

INTERIM REPORT

(No. II.)

OF THE

CHINESE IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE.

BROUGHT UP 11TH OCTOBER, 1871, AND ORDERED TO BE PRINTED.

WELLINGTON.

—
1871.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

WEDNESDAY, THE 11TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1871.

Ordered, That the Chinese Immigration Committee have leave to postpone the bringing up of their Report for fourteen days.

(On motion of Mr. Steward.)

A true extract.

F. E. CAMPBELL, Clerk, House of Representatives.

AD INTERIM REPORT (No. II.) OF THE CHINESE IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE.

Report on the Petition of 2,400 Gold Miners of the Province of Otago.

(Referred to the consideration of the Select Committee on Chinese Immigration on recommendation of the Private Petitions Committee.)

THE Petitioners represent (for reasons set forth) the necessity of placing an effectual bar to the further influx of Chinese.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that it is unnecessary at the present moment to make any specific recommendations with regard to this particular petition, as they propose shortly to lay before the House a full Report upon the whole question.

W. J. STEWARD,
Chairman.

11th October, 1871.

FURTHER MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, 11th OCTOBER, 1871.

The Hon. Colonel Brett, M.L.C., in attendance, and examined.

1. Witness stated: I have had seven years' experience amongst the Chinese in Burmah, where there was a large population of them, and I always found them exceedingly sociable, orderly, and amenable to the laws of the country. A very large number of them were engaged in ship-building as their regular occupation; but they all seemed to have little patches of garden, which they cultivated with great care, though done in a great measure as an amusement and to fill up profitably their idle time. The Chinese population I refer to numbered between 1,500 and 2,000. From my experience of the race, I would regard them as an acquisition to the population of any country. During my intercourse with them, I never knew of one solitary instance of a Chinaman being brought before a Magistrate for breaking the laws of the country in which he was residing. Of their mechanical capacity in the art of ship-building I can speak in the highest terms; and as far as my experience goes I have always found them trustworthy, or as much so as the average. As to the charges made, so wide-spread, as to the vicious moral character of the Chinese, I can only say that I know of nothing in proof specially deserving of mention; and I am of opinion that the Government, in taking steps to increase the population of this Colony, should not only give every encouragement to the Chinese who are already here to remain, but should offer reasonable encouragement to others to come. I consider their general conduct and character equal to that of any nation with which I am acquainted, and I do not think that their immorality is worse than that of any other nation. I have had experience of them employed as domestics, and found that they make capital servants, especially cooks and gardeners. I certainly know of no objectionable trait about the race that would call for legislative interference to prevent their admission into this country; in fact I should prefer to have all my servants Chinese, even to farm labour. I never discovered that they were any more liable to attacks of disease than any other races, or than the population among which they were living; and I found them less liable to cholera than the Burmese, and also less liable to infectious and contagious diseases generally. They are, however, liable to leprosy a good deal; but that disease I consider as peculiar to the East, as I have seen much more of it there than in any other part of the world in which I have been; and I always attributed the presence of that disease to the people living so largely on fish. I think that cutaneous diseases generally are superinduced by an excess of fish diet. I should not entertain any dread of the probable spread of that disease from Chinese introduced into this country. I have seen a great deal of their domestic habits, as myself and brother officers frequently amused ourselves by visiting the Chinese houses, and we were led to do this the more from the fact that we found the Chinese singularly free from prejudice, and exceedingly sociable in every way—far more so than any other natives of the country. We dared not enter the houses of Mussulmen or Hindoos as we did those of the Chinese, as such an act would be looked upon as a defilement of the dwelling; it would be, besides, a violation of regulations. The Chinese, however, never made the slightest objection to our visits, and always endeavoured to make us as welcome as possible. In their domestic arrangements I found them tidy and cleanly, except perhaps in their food, as they eat the coarsest descriptions of food, such as cats, rats, and other things of a like character, with as much gusto as we would enjoy a rabbit or hare. They are Bhuddists in creed, but are tolerant and not delicately sensitive in their religious matters; for instance, they had no objection to our sleeping in their joss-houses. I should have observed, when speaking of the Chinese as farm labourers, that they are not physically the equal of the Europeans, but otherwise I consider them the best agriculturists in the world. As regards their character for untruthfulness and a proneness to perjury when their interest is concerned, I consider them as truthful as any other Eastern nation. Amongst them we never put a witness upon oath; we merely took his affirmation, and he was supposed to make that in the presence of his God.

2. *The Chairman.*] It has been stated so strongly by a witness from the gold fields as to leave an impression upon the minds of the Committee that the Chinese, when interested, would perjure themselves, even to the extent of swearing a man's life away. Is that so?—I am not in a position to answer that question any more explicitly than I have already done.

3. *Mr. Thomson.*] Do you think the Chinese would be as suitable for skilled work in agriculture, such as ploughing, as they are admitted to be for unskilled labour?—I have said before that I think the Chinese are the best agriculturists in the world; and although their manner of ploughing is different from ours, as their plough is of such a light pattern that they throw it over their shoulders and take it from field to field, they would soon get into our system, and use our appliances with as much skill as ourselves.

T. Henderson, Esq., M.H.R., in attendance, and examined.

4. Witness stated: I have been in China, and have seen large numbers of the Chinese in California and Australia, but I cannot speak as to their moral or immoral conduct. I know them to be law-abiding and law-observing people in other countries, as they are forced to be in their own. They are as patient and industrious a race of people as I have ever seen in any part of the world, though I would not go the length of some persons and say that they are the best agriculturists in the world; but there is no doubt that, in that respect, they are most industrious, as is abundantly illustrated by the density of the population in their own country. I know that most of the manufactures in the State of California are chiefly carried on by means of their labour; in fact, were it not for Chinese labour those manufactures would never have existed there. In the shoemaking business alone, I think there are 1,000 Chinese employed in that city. They tend all the machinery in the woollen factories, and all such light work as making tubs, brooms, and buckets; and the manufacturers admit that it is only the cheap labour of the Chinese which enables them to compete with the manufacturers of the Eastern States and Europe. No trouble is experienced with them, as they are always found to be steady and sober, always at their post, and more to be depended on generally than our own people.

5. *The Chairman.*] Have you never heard complaints that the Chinese were exceedingly dishonest, and apt to maltreat other races when in a position to do so with safety to themselves?—No, poor fellows, it is generally they who are subjected to maltreatment; they are never the aggressors. I do not mean to say that they will not steal a little. Very many of them are employed as scavengers in San Francisco in gathering up refuse about the streets; and if you have been careless in leaving small trifles about your back yard, it is quite possible that the Chinaman, in pursuing his scavenging operations, will pick up any little thing that is lying about, and put it in his basket.

6. Witness added: I believe that in their own country they are much addicted to gambling. In their quarter in San Francisco they have temples and theatres. I have had no acquaintance with Chinese on gold fields, beyond what I could glean in occasionally passing through, often hurriedly. Passing through Sandhurst, on Bendigo, a few years ago, there seemed to be little other than Chinese left upon it. I should have added that the whole of the vegetables produced in California is raised by Chinese, who are located in every available nook in the neighbourhood of the city, and carry on their operations by the help of windmill irrigation.

