

BAYARD AND THE CHINESE.

The story told in another part of this paper of the Mosby-Bayard dispute will be found very interesting reading. It has been partially related before, and more than once, but never with such fullness or with such an array of "documentary evidence." In fact the whole story is told from public property in the way of well authenticated news and from the compilation of official papers in the matter, which the Senate asked for. These papers in themselves are rather dry and cumbersome, but out of them has been plucked the relation of the most dangerous and persistent attempt to nullify the Chinese restriction act that has yet been placed on record.

The ball was set rolling by F. A. Bee, the Chinese Consul at San Francisco, in January, 1865, when he wrote to John E. Mosby, the United States Consul at Hongkong, requesting him to grant certificates to the Chinese "merchants," in accordance with the circular of the Treasury, issued in the preceding December. This circular prescribed, among other rules, that exempt Chinese coming from foreign ports, should be granted by United States Consuls at those foreign ports certificates which should admit them to the United States without further question. Hongkong, it is well understood, is a British and not a Chinese port, and notwithstanding the fact that all the emigration from China is conducted through this port, the Chinese Government stations no consul here. This was the first time the United States Consul at Hongkong had been brought into contact with the Treasury circular, but he at once decided that he would pay no attention to it, both because his instructions could only come from the State Department and because the provision was contrary to law. He so wrote back to Consul Bee, and immediately thereafter he was removed and Consul Withers put in his place. Before the receipt of his dismissal, however, Mosby had written to the State Department detailing the reasons for his refusal to obey the Treasury circular, and that letter being sent by Bayard to the Treasury Department, Manning was so convinced of the logic and law of the reasons that he at once rescinded the disputed provision of the circular.

Notwithstanding this Mr. Bayard, urged on by that able diplomat, the Chinese Minister at Washington, wrote to Withers to carry out the prescriptions of the circular. A short time after Bayard informed the Treasury Department of what he had done, and was then sharply notified that the section was no longer in force. There was naturally a difficulty at the San Francisco Custom-house when the Withers certificates came to be handed in, and again Cheng Teao Ju, the wily Minister, employs Bayard to intercede with Manning for special instructions to the Collector of this port, advising him to deal gently with the Chinese indorsed by Bayard's friend, Withers. Sometimes, however, the cases were a little too flagrant, and there was more difficulty at the Custom-house here, more memoranda from the Chinese Minister to Bayard and more intercessions with Manning for special privileges. These were somewhat grudgingly given as time went on, and then Cheng played a trump card and requested Bayard to see to it that the rescinded provision was restored. This was too much even for Bayard to stomach, but while sadly informing his friend that this was impossible, he played boldly himself and wrote to the President, asking him to recommend the amendment of the existing restriction laws by embodying in it the pith of the Treasury circular. Cleveland did so, but the Committee on Foreign Relations, of which committee Harrison was a member, refused to report a bill, and there the matter for the moment ends.

It is not going beyond the limit of the records to say that Bayard's attitude throughout the whole matter was disingenuous, weak and mischievous. That it was disingenuous his own letters show. Having set the seal of his condemnation on Mosby's life and dismissed him on a trumped-up charge of insubordination, he afterward used Colonel Mosby's expression of insubordination as his own clear arguments for amending the law. Not only this, but the various papers show a tardiness, a discrepancy in date, a divergence between fact.

Had Bayard succeeded in carrying out his friend Cheng's scheme, his other friend, Withers, could have covered California with Chinese as thick as they could stand. It would have remained with him to have given his indorsement to 100,000 Canton coolies a year ago and send them to this country certified to as exempt, and armed with a ticket of admission against which there was no denial. He might have chartered a line of steamers to send over the leaders of his certificates, and could have had an inexhaustible stock of 400,000,000 heathen to draw from. It is said that a Chinaman values his entrance to this country at from \$50 to \$100, and the amateur artifice can amuse himself by figuring out how much better than the Comstock the Consul's office at Hongkong would be if the certificate scheme had not been nipped.

It is safe to say that no such dangerous blow to Californian civilization has ever been threatened and averted than this, and it is equally safe to say that this country boasts of no warmer friend to the Chinese than secretary of State Thomas F. Bayard.