September 29, St. Louis, Mo.—Tobacco Workers' International Union.

October 13, Louisville, Ky.—Coopers' International Union.

In 1903—

May 11, New York City—United Hatters of North America.

June 1, city to be decided by executive board—United Brotherhood of Leather Workers on Horse Goods.

September 21, Cincinnati, O.—International Wood Carvers' Association of North America.

Undecided, city not decided—Amalgamated Wood Workers' International Union.

No conventions are held—National Brickmakers' Alliance.

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Convention undecided—Journeyman Bakers and Confectioners' International Union.

Undecided, city not decided—Brotherhood of Boiler Makers and Iron Ship Builders of America.

No regular conventions are held—International Broommakers' Union.

No conventions are held—International Union of Bicycle Workers and Allied Mechanics.

Convention undecided—Carriage and Wagon Workers' International Union of North America.

No conventions are held—Granite Cutters' National Union.

No conventions held in United States—Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners.

Convention undecided—The Window Glass Cutters' League of America.

Undecided, city not decided—Window Glass Flatteners' Association of North America.

Undecided, city not decided—Amalgamated Glass Workers' International Association of America.

The largest non-union cigar factory in Pennsylvania is being prosecuted by the state for working women and children more than 12 hours per day. The complaint alleges that they work them from 7 A. M. to 10 P. M.