Mr. John Fortescue Evelyn Wright in attendance, and examined.

7. Witness stated: I can only say, in addition to what has already appeared in print, with my signature, in the *Evening Post*, that, during my residence amongst the Chinese in China, I always thought they would prove a useful portion of the population of any country. They are always orderly and well behaved in their own country, and they are on the whole a fine race physically; because, although those whom we see here may not be remarkable for general appearance and physical proportions, I have seen as fine-looking and as muscular men in China as I have seen anywhere. At Singapore I found that very few Chinese were lodged in the prisons, the Malays being the criminals in nearly all cases. The work and business of Singapore could never be carried on but for the Chinese. It is they who really open up and develop the wealth of the country, in cultivating the sugar cane, nutmegs, and cinnamon, and in raising the other products of the soil of that part of the world. Very many Chinese are also to be found in Batavia, and in the Islands an immense number, much greater than the aborigines, and may be safely classed as a highly superior race as compared with surrounding races. They are much better behaved than the aboriginal Malays, who frequently indulge in "running a muck" with their "creases" in their hands, and have otherwise violent tempers; but it is rare indeed to know of a Chinaman carrying any kind of weapon. They always go harmlessly about.

APPENDIX I.

Letters addressed to C. E. Haughton, Esq., Chairman, Gold Fields Committee.

Mr. H. W. ROBINSON to Mr. C. E. HAUGHTON.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Naseby, 26th August, 1871.

In reply to your telegram of this day's date, I have the honor to report as follows:—

1. As to the effect of Chinese immigration upon the gold fields.—Up to the present time, I do not consider that the effect of Chinese immigration to Otago has been of any serious moment either for good or for evil. A considerable number of Chinese are scattered throughout the gold fields; but nowhere are they so very numerous as to afford grounds for alarm. They are quiet peaceable miners, who work ground that would hardly be looked at by Europeans, and manage to make a living out of it. I am of opinion that a moderate number of them would be useful on any gold field. They are good gleaners, and save much gold, which, but for their minute and patient industry, would be entirely lost to the country. Of course, also, they by indirect taxation, as well as by purchasing miners' rights, contribute to the revenue of the Colony.

But, while I should always be glad to see a fair proportion of Chinese on the gold fields, I should certainly view with alarm any large addition to the present numbers. It would be very undesirable

that the Chinese should have become so very numerous in this country as to outnumber the European miners, or even to incommode them by largely occupying the auriferous ground, or by too keen a competition in the labour market.

It is a common argument against the Chinese that they do not come to this country as settlers, but merely to get what gold they can, and then return to their native land with the proceeds of their industry. But it appears to me that the case would be much worse were they to settle permanently in the Colony in large numbers. As a race, they are by no means to be desired as colonists. Having regard to the future progress of New Zealand, I would say that a large admixture of an inferior race must necessarily lower the tone of the population, and diminish the chances of New Zealand realizing the dreams of those who expect her to become the Great Britain of the South.

2. As to the temper of the European miners in my districts, I have to report, that as yet no strong feelings have been aroused. The fact is, that the Chinese are not here in any great force, and that they do not, as a rule, come in any way into competition with the Europeans. European miners will not in this district work ground that cannot be sluiced. All the available water is in the hands of European mining companies; and the Chinese can therefore only "fossick" about on ground that would otherwise remain untouched for years. Still there is a vague general feeling of distrust and dislike of the Chinese, although no positive complaint can be urged against them.

C. E. Haughton Esq., M.H.R.,
Chairman of Gold Fields Committee.

I have, &c.,
H. W. ROBINSON,
Warden.

Mr. J. B. BORTON to Mr. C. E. HAUGHTON.

SIR,— Roxburgh, 29th August, 1871.

In reply to your telegram of the 26th instant, I have the honor to report as follows:—

I have long entertained the opinion that any extensive immigration of Chinese cannot but be detrimental to the best interests of the gold fields; and I base this opinion on the following facts:—

1. They are not a permanent addition to the population.
2. A great portion, if not the whole, of the ground wrought by them would otherwise be occupied by Europeans.

3. Whenever congregated in numbers, they deal principally with Chinese storekeepers, and thus the money they necessarily spend finds its way to China.

4. Their presence deters a more desirable population from settling.

5. Great difficulty exists in making them understand and become amenable to the law.

With regard to the latter portion of your telegram, I am of opinion that the general feeling of the great bulk of the European miners towards the Chinese is more or less hostile; and the idea seems to be very general that every Chinaman introduced into the country is a wrong done to the whole population.

C. E. Haughton, Esq., M.H.R.,
Chairman of Gold Fields Committee.

I have, &c.,
J. B. BORTON,
Warden.

Mr. E. H. CAREW to Mr. C. E. HAUGHTON.

SIR,— Warden's Office, Blacks, 30th August, 1871.

In accordance with your telegraphic message, dated 26th August instant, I have the honor to report that my opinion of the effects of Chinese immigration upon the gold field is, that thereby a large portion of auriferous wealth is being alienated with the least benefit to the Colony; and I beg to state that I have formed this opinion principally from the following premises:—

1. That the gold fields serve as a powerful agent in promoting European immigration into the Colony, and that gold, being an exhaustible resource, the mining of several thousand Chinese must materially reduce the attractiveness of the gold fields, and consequently check the immigration of a desirable class.

2. That the Chinese are not permanent or desirable settlers.

3. That they contribute less to the public revenue than other miners, although they enjoy the same privileges (excepting the restrictions of aliens).

4. That the profits of mining and of trade of Europeans are, to a very much larger extent, retained in the Colony than those made by the Chinese, who carry them away to add to the wealth of the Chinese Empire.

There are very few Chinese within this district, but I feel convinced that, should any considerable number seek to settle here, they would meet with strong opposition from the other miners; and that, should any antagonistic movement be made against the Chinese in any part of this Province, it would here meet with sympathy, if not with assistance. Many persons who at one time did not object to their presence, now that the number is so largely increasing, look with much anxiety to, in their opinion, the necessity for some restraining power to prevent any further influx.

C. E. Haughton, Esq., M.H.R.,
Chairman of the Gold Fields, Committee.

I have, &c.,
E. H. CAREW,
Warden.

Mr. W. L. SIMPSON to Mr. C. E. HAUGHTON.

SIR,— Warden's Office, Lawrence, 30th August, 1871.

I am in receipt of your telegram of the 26th instant, requesting my opinion upon the effect of Chinese immigration upon the gold fields, and a report as to the temper of the European miners in this district towards the Chinese.

The question as to the effect of Chinese immigration on the gold fields, is one to which I should have desired to give mature consideration before venturing an opinion, which the time you allow will not permit of. Any opinion which I may have is formed from what I have observed in this district, to which my experience of the Chinese is confined, and I would remark that as yet the Chinese are in the minority, the numbers standing at, European miners 1,000, Chinese miners 600, which fact ought to be kept in view in considering any remarks I may make.

