

THE SILVER QUESTION

INVASION OF THE UNITED STATES BY THE ASIATICS.

How They Exchange the Products of Their Labor for Our Gold, Which They in Turn Exchange for Silver to Hire Cheap Labor to Compete with Ours.

(By Joseph K. Clark, Butte, Montana.)

The question that seems most to bother the Americans in regard to the Chinese-Japanese situation, is whether our brothers of the Orient are our financial superiors or not, and, as they appear to have the best of the matter at present, to an unprejudiced observer, it would seem that as they know when they have a good thing and then make the best of it, they, at least, are the financial superiors of those antiquated minds that see nothing but financial disasters in bi-metallism.

If the recent treaty between those nations is carried out in the spirit as well as the letter, and to the adaptability of the Chinese is added the ingenuity of the Japanese, their progress during the twentieth century would be wonderful indeed.

The Chinese, since the time of Confucius, seem to have done nothing but adhere to ancient customs; the Japanese, on the other hand, are a people of progress, and during recent years have made gigantic strides in all the arts and sciences and in commerce.

The first cotton spinning factory in Japan was established at Kagoshima more than forty years ago, by Shemazu Haribishi, the greatest feudal prince of modern times.

For nearly twenty years this was the only factory of the kind in the country, but in 1867 the people began to wake up and since then so many other factories have been established that there are now 580,564 spindles in operation, which, taken with those now in process of construction, will make the total number of spindles nearly one million.

One of the articles in the Japanese-Chinese treaty that will be most important to the development of the Chinese, and important to the world of commerce reads as follows:

"Japanese subjects shall be free to engage in all kinds of manufacturing industries in all the open cities, towns and ports of China, and shall be at liberty to import into China all kinds of machinery, paying only the stipulated import duties thereon."

At first, with a casual thought, it would seem that this article opens up before Americans visions of great prosperity; that soon the United States would soon wrest from England the supremacy in the oriental trade.

All this would happen and more, if advantage were taken of the treaty (for the Japanese look upon us as their best friends), and if we were not brought into direct labor competition with them.

While we may be slightly benefited for the time, as it is, still, they are rivals to be feared, not despised or looked down upon, and the treaty virtually makes China and Japan one nation, with a population of 500,000,000 people.

For labor they pay about 17 cents per day in gold to men and 11 cents to women.

They are the greatest imitators in the world, and as they have no patent laws by which foreigners may be protected, they seize upon every useful patent and with their cheap labor turn out products for a net cost that would make Americans open their eyes wide in astonishment.

A recent article in the "Inventive Age" has the following paragraph:

"One of the subjects for our statesmen in the near future will be: 'How best we can protect the American manufacturers and the American laborers from the imitative genius, piracy and cheap labor of Japan, not alone in cotton and cotton goods, but in the manufacture of everything the arts produce."

Thirty-five years ago the Japanese might have been classed as barbarians, and they were divided into many factions. They had a civil war and the victorious party proclaimed the present reigning sovereign "mikado of the Japanese empire." He was but seventeen years of age, but had been educated in the United States and had acquired many American ways and modes of thought.

Under his enlightened rule a great social revolution took place. Edicts were promulgated tolerating Christianity and permitting Buddhist priests to marry nuns.

It is claimed by some people that the marriage of this multitude of Buddhist priests accounts, in a great degree, for the intelligence the Japanese display to-day as a nation, for the priests were the educated men of the land.

In 1871 a board of education was formed and a year later a college with a staff of European professors was established and largely patronized.

As their chief intercourse was with the United States, England and France the study of the languages of those nations was insisted upon, and the adoption of all mechanical appliances that could promote the arts and sciences was encouraged.

At this time one railroad was in operation, with others in process of construction. Now their railway system compares favorably with those of the European powers.

In 1870 a national mint was established at Osaka, the machinery being imported from England. In this year they issued their first coin made in their own mints. Heretofore it had been coined in other countries, but used as national coin.

