

Way Lee

100 years on



Roger L. Burritt, Dylan Walker and Amanda J. Carter
with a foreword by Patricia Monaghan-Jamieson

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Dylan Walker
and
Amanda J. Carter**

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Published by
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Foreword

Patricia Monaghan-Jamieson



I am the great grand-daughter of Way Lee, I was born 37 years after my great grand-father died in 1909. Although I never knew him, I feel very connected to him, proud of who he was and what he achieved. His undaunted grit and determination, tenacity and integrity, marked him as no ordinary man, British or Chinese.

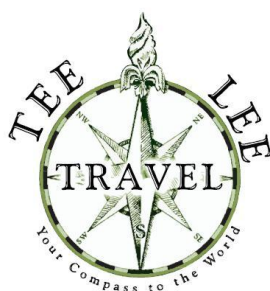
As I write this, the Australian Government is formalising trade links with China in a way which Way Lee envisaged 100 years ago, during the first few years of the twentieth century. I have no doubt that he would be proud of this even though it took another century to accomplish.

Way Lee was a man very much before his time, a forward-thinker who took on the responsibility of saying what he thought was right in very difficult circumstances. He was a man who by birth alone would have been feared by the majority of the British and European settlers in the Australian colonies. Nothing would have come easy for this man: starting his own businesses, marrying the daughter of Scottish-Irish parents, even moving between the colonies was fraught with difficulties. Way Lee's courage and strength of character has been passed on to his children, grandchildren and the generations which have followed.

This monograph provides a short history of Way Lee, his arrival and life in Australia, his struggles and achievements, and makes visible for this first time, a hidden history of the Chinese South Australian. I have been trying to bring to light the life of Way Lee for years, researching and finding a never-ending supply of information in local, interstate and overseas publications (English and Chinese). I am very pleased that the University of South Australia has recognised the contribution that Way Lee has made to Adelaide, the development of Chinese-Australian relations, and the protection of immigrants in nineteenth century Australia.

In closing, I can only say how much I admire Way Lee's preparedness to stand-up for what he believed in, to state this publicly, to live by his convictions and remain firm in the face of very strong criticism. I hope in reading this monograph, that the same admiration is felt for a man who battled for the right to move freely between the colonies and against the anti-Chinese sentiment which was rife. Despite this, Way Lee achieved a place in Australian society as a well-respected businessman and philanthropist.

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Acknowledgement of traditional ownership

We would like to acknowledge that the land on which the Way Lee building sits is the traditional lands of the Kaurna people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country. We also acknowledge the Kaurna people as the custodians of the greater Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still important to the living Kaurna people today.

Message from Professor Peter Høj

Vice Chancellor and President, University of South Australia



I welcome you to the University of South Australia on the 100th anniversary of the passing of Way Lee. Way Lee was a prominent Chinese-Australian who devoted himself to the education and welfare of other Chinese-Australians in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. UniSA is proud to host the Way Lee Building in the Division of Business, in recognition of Way Lee's enduring legacy to his community.

Way Lee was a man ahead of his time: a widely respected businessman, he established a successful importing firm in Adelaide in 1878, and subsequently opened branches in New South Wales and the Northern Territory. He was deeply committed to the well-being of Australia's Chinese inhabitants and advocated for the rights of Chinese families to migrate to Australia and cultivate unused land. He also tried to remove the restrictions placed on Chinese people travelling between Australian colonies, and fought to abolish anti-Chinese legislation.

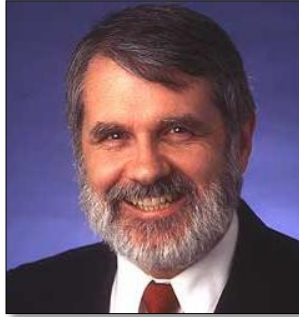
Way Lee became the accepted leader of Adelaide's Chinese community and hosted many social events for the business and wider community, in addition to raising money for victims of flood and famine in China. It is of great relevance that our governments and businesses are now addressing the social and environmental issues that Way Lee promoted so strongly during his life time and that we as a community are striving to act more responsibly as global citizens.