Up to the present time, I would, without hesitation, say that the Chinese miners have been a benefit to this district. The mining, as a rule, that has been carried on by the Chinese, has been confined to the ground that had long ago been deserted by the Europeans, and that which the Europeans declined to work. From such ground the Chinese have unearthed a very large quantity of gold, which, but for their industry and perseverance, would have remained buried. Occasionally the Chinese have opened up fresh ground; but in this district they have preferred to follow in the wake of the European miners, gathering what they happen to leave. I have never known the Chinese undertake any of those works, requiring considerable power both of mind and body, such as the bringing of large bodies of water to bear on the auriferous hills, and spurs, and sluicing them away. That is the only sort of work on the mines that will now pay the European miner. The Chinese workings are confined to the more primitive styles of paddocking and driving out the wash, and box-sluicing or cradling it. I may say that the Chinese miners have never come in any way into collision with the European miners in this district. Up to the present, the only European miners who ever have had any complaints against the Chinese, are a class who work after the same primitive style, but with less energy and perseverance than the Chinese. This class of European miner is numerically small, and their ideas none of the largest; content to work for a small wage after their own fashion, with no ambition above a comfortable living and plenty to drink, and who would be jealous of an influx of any miners, no matter of what nation. This class are quite as indifferent colonists as the Chinese, and give much more trouble; but in this district, even with that class, there have been few complaints.

As consumers, the Chinese miners have been a benefit to this district; and up to the time that they introduced their own storekeepers, all classes of European storekeepers were of that opinion, and have often been heard to remark that, had it not been for the influx of Chinese, they must have left the district. Since the introduction of the Chinese storekeepers, the smaller European storekeepers have changed their opinion, the Chinese having ceased, or almost so, to deal with them. The larger European storekeepers, with whom the Chinese carry on a large business for clothing, tools, and some of the staple articles, continue to consider them a boon to the district. The small settler has also been benefited by the Chinese miner, with whom he carries on a considerable trade in poultry and pigs.

Of course all would prefer an influx of *bonâ fide* European miners; but if the gold fields have reached that stage, as I fear they have, when they cease to attract European miners, an influx of Chinese is better than stagnation. It may be said that the gold miner only reaps one crop, and that he must have reserves to fall back on; and that if Chinese are allowed to overflow the country, the present European miner will have nothing to fall back on. I would, in answer to that, remark that, so far as Otago is concerned, my experience of Chinese is, that their mining is confined to ground that is considered not payable by Europeans as a rule, and that the Chinese are not equal, either mentally or physically, to undertake the sluicing away of the auriferous terraces and spurs, the only mining that now pays the Europeans. The European miner will, in my opinion, ever maintain his supremacy, and will, as a superior animal, even when outnumbered, cause the Chinaman to do the drudgery. I think it is a proof of no overcrowding, that, as yet, both Chinese and European miners have found room to act independently, and the superior has not begun to employ the inferior.

The "cry" that is at present being made, is, in my opinion, raised, as it was in Victoria, by the small class of European miners to whom I have already alluded as not being over energetic, and the smaller storekeepers, who may have lost the Chinese trade, together with some who think the influx of Chinese will affect the labour market.

Up to the present, in this district, the temper of the European miner is amicable towards the Chinese.

C. E. Haughton, Esq., M.H.R.,
Chairman, Gold Fields Committee.

I have, &c.,
W. LAWRENCE SIMPSON,
Warden.

The European miners are not on the increase, not because of any influx of Chinese, but because the payable ground is becoming less in area, and no fresh discoveries have been made recently.

W. L. S.

Mr. R. BEETHAM to Mr. C. E. HAUGHTON.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Queenstown, 28th August, 1871.

In reply to your telegram of the 26th instant, I have the honor to report that the Chinese miners at present located in the district under my charge number about 1,800, and exceed the number of European miners by about 500. They have hitherto confined their attention principally to cleaning up the beds of creeks and small rivers, which have been partially worked and, to a great extent, abandoned by the European miners. They are content with small earnings, and are satisfied with gains which would not be accepted by the Europeans.

I have made the most careful inquiries as to their organization, the cost of living, and their earnings.

I find that their average earnings may be set down at from 15s. to 20s. per week clear of all expenses—that is, they save from 15s. to 20s. Thus they can live for about 8s. to 10s. per week. They do not amalgamate in any way with the Europeans, but exist entirely by themselves; and will not, except in rare instances, subscribe to any local charity, such as hospitals, &c., though they are quite ready to take advantage of them when sick. They have simply one object, and that is, to save what money they can and return to China. Assuming that they save £45 per man per annum (and

they would be quite satisfied with doing this), their stay in the Colony will not exceed four years, as, after they have saved from £100 to £200, they return to China.

Up to the present time Chinese labour has not been available for any other purpose than mining in parties organized by themselves; but I believe that, should the influx continue as at present, large numbers will be content to accept work on railway or other contracts, and will be satisfied so long as they can save 10s. per week.

I must again draw your attention to the fact, that the Chinese, up to the present time, have shown little or no desire or intention to invest any capital in mining. They have been content with practising it in its simplest form. They occasionally open new ground, but it must be situated in the beds of creeks, and of a nature to be easily and safely worked. In my district the Chinese have not undertaken the construction of any but the smallest and most inexpensively constructed water races, designed merely to lift water for the purpose of working creek claims. They may be described, then, as the scavengers of the mines; and their great end and aim, from the day they land in New Zealand till they leave it with a small hoard of gold, may be set down as an endeavour to obtain the largest possible amount of gold with the least possible expenditure of money in getting it.

So long as the Chinese confine their attention to their present system of working, there can be no question, I think, but that they are producing gold which would not have been brought to light for years; and in doing so, they must benefit to a certain extent the gold fields and the country, simply by their expenditure in so producing it; but beyond this expenditure they do not benefit the gold fields or the country. In my opinion, they will always be the scavengers I have described them to be; and I also think that their cheap labour will eventually be utilized to the benefit of the country.

The temper of the European miners is against them; they look upon them as an unmixed evil on the gold fields. I do not, however, think that there is any danger that this feeling will result in any forcible demonstration against the Chinese.

In conclusion, I would say that I am sensible that I have not been able to give this subject the time or attention which its importance demands.

The conclusion to which I have been led is, that, unless the cheap labour of the Chinese can be utilized on railway and other works, their presence cannot be a benefit to the gold fields or the country.

C. E. Haughton, Esq., M.H.R.,
Chairman, Gold Fields Committee.

I have, &c.,
R. BEETHAM,
Warden.

Mr. J. M. WOOD to Mr. C. E. HAUGHTON.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Switzers, 7th September, 1871.

In reply to your telegram *in re* Chinese on gold fields, which arrived during my absence at Nokomai, I have the honor to inform you that, from my own observation, I find the Chinese are an industrious and orderly race, and a great acquisition (in the absence of European miners) to the Otago gold fields, where they open up and work ground that has been abandoned as unremunerative by Europeans. They are large contributors to the revenue of the country, as I believe they obtain at least one-fourth of the gold sent from Otago, and they are large consumers of goods liable to duty. They do not and will not injuriously affect the labour market, and the "cry" that they will prevent additional population coming in is folly. I have a better opinion of my countrymen than to think that they would be deterred from entering the race for wealth on account of foreigners being competitors.