The Japanese came from a mongrel Tartar source, and their origin dates

far back into antiquity. The national religion is Buddhism, but sanction was given to the worship in the old faith, Sin Fin, or Faith in Gods.

The Chinese have historical legends that antedate the flood mentioned in the Bible, and have a history that reaches back farther than any other nation now in existence.

The wonders of the Empire caused the discovery of this continent, for Columbus had in his mind as much the discovery of a short route to Cathay, as he had the desire to prove the correctness of his theory that the world was round.

If it had not been for his vivid and glowing descriptions of the riches and marvels of this country, Isabella and Ferdinand probably never would have listened to his pleadings, and have supplied him with vessels, and men, and money to make the trial.

Later a famous traveler, Sir John De Mandeville, returned home with glowing accounts of the country, and with strange tales of the queer people inhabiting it.

Their first porcelain furnace was set up in the seventh century in the province of Kiangsi, but the celebrated furnaces of Kinti Chin were not established until almost two hundred years later.

They now have over five hundred porcelain furnaces in operation, which supply nearly the whole world in porcelain ware. In the matter of baking the porcelain, no other country has ever excelled them, one single piece passing through forty hands before it is deemed finished.

The date of the origin of the manufacture of silk in China is lost in the mists of remote antiquity. From the Chinese the Persians acquired the art; from the Persians the Greeks learned it, while it is not known whether the Romans had it from the Greeks or through some intercourse their sea captains had with the Chinese themselves.

They excel in the manufacture of damasks and flowered satins and in their simple hand looms can reproduce the most intricate of French and English patterns. China Crepe has never been imitated successfully.

In the tenth century they had invented printing machines and were proficient in the manufacture of the finest paper.

Their most elaborate works are the Imperial Canal and the Great Wall. The latter was built about 200 B. C. and extends west from Pekin for the entire northern frontier for a distance of over 1,500 miles, over rivers and across mountains and plains. It was from 15 to 30 feet in height, and 25 feet at the base, while the top was 15 feet in breadth, or wide enough for six men to ride horse back abreast.

The Imperial Canal is one of the greatest works of its kind in the world and flows from Pekin to Canton, a distance of 1,200 miles. This great work was constructed in the thirteenth century and runs through a most fertile country, where every variety of vegetable life may be grown on account of the diversified climate.

Thus, centuries before we became a nation, China had progressed in art and manufacture, and although they have been isolated to a great extent from the rest of the world, thereby being unable to profit by the developments of civilization, with the Japanese to teach and aid them, they will be able soon to make anything that can be manufactured in any other place in the world.

They produce the raw material in their own land and sell the manufactured article for gold in a gold standard country.

I have thus briefly outlined the present condition of China, simply to direct your attention to what we may expect in the near future, when the well paid labor of America will be brought into direct competition with the pauper labor of China and Japan.

There is only one logical conclusion to come to if our legislators do not take some active steps towards preventing such competition—the wages of American labor will drop.

The gold bugs have always been vicious.

You ask, "Why?" "Because the masses do not understand the financial question?" This is true only in part. The main reason is that the gold bugs have bought both judge and jury. Is it any wonder that they are awarded the verdict?

Three-fourths of the people of the United States are in favor of free coinage on a basis of 16 to 1 and have cast their votes to that effect, electing on a silver platform men who, when elected, repudiated their promises and deceived the people, supporting gold bug theories regardless of the suffering and misery their actions brought upon the people who elected them.

The time has come when the masses must make the great effort of their lives to gain recognition. In the elections of 1896, the silver question will be the axis upon which all others revolve; so prepare to make the fight of your lives. Cast aside all party affiliations. If you cannot get an honest man nominated in your own party, vote for any honest man, regardless of party, but be sure that he is honest.

Remember that the gold bugs are preparing for the greatest fight they have ever had; they realize their jeopardy and that the people have become determined to be heard and so are making strenuous efforts to provide against defeat.

