

21
279

OPENING STATEMENT

OF

B. S. BROOKS,

BEFORE THE

Joint Committee of the two Houses of Congress,

ON

CHINESE IMMIGRATION.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21st, 1876.

11
27

ARGUMENT.

MR. BROOKS.—*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee:* I do not appear here as the attorney of the six companies. I do not know them. I never spoke to one of them in my life. But I take an entirely different view of this subject from the gentlemen on the other side. I look at it from an entirely different standpoint, and I claim to represent the interest and the opinion of the people of the State of California, and the interest of the Government of the United States. At the time that this movement took place here, I was in Washington Territory, and I only knew of what was taking place here, from reports in the newspapers. I read the reports in the papers. I saw the names of the promoters of the movement, and those who assisted at it. To my mind, that sort of thing has no force of argument whatever. I know very well the views entertained by that class of people. They have held the same views since the dawn of civilization, and I suppose there will be the same class of people entertaining the same views, until the crack of doom. If such arguments had been listened to, and if such views had prevailed, all the elements of

progress, of wealth, and of comfort to the people of the present century, which is brighter than all that has preceded it in its great progress—its telegraph, its railroads, its steam engines, its printing machine, the cotton gin—would never have existed at all. They have opposed them from the beginning. There is not an improvement in manufacturing but will come at once in competition with labor. There is not a steam engine, but does the work of hundreds of men. You might as well transport your goods upon the backs of men. You might as well do all your plowing with the old Egyptian plow, and harvest with the cradle and the scythe. It is proposed in the papers to call a public meeting, and have a procession of men with torches, and banners and transparencies, and music; that is an argument intended to be offered to the Committee. Such arguments amount to nothing, and I apprehend will have no influence with the Committee. A lighted hall, a band of music, and eloquent speeches announced to be addressed to the passions and prejudices of the ignorant and narrow-minded, will at any time assemble a crowd imposing in numbers, and vociferous in applause.

I do not sympathize at all with the view of the subject which has been presented on the other side. The very people who raise all this clamor, who fill the halls, pass resolutions and elect delegates, would never have been in this country, if their views had prevailed. It seems strange to me that one class of emigrants should be per-