As to the "cry" that the Chinese leave the country when they make money and take it with them, it is absurd, coming from a people that support foreign banks, whose large revenues are taken out of the country, and from absentee landed proprietors, and railway contractors.

The police records and gaol statistics, both in New Zealand and Victoria, show a percentage in favour of the Chinese.

The European population on this gold field have never taken any notice of the Chinese till the last week, when I see that a public meeting was to be held on the subject; but this is at the instigation of the Arrow River anti-Chinese party.

In conclusion, I would recommend to the notice of the Gold Fields Committee the advisability of putting an extra tax on the Chinese—say, the issue of Chinese miners rights at 30s. per annum—to cover the cost of an interpreter at each place where a Warden was resident that had a population of Chinese in the district, not only for their own protection, but for the detection of crime and collection of revenue. The interpreters to be under the orders of the Warden.

C. E. Haughton, Esq., M.H.R.

I have, &c.,
JOHN MYERS WOOD,
Warden.

APPENDIX II.

Letters of J. F. E. Wright and "Yelia Borg," published in the "Evening Post," and referred to in Interim Report No. 1.

SIR,—

Goathurst Farm, Ohio, 4th October.

It was with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction that I perused the truthful and interesting letter of "Yelia Borg," contained in your issues of the 2nd and 3rd instant, coming forward in the behalf and interest of the Chinese as useful and deserving colonists. Writing from six years' personal knowledge of them in Hong Kong, I do not think that, taking their numbers into consideration, there is a more orderly, patient, law-observing people on the face of the earth. In a walk round the city walls of Canton to the White Cloud Mountains, a party of us passed tens of thousands of persons, all

orderly; all quiet; every one busily intent on his occupation; all looking remarkably happy and contented; and in this long walk, and through this crowd of Chinese, we only saw one man who had misbehaved himself; he was being driven with a chain round his neck, and the crime committed written in large characters slung on his chest, and driven along by a policeman, whip in hand. Now, could any one make the same journey, passing as many thousands of persons, and see such order as here witnessed in any other country? Could he in London? For the whole period of my residence in China I never saw a drunken Chinese, or one with a black eye, or features distorted by brutal riot; but they are fond of enjoyment, play at cards, dice and mora, and enjoy a glass of samshir. I confess to being one who sees numberless good qualities in this persevering race. In travelling from China to Singapore, Penang, Batavia, &c., &c., what do you hear?—That were it not for the Chinese labour, the jungle would not be cleared and a paradise made in its place, by the beautiful plantations of the nutmeg, cocoa-nut, and other trees peculiar to the tropics; they are considered everything by the merchants and planters in the places above named, and why be jealous of their immigration to our more inhospitable shores, to bring in light, and develop what would never be dreamt of by Europeans? Coming nearer home, what do we see? Some three and a half years ago there was a sparsely-grassed paddock of about four acres, exactly opposite the entrance to my farm, and about that time it happened that four Chinese came and leased this piece of ground, that at most would have kept two cows. What is it now? A beautiful market-garden, supplying fresh vegetables to the inhabitants of Wellington (not, as in former days, only able to get them at special times); they trot away with their loaded baskets three or four times a week, all the year round. At first I think our villagers looked on Johns as intruders; not so now; they know them to be, from experience, a useful people; they have given work to our men at 6s. per day at digging; have employed horses and carts from town, and in the village, for drawing manure to their garden. The residents here have also been employed by them in collecting fungi, which is exported to their own country for some useful purpose. Is this not doing good, and bringing capital to our adopted land? Is it not all bunkum, the cry relative to their making money and clearing out? What do our merchant princes do in China? Why they consider a residence of four or five years a long period to make a fortune in, and leave with all their gains got by giving opium in return for their wholesome and delicious beverage, tea, and their other thousands of beautiful articles of merchandise. I had the good fortune to make a little money in China, and left without the permission of his Imperial Majesty, to expend it in New Zealand. Again, touching our neighbours the market-gardeners, I can safely say that for the period they have resided here, nearly four years, we have never missed a single article, and they have in other respects proved themselves really good neighbours. Our villagers all like to go in and have an hour's chat with them, and a friendship appears to exist between them. They adapt themselves entirely to European requirements in tools, clothes, food, &c. Do they not do good in that way? I think a few of them on our local gold reefs would swell the revenue of this Province a little.

Feeling it a duty, on behalf of this industrious people, for making these few remarks, and my apology for asking you to insert the same,

I have, &c.,
J. F. E. WRIGHT.

“AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.”

[Mr. George Bailey, of Switzers, Otago, requests us to publish the following, on the ground that “it advocates the cause of a large section of the community—a section quite unable to advocate their own, and indeed entirely unaware of the necessity for such advocacy. We can make room for only one-half the communication to-day, but will print the remainder to-morrow.]

To the Members of the House of Representatives, and to the British Colonists of New Zealand.

GENTLEMEN,—

A question of immense importance to the welfare of the Colony is now being agitated; I mean the Chinese question, or “difficulty” as it is sometimes termed. The mining community protest against the further admission of Chinese into the Colony, and to support their case they bring forward numerous charges and arguments, which, if allowed to pass current without question, may be accepted without the *granum salis* with which all *ex parte* statements should be received. I therefore appeal, in the name of that civilization and enlightenment which the present generation of Europeans has received from its predecessors, of that love of justice and fair play which “throbs impulsive” in the heart of every Britisher; and in the name of honor, charity, and truth, I ask that you hear the other side.

The arguments on which the objections to the admission of the Chinese are based may be classified under four heads—

1. Abstract right.
2. Religion.
3. Morality.
4. Social and political economy.

The above are stated inversely to their apparent relative importance in the eyes of the majority of those miners with whom I have conversed, but it may be better to consider them *seriatim* in the above order.

1. That Europeans being here in actual possession of the country, have a right to exclude such as they may conceive it to be prejudicial to their own interests to admit.
2. That Europeans discovered the gold fields at present working, and are therefore entitled to reap the sole benefit of them.

Now, I submit that the ground on which the European “explorers” first took possession of the Colony was not simply the right of the strongest, but the plea that a mere handful of Natives had no right to retain for their own use and pleasure a large country (capable of supporting millions) to the exclusion of the surplus population of other overcrowded lands. But although we Europeans claimed the right to come and occupy the country, the Native ownership was so far admitted as to necessitate

the purchase of such land as was required from the Native chiefs; and this transaction (in theory at any rate, if not always in actual practice) was voluntary on the part of the original possessors of the soil. Now, this argument, based on an abstract theorem of right and wrong, tells with tenfold force against the arbitrary exclusion of the Chinese.

From the whole tenor of our Colonial policy with regard to the encouragement of emigration, it must be conceded on all sides that there is room for a much larger population to live in comfort and plenty than our present number; and if this be admitted, the question arises, who have the best right to migrate to an unoccupied country? Why, surely it must be that nation that is most incommoded by its surplus population. China is at this present the most densely peopled country in the world—their population is between 350 and 400 millions. The Emperor of China sways the sceptre over more than twice the population which acknowledges the sovereignty of the Queen of England,—and this allowing the widest possible extent of that kingdom on which it is proudly said the sun never sets.