The University of South Australia strives to create educational opportunities for all members of our diverse community, and is particularly proud of our vibrant, international student population. More than one third of our students are international citizens from over 70 different countries, most of whom come from China, India, Malaysia and Vietnam. The growth in the number of Chinese students enrolled at UniSA is something I am sure Way Lee could not have anticipated during his lifetime, but something which would have been a great source of happiness for him today.

UniSA endeavours to build social cohesion by maintaining an open, international and ethical outlook in all that it does. Central to this commitment is an underlying belief that the major issues of our time can only be addressed in collaboration with our local and international communities. With this in mind, I am very pleased to welcome representatives from our Chinese community to today's ceremony, and look forward to our future collaborations in teaching and research.

Message from Professor Gerry Griffin

Pro-Vice Chancellor, Division of Business, University of South Australia



Today we have come together to celebrate the life of a person who was a leader in business not only in Adelaide, but in South Australia and other States and Territories in Australia. One hundred years on from his passing, it is appropriate to acknowledge the significant contribution Way Lee made in his lifetime, and to recognise his achievements.

As a businessman Way Lee was proactive about developing commercial opportunities and trade between China and Australia. In 1902 and 1903 he engaged in discussions and correspondence with the Prime Minister of Australia, Sir Edmund Barton, the Minister of Defence, Sir John Forrest and the Comptroller of the Department of Trade and Customs in pressing for development of trade. Way Lee could see the opportunities for the export of staple products such as flour, wool, butter and cheese, frozen meat, cattle and sheep, fruit, timber, silver and copper and lead.

Unfortunately his entreaties were not heeded by the government of the day; somewhat in contrast with the more enlightened approach to trade evident in Australia today. Way Lee was an entrepreneur with a clear vision of what the future could hold for trade relations between Australia and China, and in this, he was a man ahead of his time.

Way Lee was more than just an astute businessman. He was a man of conscience, involved with a variety of charity works including the Chinese School at the Adelaide City Mission and fundraising for relief from natural disasters in China. Way Lee was also concerned to improve the conditions of other Chinese immigrants.

Way Lee truly represents the spirit of multicultural Adelaide, embracing both the East and West, in pursuing both his business and personal interests. The development of the City of Adelaide and the University of South Australia has depended on such engagement and vision from leaders in our society. The Division of Business is committed to continuing the good works of Way Lee by building even closer ties with Chinese communities, in South Australia and around the globe.

Message from Professor Janek Ratnatunga

Head of School, School of Commerce, Division of Business,
University of South Australia



Way Lee was born in the Canton region of China, and became a prominent citizen of South Australia during the latter half of the 19th and into the early 20th centuries. He had extensive commercial interests throughout Australia and China. He was an immigration activist, seeking to remove some of the restrictions of movement that all Chinese immigrants experienced during this time including the payment of large poll-taxes when crossing the borders between the colonies.

On 21st August 2009, the School of Commerce reception in the Kerry Packer Civic Gallery, Hawke Building, City West Campus, marks the centenary of Way Lee's passing and launches a monograph commemorating his life and contribution to Adelaide, the development of business in South Australia, and the international spirit he promoted throughout his life.

By attending the commemoration and presentation of the monograph *Way Lee — 100 years on* we acknowledge the debt we owe to Way Lee as a person who promoted commerce and trade in early Australia, encouraged an international outlook, held an opinion on and did not shy away from controversial issues such as the improvement of conditions for Chinese people in Australia. His actions paved the way for the recognition of the value of those from the many other lands that subsequently followed; and therefore, to him many of us born overseas owe a personal debt of gratitude.

Our gathering represents a small offering of time towards our desire to continue to encourage dialogue about the future of commerce, trade and industry as well as recognition that it is people and their welfare that drive us to achieve.

Message from Professor Roger Burritt

Professor in Accounting and Director of the Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability, University of South Australia



Leading the development and writing of a monograph to commemorate the passing of Way Lee has been a humbling experience. As Director of the Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability in the School of Commerce it has been a privilege to take time out to work with my co-authors, Dylan Walker and Amanda Carter on the Way Lee project.

