

SHANGHAI CERTIFICATES.

An Important Test Case About to Be Decided.

A case is pending in the United States Circuit Court the issue of which will materially affect Chinese immigration. The case referred to is that brought by the Chinese Consulate to test the authenticity and scope of the merchants' certificates issued to the number of about thirty by the Chinese Intendente at Shanghai. The case is now in Judge Hawley's hands and he will render his decision some day this week.

The basis of the contention in the case is as follows: Section six of the Exclusion Act prescribes that any Chinese merchant desiring to come to the United States must present to the customs authorities a certificate issued by the Chinese Government to the effect that he is a merchant. Collector Phelps refused to accept certificates of this nature issued by the Chinese Intendente at Shanghai, claiming that the Intendente was not a representative of the national Chinese Government, but merely a municipal officer. In the test case in the Circuit Court it was shown by Assistant District Attorney Witter that the office of Intendente was purely a local one, like that of an American Mayor, and that the official was in nowise a diplomatic representative of his government. The fact is, as has already been stated by Consul Bee, that the Chinese Government has persistently refused to issue the certificates required by section six, but the Chinese Consulate has put forth its best endeavors to convince the Circuit Court that the Shanghai certificates are sufficient under the Exclusion Act.

Judge Hawley's decision is awaited with interest by all the parties concerned in the case.