

12. That under the law as it exists at present alien immigrants other than Chinese are subject to the writing test aforesaid, which, generally speaking, is in their own language. Chinese immigrants are exempt from the writing test, but are subject to the poll-tax and the limitation on travel already mentioned. If, however, the proposed legislation is approved by His Majesty, Chinese immigrants will be subjected to peculiar hardships, inasmuch as they will be amenable to the poll-tax, to the limitation of the number travelling by any one vessel, and to a reading test in a language foreign to them, and of which they cannot be expected to have any knowledge.

13. That the Bill recently reserved by Your Excellency is directed solely against persons of the Chinese race, and Your Excellency's Advisers expressly stated when the measure was before Parliament that its object was the complete exclusion of Chinese immigrants from New Zealand, and that its probable effect would be the prevention of any further accession to the Chinese population of this Dominion.

14. That your petitioners firmly believe that the effect of the Bill, if it passes into law, will be, as stated by Your Excellency's Advisers, to prevent all Chinese immigration into the Dominion, since practically all the Chinese likely to emigrate to this country must be manual labourers, and, as they have no facilities for acquiring a knowledge of the English language in China, they will necessarily be unable to pass the reading test for which the Bill provides.

15. That the said Bill makes no provision for the re-entry of Chinese residents who, though domiciled in New Zealand, are at present absent from the Dominion, and, though having their homes and property here, will be precluded by the rigorous reading test imposed by the Bill from returning. Moreover, your petitioners would respectfully point out that it is impossible to inform such persons of the provisions of the Bill in time to enable them to return before the same becomes law, if it should in due course receive the assent of His Majesty.

16. That the Bill provides for no exemption in favour of Chinese at present residing in New Zealand, but who may desire to visit China or any other part of the world.

17. That, if the said Bill passes into law, it will necessarily cause great hardship to those Chinese who are now visiting their native land, all of whom have made their homes in New Zealand.

18. That, if there were any influx of Chinese into this Dominion, your petitioners, though they would feel that they were being unjustly treated, nevertheless would not complain. The Chinese population of New Zealand, however, is steadily diminishing, and there is every reason to believe that it will continue to diminish, in proof of which your petitioners would quote the following figures from the official census returns:—

| Census Year. | Chinese in<br>New Zealand. |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| 1881         | 5,004                      |
| 1886         | 4,542                      |
| 1891         | 4,444                      |
| 1896         | 3,711                      |
| 1901         | 2,857                      |
| 1906         | 2,570                      |

Your petitioners are thus able to show incontestably that for the past twenty-six years there has been a steady diminution of Chinese in this Dominion. Hence, even from the standpoint of those opposed to Chinese immigration, the said Bill is uncalled-for and unnecessary, more especially as the measure adopted by the Premiers' Conference on the suggestion of the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1897 was clearly intended both by the Conference and the Parliament of New Zealand to mark the point beyond which legislation should not advance unless special circumstances made such a course necessary. Your petitioners humbly submit to Your Excellency that, in face of the official figures hereinbefore quoted, it cannot be seriously maintained that any such circumstances have arisen in this country.

19. That your petitioners submit further that the provisions of the Bill are opposed to the well-recognised principles of international comity, and that they amount to an unfriendly act towards the Empire of China, between the Government of which and His Majesty's Imperial Government happily the most cordial relations obtain. Your petitioners would respectfully point out that, if such legislation were attempted in China against the subjects of any foreign State, pressure would at once be brought to secure its withdrawal or modification, and your petitioners humbly submit that other Governments should hesitate to impose on subjects of the Chinese Empire disabilities to which they themselves would strongly object.

20. That your petitioners readily acknowledge and appreciate the many blessings afforded them by living under the British flag, and they particularly appreciate the even-handed justice invariably meted out to them in His Majesty's Courts of law. They are not unmindful either of the kindness and forbearance observed towards them by the great majority of His Majesty's subjects, from whom they are necessarily separated by difference of customs, language, institutions, and national feeling. Your petitioners feel strongly, since they find no difficulty in pursuing their respective avocations in this country, and that there is not the slightest objection to dealing with them in the ordinary course of business, that they are neither undesirable immigrants nor nearly such unwelcome residents as the provisions of the said Bill would indicate.

21. That, notwithstanding the far-reaching effects and the drastic provisions of "The Asiatic Restriction Act, 1896," there was not the slightest manifestation of popular dissatisfaction when Her late Majesty withheld her assent therefrom, and your petitioners have no doubt whatever that the public opinion of New Zealand will dictate loyal acquiescence in His Majesty's will if His Majesty should see fit to save your petitioners and their countrymen from the hardships and indignities proposed by the said Bill.