

were unworthy of his head and heart, and therefore unworthy of the least consideration, being based on contempt of race, a low selfishness, a blind and cowardly fear of consequences, and the gratification for party purposes of a local hatred (in its climax reaching to the diabolical) against a helpless, unoffending, industrious, frugal, and intemperate class of inhabitants. They are such reasons as were formerly urged by some against freely allowing the Irish to emigrate to this country, and against emancipating the Southern slave population; and against labor-saving machinery, as reducing the wages of the laborer, etc., etc. They are not born of reason, or justice, or historical experience. If the proposed measure shall be carried and enforced, the Chinese Government may proclaim non-intercourse with this country, and find as ample justification in so doing....

This is the spirit of caste; black versus white. It is essentially the same everywhere - vulgar, conceited and contemptible. Cannot Senator Blaine be instructed by it? Respectfully yours,

William Lloyd Garrison
Boston, Mass., Feb. 15, 1879
New York Tribune, February 17, 1879

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The following New York Times editorial, a comment on the on-going debate in Congress, is of interest for both its sharpness and the fact that a newspaper in San Francisco, heart of the anti-Chinese movement, saw fit to publish it. Former president U.S. Grant did not win the Republican presidential nomination that year; the party platform adopted in convention, with James A. Garfield as standard bearer, endorsed Chinese exclusion.

There is every reason to believe that within a few days a San Francisco mob will make an attack on the Chinamen. The preparations for this attack are in open progress, and Mr. Dennis Kearney, the eminent California statesman whom Mr. Hayes once honored with a long interview at the White House, is now appealing to his followers to furnish money for erecting a neat and serviceable gallows on the Sand Lots whereon to hang the wretches who are guilty of being Chinamen.³ As the Mayor of the city is the

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ally and tool of Kearney, no protection will be given by him to the Chinese, and the fate of these unhappy heathen, in case the anticipated riot takes place, can be easily imagined.

There are a few weak sentimentalists in the Eastern States who would look upon a massacre of the Chinese in San Francisco as a shameful crime. When that event occurs they will denounce Kearney and Kallloch⁴ with much energy, and will assert that the American nation has been disgraced. Such people, however, have nothing to do with real politics, and their opinions are of very little consequence.

Practical men are growing tired of the foolish sentimentality which is talked in Eastern cities concerning the Chinese. We are told that because the United States has made a treaty with China guaranteeing protection to Chinese residing in this country, it is a disgraceful breach of faith to permit the San Francisco Chinamen to be persecuted and massacred. Suppose it is. What of it? Can China compel us to keep a treaty, and if not, can we be expected to keep it? The United States has made numerous treaties with our Indian tribes, and violated them whenever the Northwestern voter has desired to seize the land of the Indians. It is one of the fundamental principles of our Government that we are under no obligation to keep treaties made with Indians, since the latter are weak and powerless. We keep treaties made with nations like England and France who are able to resent bad faith and dishonesty on our part, but the Indians can be cheated with impunity. We can apply the same reasoning to the treaty which exists between the United States and China. We can violate it with impunity, since China cannot possibly invade our Coasts with a powerful fleet and batter down our towns. As for pretending that we must keep a treaty because it would be dishonorable to do otherwise, that is mere sentimental nonsense. To tell a Government that has recognized no law of honesty at home in its dealings with weak copper-colored people, that it must be honorable when dealing with weak yellow people, is a waste of breath.

Of course, it would be possible to put an end to lawless persecution of the Chinese provided it were possible to do so, but it so happens that it would be unpopular. Which great political party is foolish enough to risk losing the votes of the Pacific States by undertaking to do justice to the Chinese? What if it is morally right to do justice even to yellow heathen? Politicians do not make a practice of doing right because it is right. They are practical men, and their rule of conduct is to do what will secure votes. It

would not pay for any politician or any party to take up the cause of the Chinamen. Votes are not to be obtained in that way. The true way to please the Sand Lot voters is either to openly sympathize with their hatred of the Chinese, or to ignore the whole subject, and after the Chinese have been massacred, to mildly deprecate such irregular action on the part of the impulsive working men in San Francisco.

What, then, is the use of the sentimental talk concerning the poor Chinamen, and the duty of keeping our treaty with China, which we hear from visionary people who know nothing of politics? Dennis Kearney and his followers intend to drive out the Chinamen, and there is no more reason for protecting the Chinese against him than there has been for protecting the Indians against white men who wanted their lands. The question of the right or wrong of the matter is of no consequence, since the motive which governs in our public affairs is a desire to secure votes, not a sentimental desire to do right for the right's sake. The sooner the Chinese are exterminated, the sooner San Francisco will be at peace. If anyone calls this a brutal and shameful doctrine, it may be retorted that such a criticism comes rather late in the day. We have systematically treated the Indians with the same technical injustice with which the Chinese are now threatened, and so long as our people accept quietly the profits of such a policy, it behooves them to remain quiet concerning the persecution of the Chinese and the violation of our treaty obligations with China.

There is precisely one eminent American citizen who has openly shown his contempt for Kearney and his gang - heedless of the votes he might thereby lose. Gen. Grant snubbed Kearney in San Francisco by refusing to see that person when he called at Gen. Grant's hotel. Perhaps Gen. Grant would also have the courage to protect the Chinese, in case he were in a position to do so, but then he is not a professional politician, and disdains to bid for votes by courting demagogues. This is probably one of the reasons why his possible election to the Presidency is regarded by some people as a danger to our institutions. It would probably be a serious danger to Mr. Kearney and his kind, should they undertake to indulge in arson and murder.

"The Chinese Must Go," *New York Times*, February 26, 1880, reprinted in *The California Independent*, March 13, 1880

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Other materials appearing in the California Independent suggest its dissent from the prevailing view. The first piece below compares anti-Chinese racism in the United States with anti-Semitic prejudice in newly unified Germany (a); appended to Barton's article was the Independent's editorial question, "What has Kearney done with the money he collected for the erection of a gallows on the Sand-lot?" The second article (b) deals with a different angle of the exclusion controversy.

(a)

We have our crusade against the Chinese, and Germany has her crusade against the Jew. Treitschke^s and Marr, the Kearney and the Kalloch of the German intellectual sand-lot, are firing the Teutonic heart with a bitter hatred against the descendants of Abraham, that race whose line has its initial away back into the very dimness of the historic, almost coeval with the beginning of that of the Chino-Mongol, and along which, down through the vast ages, has come to us civilization, science, invention, free law and all that to-day make the world grand and historic.

These German agitators of race prejudice bring the charge that the Jews are filling the benches of the universities and the colleges, as well as elbowing the Christians in the fields of finance, speculation and the lighter arts. The result is, the formation of "anti-Semitic Leagues," not unlike our anti-Chinese Ward Clubs of San Francisco, in which the watchword or cry is: "The Jew must go!" Kearney and Kalloch say the Chinese are intemperate, industrious, economical, ingenious and apt in intellectual acquirement, and are therefore proving themselves more than the equal in the race of life with the Irish; hence the cry: "The Chinese must go!"

These virtues, upon which the true civilization and the true grandeur of nations can alone be built, our Sand-lot agitators declare to be a crime with the Chinese; and, standing upon the same plane of thought, the Treitschkes and Marrs of the German Sand-lot declare these very same virtues to be a crime with the Jew. Thus it is, with these new-school reformers, the possession of these virtues in the case of the Chinese and the Jews is a great crime; while, according to their own admission, their absence with others is even also a crime. Surely the logic of the Sand-lot, whether in San Francisco or in Berlin.