

THE CHINESE QUESTION AND ITS IMPORTANCE

BY A WORKINGMAN

(Continued from last week.)

Those who oppose excluding the Chinese take the position that there should be no re-enactment of our Chinese exclusion laws as they now stand, but they should be permitted to expire and cease to be operative, as they do by their own terms, on and after May 5, 1902.

This would be a practical removal of all restrictions and would allow them to come here just as freely as they had the privilege of doing before the enactment of these laws.

Those of us who are in favor of exclusion, take a squarely opposite view of the matter and go even somewhat further. We contend:

1. That these several exclusion laws should be re-enacted and continued in force permanently.

2. That they should be so broadened in their scope as to apply to the Japanese as well as to the Chinese.

3. That they should be made to apply to all other Asiatic people who are open to the same objections that are urged against the Chinese.

Here then is the issue between those who oppose and those who favor exclusion as plainly stated, perhaps as it is possible to do so. Before proceeding further a few general statements will be premised, to be constantly borne in mind by the reader. The exclusion laws as they now stand apply to Chinese laborers, skilled and unskilled, and to these alone, with an exception or two, not sufficiently important to require more extended notice here.

While the Chinese only, will, for the most part, be mourned as those, upon whom the proposed legislation is to operate, it will be understood that Japanese and all other Asiatics are in contemplation as well as the Chinese. Again where such expressions as "our own people," "our own working men," "our native population," and the like are met with, they will be used as applying to all persons now citizens or residents of the United States save in cases where it is apparent they are employed in a different sense.

The main arguments of those opposed to exclusion may be ranged under two broad generalizations, as follows:

1. Our Federal Government has no moral or ethical right to exclude.

2. Even if it have such right, there is no sufficient reason for exercising it in that direction as matters now stand.

If these propositions are true, our opponents have planted themselves on pretty strong ground. Let us therefore take them up in the order named and see whether the arguments by which they seek to maintain them are valid.

Their first proposition is that our Government has no moral or ethical right to exclude. They mean and insist that this shall be accepted as a universal proposition, applying not only to our Government, but to all other governments as well. In other words their contention is that no government has or can have a moral or ethical right to exclude from its territory the people of any other country. What are the arguments they rely upon to support this assertion? Let us proceed to some of them, noticing the less important ones first. Among other things they say that to exclude is unkind and inhuman.

To this I answer:

1. I deny it; and this denial has just as much force as the bare unsupported statement, it puts in issue.

2. To say "to exclude is unkind and inhuman," and there stop is to use the language of characterization only—nothing more. Were I to say "to exclude is very kind and very humane," I would be employing words every whit as strong and at the same time taking an opposite position. As a mat-

ter of argument there would be as much sense in one mode of reasoning as in the other, but not very much in either.

3. If, from any point of view it be unkind to the Chinese to exclude them, I affirm that from various other points of view, to be dealt with later on, it would be much more unkind to our own people to admit them. Hence were all things else equal, our government would be under a moral obligation not to admit them in order to prevent a greater unkindness from befalling our people than exclusion would entail upon them. In other words where our government must do one or the other of two unkind things, it ought to do the one which is the least unkind.

They say, it is not so much from the poor immigrant that we may expect harm as from the rich one who comes here, seeking to perpetuate the wrongful domination of organized wealth, and hence to exclude the former and admit the latter, is unfair and also impolitic as well.

To this I reply:

1. We do not insist upon excluding the Chinese or any of them because they are poor, and to assume that we do so, is to set up a man of straw to be knocked down again; and yet the blow is so weak, that did I not thus volunteer to help do the job, he would continue on his feet, smiling at their discomfort.

2. Being as I am, no apologist for the wrongful domination of organized wealth, I am, therefore, the more ready to declare that if the coming of rich immigrants into our country is threatening us with any dangers of that kind I am perfectly willing that our exclusion laws shall be applied to them also.