The following statistics will show at a glance the relative denseness of the population of eight principal Provinces of the Chinese Empire:—

	Population per square mile.
Kiang-Su	853
Nghun-hwei	701
Che-kiang	671
How-pih	525
Shang-tung	515
Pe-che-lee	473
Kiang-See	421
Ho-nan	353

The two most thickly populated countries in Europe are Belgium, 383 per square mile, and England, 353 per square mile.

The eight Provinces above enumerated contain (each!) a population varying from 23 to 38 millions—the smallest of them exceeding the population of England and Wales, which may be fairly set down at 22 millions, while Belgium has only 5 millions.

If, therefore, the plea on which we ourselves encroach upon the birthplace of the Maoris be at all tenable, we cannot exclude the Chinese, who have still greater claims than ourselves to take up unoccupied tracts of country.

As to the argument that Europeans having discovered the gold fields that are already opened, and therefore the right to work them should be vested in Europeans for ever after, it may at first glance deceive some by its plausibility, but will not bear examination. It would be more reasonable to limit the right to work to the individual discoverers, than to all emigrants from one arbitrary quarter of the globe, Europe to wit. Besides, the same argument would exclude Americans, although many of the earliest pioneers of the mines of New Zealand were either Californians, or had gained much of their gold fields experience in California.

The next arguments to which I shall refer are those apparently based on religion. The Chinese are objected to as being idolatars, pagans, heathen, and that they keep no Sabbath. To this I reply, that whatever their religion may be, it does not intrude itself upon the rest of the community offensively; and I ask if it is seriously feared that Chinese paganism and idolatry will dechristianize the miners of the New Zealand Gold Fields? I have had extensive knowledge of them, and can say, without fear of contradiction, that (except in the chief gold fields towns, where the mercantile element has a greater influence) the mining community show but little respect for religion. They neglect public worship; it is difficult to support a church among them, although they are always more ready to subscribe for a building when solicited than to enter it after erection. The grog shanties and many licensed public-houses do their best trade on Sundays. In many of them half a dozen or a dozen men may be found from Saturday night to Monday morning drinking, drunken and rioting, to the disturbance of their more peaceably disposed neighbours. Of course this is a sweeping assertion, but it is none the less true. There are many praiseworthy exceptions in every community, but these will, I am sure, not be offended with me for pointing out in all its nakedness the real truth as regards the state of Christianity on the gold fields. Many have been baptized, and have no other claim to the name of Christians; and these are the first that cry out against John, "Oh! he's not a Christian, he's a heathen; we won't have him here." I've seen a Christian miner on a Sunday rolling along the street in a state of Christian drunkenness, pass a Chinaman, who was quietly standing off the pathway, and wantonly strike him with his open hand upon the head, which the Chinaman meekly bore, merely rubbing his head and thinking—what? What could he think but that he had been grossly and grievously insulted and assaulted by a Christian, in a Christian country, on a Christian Sabbath, and had no redress. Our much-vaunted Christianity teaches us that God "made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts xvii. 26); that charity is the chiefest of the Christian virtues; that charity "doth not behave itself unseemly," "charity envieth not," &c., &c. The very essence of Christianity is proselytism—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Accepting this, as Christians must, as an authoritative command to spread Christianity amongst heathens and pagans by every means in their power, they ought to hail the influx of Chinese as a special dispensation of Providence for facilitating the dissemination of Christian doctrines and virtues.

I turn to the next class of objections—those based upon grounds of morality. I am told the Chinese are addicted to thieving; they bring no wives with them; and they are in the habit of decoying young girls to their homes for immoral purposes; and that they are inveterate gamblers.

I believe that to the last charge they must plead guilty. Many of them seem to take great pleasure in a game of chance in which money is staked and lost and won. I have many times entered their houses when the game has been in "full swing." They, however, do not encourage Europeans to join them at it, although they are civil, and even polite, to strangers who merely go to look on. The games are always conducted in a very orderly manner. I never heard of a quarrel among them at a gambling-table, although there is always a perfect babel of talk going on. It is to be regretted for their own

sakes that so many of them are gamblers; it is more to be regretted that so many Europeans are drunkards.

As to thieving, I do not think it has yet been shown that the Chinese are more addicted to larceny than other colonists—certainly the criminal statistics of Victoria do not bear out the assertion; and most of the cases which have been proved against them have been of the most trifling description, such as fowls, washdirt, &c.; and I knew of several instances in Victoria where Chinamen were at first suspected of robberies for which Europeans were afterwards convicted and punished.

They certainly do not bring their wives with them, but not one per cent. of the European miners do so either.

The last and most serious charge under this head, is the decoying of young females. Now, if a robbery occurs, it may possibly be difficult to trace it home, but no such difficulty stands in the way when such an offence as that alluded to is committed. If the Chinese are addicted to the practice, how is it none of them have been charged with it and convicted. The thing would be easy of proof; but I believe this charge to be utterly without foundation. On this count, also, I may use the *tu quoque* argument. How many miners are at this moment living with other men's wives, or in a state of concubinage? Truly the statistics of one or two districts that I know of would astonish the anti-Chinese moralists. Some half-dozen cases of European females cohabiting or intermarrying with Chinese miners have come under my notice, and in each of these cases the females had no character to lose. I never knew of any instance of a respectable girl being decoyed by a Chinaman, and must believe such cases to be very rare—as, in such an event occurring, the outcry that would be raised against the obnoxious race would be so great that it would resound throughout the Colony. Where are the parents of all these girls that have been decoyed? What are the police doing, if such crimes are being committed among us?

I now come to the last class of arguments—those founded on grounds of social and political economy. I believe that these are they which weigh most with the mining community:—

1. They are uncivilized barbarians, and are dirty in their habits.
2. They cannot speak our language, nor understand our laws and customs.
3. They do not settle in the country, but take back to China the gold they obtain, and therefore do no good to the Colony.
4. That if allowed, they will come in such numbers as to overwhelm the European population; they will become more bold and arrogant in their demeanour, and will endanger, if not the safety, at least the peace and quiet of the European population, by causing intestine commotion and perhaps bloodshed.
5. They can live on less than Europeans, and therefore can injuriously compete with them in the matter of wages.
6. They work ground which will not pay Europeans to work at present, but which in a few years, when living is cheaper, may support an European population; and if great numbers are admitted, they will quickly exhaust the payable gold fields, and throw European miners out of profitable employment.

1. Are they really the uncivilized barbarians they are supposed to be, or is this merely a claptrap phrase which means little or nothing, and is only used to fill the sheet of charges against them? Impartial writers agree in describing the Chinese as a highly civilized nation, and their Government as quite a miracle of orderliness. The Imperial sway is autocratic and absolute, but not despotic. I quote from Maunder (an admitted authority); alluding to the power of the Emperor, he says:—“Public opinion is always ready to check any excess on the part of the Emperor, who would not, without exciting general indignation, dare to violate the rights of any of his subjects.” The next power in the State is the literary aristocracy, or corporation of men of letters, which dates its origin as far back as 1100 years before the Christian era. “The Emperor can only choose his civil agents among the lettered class.” “It may be said that the administration receives all its real and direct influence from this sort of literary oligarchy.” Every Chinese may present himself for examination for the third literary degree; if successful, he may become a candidate for the second degree; if again successful, he is then eligible for official employment; to fill higher offices, he must next compete for a first-class degree. The corporation of lettered men are almost the only nobility recognized in China, and constitute the chief nerve and strength of the Empire. Municipal or communal organization is perhaps nowhere else so perfect as in China. The Mayors are all chosen by the people. Their commercial relations are sound—bank notes payable to bearer circulating throughout the Empire.

