

critical article admits this contention in so far as it relates to the principles involved, but denies it as to questions of fact. It claims, accordingly, that the question of whether Chinese immigration would amount to a hostile invasion should be left to the determination of the Coast, as the locality familiar with the facts. That claim cannot possibly be allowed. It is like claiming for the plaintiff in a lawsuit, that while the interpretation of the law in the case should be left to a disinterested judge, the verdict should be left to the plaintiff himself, he being so well informed about the facts. What the Star contends for would never be conceded with reference to an armed invasion. The country would not and ought not to go to war with China because the people of the Coast demanded it on the ground that they knew that a Chinese army was being fitted out for purposes of invasion and that their location and interests made them peculiarly familiar with the facts. Before a nation can justly enter upon defensive war, the nation itself and not merely a hysterical locality must be convinced of the defensive necessity. Equally so, the nation must be convinced, not merely informed by an interested locality, that a current of foreign immigration is a menace to natural rights or national institutions before it is justified in closing its ports under the principle which we have laid down and the Star adopts. This nation is not so convinced with reference to the Chinese and no evidence has yet been presented which justifies such a conviction. So far, with all respect for the sincerity of opponents of Chinese immigration, we fail to find evidence in the case they present of anything but an unwarranted and unworthy race intolerance.

It has been noticed that in popular speech the name of this nation is used in the singular instead of the plural, as formerly; and the congressional committee on revision of the federal statutes has departed from

authoritative precedent by adopting the newer form. A recent editorial in the Chicago Tribune, in calling attention to the change, observes:

The plural form, which was universal once, has given place to the singular form, and grammatical revolutions no more go backward than do other revolutions.

But this revolution is not grammatical alone. Essentially it is not grammatical at all. The revolution in grammatical form is strictly in obedience to a revolution in political sentiment. It marks a reversal of the old idea that this nation is one of strictly limited powers, being only a federation of sovereign states which have invested it with authority to act for them in certain specified particulars. When that idea obtained, grammatical usage conformed to the political principle. We said of the United States that "they are a nation." But now, with the advance of world-power imperial aspirations, that idea is passing into oblivion, and grammatical usage takes cognizance of the fact. We no longer say of the United States that "they are a nation," but that "it is a nation."

It is interesting in this connection to recall a political prophecy made in 1893 by the great publicist, David Dudley Field. His prophecy is rapidly approaching fulfillment. It was made to Prof. Adam S. Hill, of Harvard college, in a letter in which Field discussed the use of the word "is" instead of "are," as applied to the United States. To Field "the United States is," was not only ungrammatical but dangerous to democracy. In his letter occurs the pregnant passage:

In our own history we see unmistakable proofs of a strong flood tide setting in towards federal authority. To go no further than the Chinese deportation act of the last session, enacted and upheld upon the plea of federal sovereignty, it needs no prophet to foretell that, if the foundation of that enactment be not dashed in pieces, the incoming century will see this nation either broken into fragments or converted into a consolidated republic—another name for despotism, which would be

but a prelude to anarchy, and that but another name for an emperor and military dominion.

We are not always in accord with the Chicago Chronicle on questions of democracy. But one of its recent pronouncements we most heartily indorse. It rebukes the Democratic leaders in congress for trying to make reciprocity a Democratic issue. What the Chronicle says on this question is so timely, so true, and so compact in statement that we quote it. Defining reciprocity, it says:

In the first place, it is an attempt in violation of the constitution to take the power of originating revenue bills from the house of representatives, and to place it in the hands of the president and the senate, the treaty-making power. In the second place, it is a scheme of the big protectees to remove their selfish interests from the omnibus tariff bills of the future and to intrench themselves in such a way in treaties negotiated by a few men who can be trusted to look after their welfare that the amount and the character of protection which they are to enjoy hereafter will depend more upon their own ideas and bargainings and less upon the uncertainties of action by the representatives of the people. In the third place, it is indubitable evidence that the whole rotten tariff system is breaking down of its own weight of lies and corruption. Democrats as such have no more reason to interest themselves in these measures than missionaries of the cross have to espouse the cause of a Chinese joss as against the claims of Buddha.

There is a whole battery of democratic principle and argument in that brief quotation. The Democrat in the lower house, if any such there be, who has within him the ability of a statesman and the spirit of true leadership, could make it the text for an epoch-making speech and the dynamic of a great public career. Reciprocity is indeed only the rotten fortification to which special privilege is retreating before the silent but resistless advances of free trade.

Says one of the publications of Dun's commercial agency,—

Prices are now at the highest point in many years, and, in fact, surpass