If any of our opponents believe that poverty makes innocence a crime, or that riches converts vice into a virtue, it affords me pleasure to inform them that I join them in no such unholy opinion.

J. T. MORGAN.

(To be continued.)

WHY EIGHT HOURS?

Because of the present long hour day many are unemployed, and the man on the street fixes the wages paid to the man that works.

The price of labor is regulated by the supply. Eight hours would reduce the supply.

Labor saving machinery has increased the producing capacity of working men, who in justice should be afforded more leisure.

The eight-hour day would increase the longevity of the workers.

It would give greater opportunity for social and educational development.

It would raise the standard of living, upon which prosperity depends.

It would help the taxpayer by putting the tramp to work.

It would promote an independent spirit, which is lacking in over-worked people.

It would build up trades unions, and concentrated effort is the law of success in the militant world of industry.

It would open up the road to every desirable social reform.

It would give men a chance to get acquainted with their families.

It would promote temperance by removing the desire for stimulants which comes from long hours of labor.

It would make better citizens by giving the citizens more time to understand his duties.—Exchange.

Why don't the white laundry workers organize and drive out the pig-tails?

There are butchers enough in the city to make a splendid union.

IMPROVED CONDITIONS.

A comparison of some of the old records and statistics in the office with some of the later ones shows a wonderful improvement in the condition of the organized workers over that which obtained previous to the reorganization of the International Union in 1879. In many instances the record shows an increase of 50 per cent in wages and a reduction of the hours of labor from 12 and 14 hours to 8 hours per day as well as the abolition of the truck system, which all know prevailed to an alarming extent, says the Cigar Makers' Journal. In this connection Jerry Cronin told a story to the Detroit convention which he vouches for as the truth; while it is old it is good enough to reproduce here for the purpose of showing to what extent the truck system prevailed in those days. It is as follows: A cigar maker who was in the habit of taking truck as a necessity for his wages could not even at that get all that was due him each week. This surplus, which was left in the bosses' hand, finally amounted to \$47. In order to square the indebtedness he proposed that the journeyman take a horse which the boss had and which he pronounced a crackerjack, to which the journeyman agreed. That night he started home with the horse, and had proceeded about three blocks when the horse fell dead. It cost the journeyman \$7 to have him removed from the streets of Elmira. Old timers say that this story also originated the "dead horse" phrase so commonly used in our trade. Organization has practically eliminated the truck system with all its consequent evils from our trade in so far as the union man is concerned. Anybody who has been in the business for any length of time can readily see the great improvements that have been brought about by organization.

TO BAR OUT THE CHINESE.

The following dispatch has been received from its special correspondent by the San Francisco Examiner:

Washington, Jan. 2.—Representative Kahn will have an important conference tomorrow with Commissioner-General Powderly of the Immigration Bureau, regarding the bill he proposes to introduce for the extension of the Chinese Exclusion law, as provided by the Geary Act.

"In its general features," said Mr. Kahn, "my bill will be a re-enactment of the Geary law; but it will contain an important departure in permitting the United States to take appeals in the prosecution of cases against Chinese. At present, a Chinese, when brought before a Federal Commissioner to be examined as to his right to remain in this country, is often able to obtain admission on the perjured testimony of fellow Chinese. Though the government may afterwards find that the admission was procured through fraud, yet it cannot re-open the hearing. My bill will provide that in cases of this kind the federal officials may take an appeal to the District Court. This feature is heartily advocated by Mr. Powderly, who has experienced much trouble through his inability to reopen cases against Chinese who have succeeded in passing the Federal Commissioner.

"I shall try to obtain the passage of the bill for a term of twenty years. I am much pleased at the favorable reception that has been accorded the measure, and I have no doubt of its passage."

It has been given out as authority that the new steel trust, practically including all the manufacturers of steel in America, will be an accomplished fact shortly after the new year begins. This announcement should be received with pleasure by the American people, especially at this time, when contracts for so many new battleships are to be let, giving such an excellent opportunity for the new trust to loot the public treasury.—Pueblo Courier.

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