Is this the organization of barbarians? Is the want of civilization apparent in their mode of Government? Are there ten Chinese in this Colony who cannot read and write their own language? As regards their alleged want of cleanliness, there may be some truth in it, but it is open to dispute whether they are on this point lower than similar classes of society in other nations. It must be remembered they come from a densely-crowded population, and are for the most part selected from the poorer classes. Take the same class from London, Liverpool, or Glasgow, and the “heathen Chinese” will compare favourably with the squalor and filth which all residents in great cities must be familiar with. The habit of living in large numbers under one roof is among them, as with the poorer classes of Europeans, the cause of much of the want of cleanliness, &c.; but it is remarkable how soon after landing in the Colonies they break themselves of the habit. I have seen from sixteen to thirty new arrivals living for twelve months in one hut, and by the end of that time there would spring up five or six huts to accommodate the same number.

If they cannot speak our language, a far greater proportion of them can read and write their own than can be said of other colonists; and they show a remarkable aptitude for picking up such words and phrases of English as they find it useful to acquire. There are a large number of Anglo-Chinese books circulating among them, containing thousands of words and sentences in English and their equivalents in Chinese. Their language is spoken by one-third of the human race; it is therefore the nearest approach to an universal language. None other is spoken by one-tenth so many people. And shall it thus be laid against them as an objection that they do not speak our language—the English language; it must be the best because it is ours! Why, all who can speak the English language do not exceed the population of

two out of the eighteen provinces of their Empire! "The Chinese language is undoubtedly the most widely diffused throughout the world, and that which transmits the ideas of the greatest number of men."

But "they cannot understand our laws and customs." This is indeed true; but is it any objection? I cannot understand them, and I am a thorough European—"A Hebrew of the Hebrews"—a native of England, having been for eighteen years on the colonial gold fields, many of which years have been literally spent in studying "the laws and customs" of Australia and this country. I confess I cannot comprehend our Stamp Act; I can hardly make sense of our land laws. As to our customs, the less said about them the better. I contend that the Chinese understand just sufficient of our laws as is requisite—namely, the necessity of obedience to constituted authority; the mass of Europeans know no more. If the miners were better acquainted with the laws and customs, as well as the unvarying policy of the British Empire, they would refrain from raising this fruitless agitation; they would know that our pride and our policy has always been to reach the hand of friendship and fellowship to other nations—to rise above the prejudices of caste and nationality, and to recognize the grand fundamental truth of the universal brotherhood of man. This aphorism is not based upon merely religious grounds—it is innate in the human breast—it is recognized as a principle (nay, as the very foundation) of international law. And shall we, an insignificant section of a small and distant dependency, take upon ourselves to ignore and set aside the grand, large-hearted, and noble policy of the British Empire—a policy springing from and elaborated by the collective and accumulated wisdom of a succession of Parliaments through no less than 500 years? Shall we not make ourselves a laughing stock among the nations?

"The Chinese do not settle on the land," we are told, "and they take away the gold they obtain, and do not benefit the country." The statistics of this and the neighbouring Colonies will not bear out this assertion. A fair proportion do remain in the Colony. But are not most of our European miners migrators from Australia? Did they remain in Victoria? Are they more likely to remain in New Zealand than in Australia? Emigration from China is more systematic and constant and is widely diffused than is generally supposed. There is a steady efflux to the kingdom of Siam, the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, Java, Australia, California, the Phillipines, the Sandwich Islands, Central and South America, and the West Indies.

England, Ireland, Germany, &c., think they hit upon a novel idea when they relieve their own crowded States by encouraging emigration, but China could teach them all a lesson in this respect.

It is stated upon good authority that not one-fifth of these emigrants return to China; they either remain in the lands they migrate to, or seek others where they meet with a kinder welcome. As to their taking away the gold, our export statistics will flatly contradict that, for they show that the proportion of gold that goes to China is infinitesimally small compared with that which goes to Europe. Instead of doing no good to the country, they are already, and will continue to be, the very mainstay of the Colony; if it were not for them, the amount of our gold exports would be just about half what it is. What success would Mr. Vogel have had in negotiating for the loan if he could only have shown one half the exports and one-half the gold fields revenue?

A short time back about 500 Chinamen arrived in Dunedin; they immediately swarmed the stores, and in forty-eight hours it was credibly stated that they had spent about £3,000 in the town. All the available waggons were loaded with merchandise they had purchased for cash. Surely the import duties on the goods they consume, and the export dues on the gold they obtain, must equally benefit the country as the same amount passing through European hands.

The objection that their numbers will increase so much as to overwhelm and endanger the peace of the European inhabitants cannot be seriously entertained. Look at Hindostan with its 180 millions of warlike races of Indians kept in subjection and peacefully governed by our European population, which including military, did not in 1865 exceed 40,000; and these, let it be borne in mind, in an unhealthy and enervating climate, to which the European constitution never becomes acclimatized, whereas the native races are on their own soil, and in their own climate.

The converse of these conditions contains the case of the Chinese in this Colony. We have 220,000 Europeans, equal to five times the European population of Hindostan; we have a climate similar to, and perhaps more salubrious than that we have left. In contradistinction to the Indian natives, the Chinese are a peaceful people; they are in a strange country; they come from a much warmer climate, and it takes some time to inure them to the colder and moister climate of New Zealand. Why, then, should we be frightened to admit a few millions of them to cultivate the barren acres which are likely to remain for generations untilled, if left to spontaneous immigration from Europe? The last two arguments enumerated are based on the assumption that Europeans will suffer by being brought into competition with Chinese labour. I refer you to India again, and it will be found that the 40,000 Europeans there resident constitute the wealthiest community on the face of the earth. This assertion may be startling, but it is true; and the reason is that they have the command of an inexhaustible supply of cheap labour (I believe the cheapest free labour in the world).

Now, I believe if the Chinese were admitted freely, they would naturally fall to their proper level, and would become the real labouring class of the Colony. The present European labouring class would always be preferred for the higher kinds of labour, and these kinds would then be much more in demand as overseers, time-keepers, managers, &c., and their rate of remuneration, instead of falling, would be more apt to rise, from the greater demand for intelligent supervisors.