This is not a political fight. It is a battle with the plutocrats of London and their agents in the United States on one side and the people on the other. The people must win, for if they lose, the cause of the people—free silver—will be retarded for years.

Nominate, regardless of party, an honest man. One who will boldly and at all times support free silver, and

after nominating, elect him, and the cause is won.

Beware of bankers! They are false prophets and nine-tenths of them are auxiliaries of the gold bugs in London. They are gold bugs themselves for purely mercenary reasons. With gold mono-metallism they can retain their high rates of interest.

What does it matter to them that you lose your farm or your home; that the laborers on railways, in fields or in factories, have to work for a few cents a day to compete with the cheap labor of China and Japan—they get their interest just the same.

Every one that can read should study the financial question and prepare himself to cast his vote for an honest, true man, who will at all times and in all places work for the good of the country and the good of the people.

What little gold there is controlled by, comparatively, a very few men, or locked up in vaults by the hundreds of millions.

At the beginning of the Christian era the Roman Empire had 1,800,000,000 of metallic money. At the end of the fifteenth century they had less than \$200,000,000. India and China then were in the height of their glory and splendor and the inference is that much of the money that disappeared found its way into the coffers of the wealthy Indian and Chinese nabobs.

In these countries gold was needed, for the Chinese, at this time were building the Imperial Canal, and in India gorgeous and magnificent temples were being constructed.

Are we going to follow this example? Are we going to furnish money, depreciated in our own country, but to other nations worth its own value, that they may beautify and make rich their own lands while paupering us?

At this time the Roman Empire must have had men who well might have been named Sherman, Carlisle and Cleveland, who acted as emissaries to India and China and made the Roman masses believe that silver was worthless and less than gold.

The monied people of India and China at that time, probably, were as ready to buy it at fifty cents on the dollar as their descendants are ready to buy it of us, and we are not sure that they even paid that much.

But, however, they lost their money, their trade, their power; for when a nation or individual loses money, credit goes with it and with the credit goes trade and power.

To this loss of money and power may be accredited their decline in civilization, their decrease in population and commerce and the disappearance of their freedom. History records nothing to show the cause of this deplorable result except the shrinkage of bimetallic.

History repeats itself, and if we, the people of the United States, cannot retain metallic money, we will follow in the footsteps of the Roman Empire.

We alone are not suffering from the demonetization of silver; the peasantry of all gold standard countries are sharing the disastrous results with us.

In the statistics compiled by Archbishop Walsh of Ireland it is shown that prior to 1873 the exports of yarn from India to China and Japan alone were practically nothing. In 1873 occurred the demonetization of silver. What effect that had upon the industry may be seen from the following table:

In 1874. \$ 1,000,000

In 1875. 5,000,000

In 1880. 25,000,000

In 1885. 75,000,000

In 1889. 127,000,000

In 1891. 165,000,000

England had this trade until silver was demonetized in 1873, when she lost it, and while losing this she lost in nearly every other branch of commerce in proportion. It is only a question of time when all her spindles and looms will be silenced.

What has been said of England may be said also of the United States or any other gold standard country, unless bimetalism be adopted.

Demonetization of silver is responsible for this loss of prestige.

It is easily enough seen why silver standard countries prefer to trade with one another; and when silver is demonetized by any nation that nation immediately begins to lose her trade.

To cite a supposititious case that may be made applicable to ourselves. Suppose we were to have our gold discounted at the rate of 100 per cent by the silver standard countries. Would we not at once seek some gold-standard nation with whom we might trade, that our gold might be taken at par? Reverse the case, and the present situation is explained.

As I have said, they sell the manufactured article in a gold standard country for gold, and for gold alone. They take away nothing but gold. This is one reason, and a potent one, why gold is disappearing from the United States. This gold is shipped to London and is changed for fifty cents on the dollar for bar silver, which is taken to China and Japan, coined and put in circulation among their own people, where, at its coined value, it is as good as gold, and has the same purchasing power.

