

THE CHINESE-AMERICAN QUESTION.

An unaltered Address by JOHN SWINSON.

THE ALARM.

Suddenly—by a lightning flash, as it were, the Chinese question has become the living question of the hour.

It is a question not only for discussion and decision, but for action.

It is a practical question in regard to industry and capital, as well as in regard to civilization, liberty, and morality.

It is a question not only for to-day, but one which, if wrongly settled at this time, will be a disturbing question for ages.

It was but the other day the country learned, by brief telegraphic dispatch from Omaha, that somewhat less than 100 Chinamen were on their way Eastward, to fill a contract that had been entered into for their employment in a Massachusetts shoe-factory. A few days afterward they arrived at North Adams, where quarters had been fitted up for them, and where they immediately set to work at the business of shoe-making by machinery. They had been brought to the place by a manufacturer whose operatives had been on the "strike" against a serious reduction of wages which he had attempted to enforce.

The movement not only surprised the "Crispina," for whom these Chinese substitutes had been found, but it alarmed the working classes throughout the Eastern and Middle States, who very quickly saw that the great manufacturers and capitalists had obtained possession not of a mere "Chinese gong," but of a weapon, which, unless wrested out of their hands, would make them absolute dictators of labor in America. There was as deep an interest about the matter on the part of the employers of labor as wide-spread apprehension on the part of the operative or industrial classes. Numerous agents of manufacturing establishments quickly appeared in North Adams, for the purpose of observing the working of the Chinese industrial system, examining into its economy, and making inquiry as to its general results.

There is abundant evidence that if this first experiment give satisfaction and profit to the capitalists engaged in it, there will be no time lost by the employers in introducing tens and hundreds of thousands of Chinese workers into the industrial establishments of the country. Already it is reported that negotiations for a supply of Chinese operatives have been entered into by the great cotton manufacturing house of the Spragues, at Rhode Island, a firm which is said to be the largest employers of skilled labor in America,—there being somewhere near 10,000 persons connected in one way or another with its various establishments. Of course the weekly saving and profits to this house would be enormous in case it were able to engage Chinese at one-half the price now paid to the white "Lazars," and, though Senator Sprague turned up some time ago as the "poor man's champion," and the special advocate of the rights of the working classes, there is ground to fear that his highly humanitarian notions might give way before the temptation of increased profit at his mills.

"Cheap labor!" cry the capitalists. "We must have cheap labor!" Chinamen are the cheapest laborers in the world; they will be satisfied with less than half the wages of American operatives. They are ingenious, industrious, and submissive—qualities which are of the highest value from the manufacturing point of view. They can be obtained in countless numbers, at the rate of 100,000 a year, or 1,000,000 a year, as may be desired. The Chinese Coolie contractor, Koopmanschap, has offered to fill orders for his human material to any extent. China is as near to New-York, in point of time, as Europe was a few years ago. Until a recent date our European immigration was by sailing vessels, which averaged 30 days in crossing the Atlantic from Liverpool to New-York, and it is now but 25 days from Hong Kong to New-York by the Pacific steamships and the Continental Railroad. We have as yet but two steamships engaged in the Chinese immigration business; but the English ship-builders will be but too glad of an opportunity of placing as many passenger-carrying steam-propellers on the Pacific Ocean as they have placed within the last five years on the Atlantic Ocean. There is no trade more profitable to shippers than the emigrant trade; and they can by next year put on a score of steamers fitted to carry such swarming myriads through the Golden Gate as were never witnessed even in the emigrant-swarming harbor of New-York. Within a short time past we have heard from China that the inhabitants of some of the most densely populated provinces of the Empire of 400,000,000, have become deeply interested in the New World which has been opened up for them in America, from whose "golden hills" so many Celestials have already returned with riches

and organized to assist emigration, on condition of being reimbursed by the emigrants, after their arrival here.

—It is no wonder then, that in view of these facts, in presence of the arrival of the first "wholesale parcel" of cheap-working Chinese, there should be a feeling on the part of American workingmen that here is a movement that must in its beginning be dealt with decisively and peremptorily. Even already, the first organized body of emigrants has been followed by several others; and it is perfectly certain that the negotiations begun some time ago by various parties for securing large supplies of this kind of labor, will be carried through by those concerned.

—I am opposed to this unlimited influx of Chinese immigrants.

I am opposed to American workingmen surrendering the different branches of industry to Chinese operatives.

I am opposed to any such "cheap labor" as we should obtain from the Chinese.

I am opposed to the movement which has been begun at North Adams—and which [threatens to increase till the whole country and all its interests and prospects are profoundly affected by it.

I am opposed to it on grounds of—1, Race; 2, Industry; 3, Politics; 4, Morality.

1.—THE GROUND OF RACE.

The deepest dividing line between men is that of race. Deeper than politics or religion—deeper than the cotemporary differences of laws or manners, are the depths and differences of race. It enters into the elements of the blood; establishes itself in the forms of the bones, expresses itself through the material and size of the brain. It is related to the last results of existence, experience and action. It is at once the beginning of history and the summing up of history.

The people of the United States are of the white European race, the Japetic stock, from which have sprung the Germanic, Celtic, and Latin varieties—all immediately related to each other by historical terms—all growing side by side for thousands of years, and all developing a progressive civilization through the changes of time. We have in the South an African race, and in the West an Indian race; but the life, genius and power of the American Republic is with the European race which has been over-spreading it during the last two centuries. Neither the negro nor the aboriginal element has to any appreciable extent affected the blood or the characteristics of the dominant American people. All that here exists is owing to this white race, and is the work of this race, which is the best-based and