The argument against admitting Chinese immigrants to compete with the Europeans at present here, tells with tenfold force against the assisted immigration scheme at present being carried out. Under the arrangement Mr. Vogel made with Mr. Brogden, 10,000 Europeans are to have their passages paid at £10 per head out of the revenue of the Colony. Thus the European miners will be taxed to bring into the market a competition far more powerful and effective than the Chinese. The Europeans bring with them equal, if not superior, intelligence and civilization, a knowledge of all the latest improvements and appliances to cheapen labour. Skilled labourers will of course be preferred. If we are to legislate on such a selfish principle, it were far more logical to cease taxing ourselves to import European labour (which brings a still greater competition against the miner) than to prohibit

the voluntary immigration of the Chinese. I have already prolonged this letter beyond the usual limits; but, in conclusion, I would summarize in a few sentences my plea for our Chinese brethren.

To the sickly religious and moral sentimentalist I say, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." The Chinaman is no worse than his neighbours. Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. I cannot see how it is possible but that the Chinese will be in a very high degree beneficial to the country. They excel in the virtues of industry, temperance, and frugality. They are kindly-natured one to another—good-humoured, civil, and obliging to all; they live within their income, but are by no means penurious when circumstances enable them to be otherwise. When their means allow of it, they spend more on the "luxuries of the table" than European miners with equal earnings; but they do not frequent the hotels. Although, I believe, teetotalism is unknown among them, drunkenness is extremely rare.

They write neatly, and evidently are more familiar with the pen than many European miners. They are very peaceable and quiet—submit meekly to any constituted authorities. When they obtain credit from our storekeepers, they are punctual in their payments and correct in their reckonings. They contribute largely to the revenue, and add nothing to the cost of governing the country. They labour under great disadvantages in the Wardens' Courts through there being so few Government interpreters appointed; and if Chinese miners' rights were issued and charged at, say, 5s. more than those issued to Europeans, as an equivalent for the providing the gratuitous services of an interpreter on every diggings, they would have no right to complain; but any exceptional taxation further than to make provision for their own benefit and protection is not compatible with justice and equity.

Much might be said about the ingenuity of Chinese artisans and their inventive resources. They were acquainted with the magnet or loadstone, with gunpowder, swivel-guns and bombs, wood engraving, and stereo-printing, many centuries before these were invented in Europe. They excel in dyeing, embroidery, lacquer work, and porcelain manufactures; their fine and strong paper—the bright and unchangeable colours they use—cannot be produced in Europe. Of their pottery and other manufactures, very imperfect imitations have been produced in France of late years, but at a much greater cost than Chinese wares.

In fine, it may be said that the introduction of Chinese in large numbers will develop our gold fields to an extent hardly dreamed of at present. It will give an impetus to the introduction of various manufacturing industries—to agriculture and gardening (they are nearly all practical gardeners); it will materially assist us in overcoming our financial difficulties, and will greatly enrich the whole of the European population.

I have, &c.,
YELIA BOEG.

APPENDIX III.

Copy of First Official Communication on record from the English to the Chinese Imperial Authorities.

ELIZABETH, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, the most mighty defender of the true and Christian faith against all who falsely profess the name of Christ,—To the most high and Sovereign Prince, the most puissant Governor of the great Kingdom of China, the chiefest Empire in those parts of Asia, and the Islands adjoining, and the great Monarch of the Oriental Regions of the World, wisheth health and many joyful and happy years, with all plenty and abundance of things most acceptable: Whereas our honest and faithful subjects which bring these letters unto Your Highness, Richard Allot and Thomas Broomfield, merchants in the City of London, have made most earnest suit unto us, that we would commend their desires and endeavours of sailing to the regions of your empire for traffic sake: Whereas the fame of your kingdom, so strongly and prudently governed, being published over the face of the whole earth, hath invited these our subjects, not only to visit your Highness's dominions, but also to permit themselves to be ruled and governed by the laws of your kingdom during their abode there, as it becometh merchants who for exchange of merchandise are desirous to travel to distant and unknown regions, that they may present their wares and musters of divers kind of merchandise, wherewith the regions of our dominions do abound, unto the view of your Highness and of your subjects, that they may endeavour to know whether there be any other merchandise with us fit for your use, which they may exchange for other commodities whereof in ports of your empire there is great plenty both natural and artificial:

We, yielding to these requests of these honest men, because we suppose that by this intercourse and traffic, no loss, but rather most exceeding benefits, will redound to the rulers and subjects of both kingdoms, and thus help and enrich one another. And we do crave of your most sovereign Majesty, that these our subjects, when they arrive at any of your ports or cities, that they may have full and free liberty to egress and regress, and of dealing with your subjects, and may by your clemency enjoy all freedoms and privileges as are granted to the subjects of other princes. And we, on the other side, will not only prepare the offices of a well-disposed and willing Prince unto your Highness, but also, for the greater increase of mutual love and commerce between us and our subjects, by these present letters of ours do most willingly grant unto all and every one of your subjects full and entire liberty into any of our dominions to resort, there to abide and traffic, and then return as it seemeth best to them, all and every of which promises we have caused to be confirmed by annexing hereunto our royal seal.

God, most merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, continually protect your kingly Majesty.

Given at our Palace of Greenwich, the 11th day of July, 1596, and thirty-eighth of our reign.

Extracts from the Treaty of 1842.

Article 1.—There shall henceforward be peace and friendship between Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and His Majesty the Emperor of China, and between their respective subjects, who shall enjoy full security and protection of their persons and property within the dominions of the other.

Article 2.—His Majesty the Emperor of China agrees that British subjects with their families and establishments shall be allowed to reside, for the purpose of carrying on their mercantile pursuits without molestation or restraint at the cities and towns of Canton, Amoy, Foochowfoo, Ningpo, and Shanghai, &c.

Article 10.—His Majesty the Emperor of China agrees to establish at all ports which are by the second article of this Treaty to be thrown open for the resort of British merchants, a fair and regular Tariff shall be publicly notified and promulgated for general information; and the Emperor further engages that when British merchandise shall have once paid at any of the said ports the regulated customs and dues agreeable to the Tariff to be hereafter fixed, such merchandise may be conveyed by Chinese merchants to any Province or City in the interior of the Empire of China on paying a further amount as transit duties, which shall not exceed per cent on the Tariff value of such goods.

Memorandum.—A further Treaty giving more extended reciprocal privileges was signed at Tien-tsin on the 27th June, 1858, regarding which the official paper says:—"From this day a new era will begin for China. The great and difficult problem of opening the Chinese Empire has been solved. Stepping forth from an isolation which has lasted four thousand years, she is about to enter into the general life of the world, and to be brought in contact with the activity, intelligence, science, and commercial enterprise of the Western Nations."

APPENDIX IV.

Return of the Estimated Number of Chinese in New Zealand on the 19th October, 1871.

	HOW EMPLOYED.										TOTAL.	
	Carpenters.	Miners.	Storekeepers.	Hotelkeepers.	Gardeners.	Agents.	Cooks.	Labourers.	Hawkers.	Cabinetmakers.		No Return.
Canterbury	...	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	5	9
Wellington	1	...	2	...	6	...	1	1	...	6	...	17
Hawke's Bay*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Nelson	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Marlborough	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Auckland	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
Westland	...	9	...	...	14	...	1	...	...	...	...	24
Otago (15th Sept., see Return Interim Report, No. 1, Appendix III.)	4	3,561	96	1	27	3	1	10	12	...	...	} 4,159
Since arrived by sea (less ten died in harbour)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	444	
	5	3,570	103	1	49	3	3	12	12	6	451	4,215

* None in the Province.