The gold then goes into the vaults of London only to come back to the United States to purchase our bonds at a high rate of interest. The London bankers take in exchange our silver at fifty cents on the dollar, the having contracted far into the future at that price, knowing that the production of silver is running short.

It may readily be seen why nations having a silver standard do not care to join the gold standard nations in international bimetallism.

At present they make a profit of 100 per cent upon every dollar's worth of gold they exchange, but if they joined in international bimetallism, they would be compelled to take in exchange for their manufactured articles

our silver on a parity with gold, thereby depriving themselves of the handsome profit they are in the habit of realizing, for they would have to pay for our silver 129 29-100 per ounce. This would leave the gold in our country and there would no longer be complaints of a depleted treasury and a diminished gold reserve fund, and no need of further issues of government bonds.

Then, too, they would purchase our raw material, for there would be no discount on their silver money; but at present, as we will pay only fifty cents on the dollar for their silver, they will not buy of us, preferring, naturally, to deal with some silver standard country where their silver is taken at par.

This proposition appears to me so simple, so plain, so capable of but one solution that it is a matter of wonderment to me that our so-called statesmen and financiers should hesitate concerning the course to pursue.

If this condition of affairs is to continue; if our silver is to be used in this manner; if we have to compete with the cheap labor of China and Japan—they get their interest just the same.

One of the three great national parties have taken a decided, positive stand upon these three burning, living issues, and that one is the People's party. Now for the benefit and instruction of those who seek for knowledge, the unthinking, and even the prejudiced, we will enumerate some of the objects of this rising young giant, the new party of the "great plain people."

Populism means the complete annihilation of the interest bearing bond system, whether national, state, county, municipal, township or school.

Populism means that wealth, which demands the greater protection, shall bear the greater burden of taxation, instead of compelling the poor man to pay all the taxes and exempting the rich.

Populism means equality before the law, protection to voters, and honest elections. It means fair, but moderate salaries, fidelity to trust, and disbursement for malfeasance in office.

Populism means that every man and woman who desires to work shall have the opportunity of doing so, and at fair living wages, according to ability. It means that no one man, corporation or company of men shall be permitted by class laws to accumulate such vast wealth at the expense of those who toil incessantly for a mere subsistence.

Populism means the repeal of the national bank act, and the issue by the general government, on its own credit, the credit of the whole people, of all money used.

It means that the volume of currency shall be limited to so much per capita, and shall be increased only as the population and business increases.

Populism means a postal savings bank, and the closing forever of these present swindling concerns called state and national banks.

Populism means the restoration of our convenient fractional paper currency, out of which we were meanly swindled by our modern financial brigands.

Populism means absolute death to the bank system of inflation and contraction, so long practiced, to the disturbance and ruin of business, and starvations of the laboring people.

It means such an adjustment of our financial systems as will make a general panic impossible.

Populism means that no alien shall own land in the United States. It means that no landed monopoly or system of tenantry, serfdom such as exists abroad, shall exist in the United States, but that there shall be a limited ownership of land.

Populism means protection to labor as well as capital, in our home industries, and that none but American citizens shall be employed in our factories.

Populism means the government control of railroads, telegraphs and telephones, and no more giving of subsidies, lands, or special privileges, or franchises, to grasping individuals or corporations.

It means a vigorous prosecution of public improvements, as roads, canals, etc., but in no case to create an interest bonded debt, to lend its credit, or enter into partnership with any individual for such purposes.

Populism means simple laws, and arbitration to be substituted as far as practical for our expensive courts.

It means that every citizen is a soldier, ready at call to defend his country's flag. A large standing army and an expensive navy belong more to a monarchy than to a republic, to Pan-ganism rather than to Christianity.

Reformer, Walla Walla, Wash.

The people's money it has been from all time, and the people's money it should be for all time to