APPENDIX V.

Memorandum of Questions submitted to G. B. Barton, Esq., Tuapeka, and Reply thereto.

SIR,—

House of Representatives, 19th October, 1871.

The Select Committee appointed to inquire into the question of Chinese immigration, as regards its probable effect upon the Gold Fields and the social condition of the Colony, request that you will be good enough to favour them with your views and the results of your experience with regard to the matter:—

The information sought to be obtained embraces the following among other points, viz:—

1. The effect generally upon the gold fields of the influx of Chinese. (a.) With regard to the development of their auriferous resources. (b.) With regard to the general conduct of the mining population; stating whether or not the presence of a Mongolian element has an immoral tendency, encourages gaming-houses, or leads to disturbances of the peace.

2. As to whether Chinese labour is adapted for any description of handicraft, for agricultural operations, or for domestic offices.

3. In the case of intermarriages with Europeans, what are the social results of such unions?

4. What is the relative cost of European and Chinese labour, and what the relative cost of living?

5. Is it desirable to take any steps with the view of checking Chinese immigration; and if so, what steps?

6. Is it desirable to impose any special taxation upon Chinese immigrants; if so, in what form, and to what extent?

The Committee will also be glad to receive any information not specified in the foregoing queries which may bear upon the subject.

I have, &c.,
W. J. STEWARD,
Chairman, Chinese Immigration Committee.

G. B. Barton, Esq.

Reply.

Wellington, 23rd October, 1871.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th September last, with reference to the question of Chinese immigration, and, in reply, to submit the following statement for the consideration of the Committee:—

1. The effect generally upon the gold fields of the influx of Chinese, with regard to the development of their auriferous resources must necessarily depend upon circumstances—such as the relative number of Chinese and European miners, and the character of the particular field. The Chinese influence will not make itself felt on any gold fields in this Colony except those in which alluvial workings form the principal feature. The Chinese confine themselves almost entirely to “sluicing,” and are consequently found in greater numbers in Otago than elsewhere in New Zealand. It may be said that the Chinese have, in one sense, done much towards the development of the auriferous resources of that Province. They have worked a large area of ground that would otherwise have remained unworked; they have produced considerable quantities of gold; they are ready purchasers of claims held by Europeans, for which they pay larger prices than would be obtained from Europeans. They apparently possess a spirit of organization which enables them to overcome the many difficulties in their way, and to accomplish results which would, under ordinary circumstances, lie beyond them. It is the common experience of European miners that, when organisation is attempted among them, it ends in failure. European miners associated together in large numbers rarely show much discipline; if they are successful, they are apt to neglect their work and to dissipate their money; if they are unsuccessful, they become dissatisfied and long for other fields. The Chinese, on the other hand, display unlimited discipline, and their work is never interfered with, whether their fortune is good or bad. A large area of ground, which has proved ruinous to European association, has been known to yield excellent results to the Chinese. All this may be said to exercise some influence on “the development of our auriferous resources.” But there can be no doubt that, unless the number of the Chinese is very limited, their real influence on the gold fields of Otago must be disastrous. The fact that large portions of our gold fields are rapidly falling into their hands is a proof in itself that they are displacing the Europeans. If this fact resulted in the discovery of new gold fields by the latter, there would be nothing to complain of; but it is not so. No new discoveries of any importance are likely to take place in Otago. The consequence of the displacement is, that many European miners are lost to the district, if not to the country. The aversion with which they regard the Chinese is another circumstance which must prejudice the success of the gold fields, although its manifestations of feeling are very much more marked in some districts than in others. Many Europeans will leave a gold field because, as they say, it is infested with Chinese; and for the same reason, many will be deterred from seeking it. This aversion does not arise from mere sentiment or prejudice; it is brought about by the annoyance caused by the immediate presence of Chinamen, and the difficulties they create.

The question is practically one of number. A few Chinamen would not be objected to, because they would be harmless, if not useful. But when they are counted by thousands, “the conflict of races” begins at once, and a national difficulty presents itself. If the number is allowed to increase in that ratio, the permanent success of the Otago Gold Fields will be seriously prejudiced. It must be borne in mind that these fields, unlike those of Australia, are very limited in extent, and are not capable of supporting an indefinite population. The limit is very soon reached. It is difficult to conceive any process by which the thousands of Chinamen now arriving in Otago can be healthily absorbed, without ruinous consequences to the gold fields. The Chinese who are already settled in the Province, and who may be said to have “interests at stake,” are quite as alive to this difficulty as the Europeans. They do not wish to see their numbers largely increased, because they know there is not room for more. I believe they would readily assist in checking the influx of their countrymen, if any opportunity were afforded.

With regard to “the general conduct of the mining population,” the presence of Chinese is not at all calculated to create any alarm as to the morals of the community. There is nothing to show, at present, that the Chinese in this Colony are more addicted to immoral practices than any other races. The records of the Law Courts on the gold fields will be the best evidence on this point, and I think will acquit the Chinese of any marked tendency to crime or criminality. Their gambling is among themselves, and is consequently harmless to others. So long as they remain scattered in small parties over the country they are not likely to exercise any prejudicial influence on society.

2. Chinese labour is just as adapted for any description of handicraft as any other labour. I suppose that a Chinese tailor will sew a pair of trousers as well as a London tailor, although “the cut” might be different; and as to their capacity for cooking and market-gardening, abundant evidence may be found anywhere.

3. In the case of intermarriages with Europeans, the social results of such unions are not perceptible. The two races have not yet intermingled so far as to justify an opinion on the subject.

4. The relative cost of Chinese and European labour is as £1 to £3 a week. The relative cost of living is as ten shillings to thirty shillings a week.

5. It is desirable, I should think, to take steps with the view of checking Chinese immigration. The step I would recommend is this: The Government of New Zealand should place itself in communication with the authorities at Hong-Kong and other Chinese ports, for the purpose of representing the actual state of affairs on the subject, and making it known among the Chinese themselves. There can be no doubt that they are now flocking to Otago under gross misapprehensions. They have been

led to believe that there are millions of acres in Otago open for occupation ; that the climate is mild, employment easily obtained, wage high, and provisions cheap. If it were made known to them that the facts are just the reverse, their emigrating tendency would probably be checked at once.

6. Special taxation upon Chinese is undesirable in itself, for two reasons : it is unjust on the face of it, and it has not been found to succeed elsewhere. It has been abandoned in Australia, and there is nothing to show that it would answer the purpose in New Zealand. A tax upon rice would fall as heavily on the Europeans as on the Chinese, and the Chinese never eat rice when they can get pork or poultry. A capitation tax would neither drive them out of the country, nor prevent them from coming into it. If it were levied in the shape of a miner's right, the law would be evaded, just as it is now. Probably an inquiry at the Wardens' Offices would show that the many hundreds of Chinamen who have recently distributed themselves over the Otago Gold Fields, have altogether forgotten to provide themselves with a miner's right.

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I have, &c.,
G. B. BARTON.