Review of the actions and convictions of a person who was particularly well known and respected in the Adelaide community at a time when life was not easy reveals a high benchmark for future leaders from the Chinese communities to follow. Success of the multicultural setting in which we live today rests in part on the tireless efforts of people such as Way Lee who was an active businessman and philanthropist.

Education of students from Chinese communities about accounting, governance and sustainability issues looms large on the agenda of higher education in Commerce today, and all of these were directly or indirectly of concern to Way Lee.

I look forward to building future collaborations and partnerships with leaders of the Chinese business communities as we commemorate Way Lee — 100 years on.

Preface

The monograph *Way Lee – 100 years on* provides a token of acknowledgement for the life, times and contribution of Yett Soo War Way Lee. It provides a focal point for a gathering of people to commemorate the passing of this respected businessman 100 years after his death. People attending the commemorative event in the Hawke Building at the University of South Australia include family and relatives, academics and professional staff and their partners from the University, alumni with a Chinese connection, sponsors from the Chinese business communities and the South Australian Government, and others wishing to recognise Way Lee's achievements.

Three co-authors are also present and the story of their coming together also merits a short note. Professor Roger Burritt was appointed to the School of Commerce in March 2006. A notice located by the lift entrance in the main foyer of the Way Lee building where Roger worked displayed a few comments about Way Lee the businessman. Roger's curiosity led him to search the web for further information and he discovered in 2008 that on 21 August 2009 an anniversary would be forthcoming. Roger approached the Head of School, at that time Professor Atique Islam, the Pro Vice Chancellor, Professor Gerry Griffin, and Professor Alfred Huang to try and establish if there would be support for the development of a monograph and a commemorative event. Support was unanimous. Later Roger by chance met, Dylan Walker, a friend and PhD scholar at Flinders University. In a convivial setting in a cafe in Rundle Street, unbeknownst to them at the time that Way Lee's former residence was only a few metres away, they discussed the monograph further. A co-authorship was in the making. Finally, Amanda Carter, a PhD scholar and Research Assistant at the Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability, with a penchant for historical enquiry enthusiastically joined the team.

The financial generosity of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce South Australia Inc., the South Australian Government's Department of Trade and Economic Development, Tee Lee Travel, and PNG Consultancy & Associates, as well as support from the University of South Australia made the commemorative event and monograph publication possible.

Way Lee – 100 years on tells the story of a man who came to Australia in the 1870s at a time when life for Chinese people was not easy. He became a successful trader and businessman with an eye on the potential for expansion of trade between Australia and China. Way Lee was a family man who had interests all over Australia but a main base in Adelaide. He was a person who challenged systematic biases in the political system, for example the poll tax levied on people travelling between States, and tried to change them. Way Lee was also an active proponent of social reform, particularly in relation to Chinese people in Australia, and a generous benefactor with his time and money for such organisations as the Sick Poor Fund and the Transvaal Patriotic Fund in Adelaide.

We would like to thank Patricia Monaghan-Jamieson who has kindly given her time and opened her archival materials to the co-authors. Her help is gratefully acknowledged. Also we would like to thank Janet Chin-Ng, President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce SA and Director of Tee Lee Travel for her enthusiastic support for the project and the way she engaged others and galvanised support for

the commemorative event. A note of thanks also for support gained through Wayne Parham from the SA Government Department of Trade and Economic Development. Professor Lee Parker kindly introduced Janet to the project. Thanks should also be expressed to Kuan Tan, Director/Proprietor of the Holiday Inn, who co-ordinated the Chinese Chamber of Commerce Working Group. Staff at the Migration Museum provided considerable assistance, initiated by Dr Christine Garnaut, in relation to the availability of photographs for inclusion in the monograph. Thanks also are due for the early involvement of Professor Alfred Huang from the International Graduate School of Business and previous Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Wayne Cao, Business Manager of Age Media, Norman Sheun, Managing Director of Norman Sheun Architects and past president of the Hong Kong Australia Business Association – South Australia, and Edmund Ng, Director of Market Minx. Finally, we thank professional staff at the University of South Australia, in particular Doreen Michalski, for helping to organise the event, Jade O'Donahue, Nathan Brookes and Jo Tingey.

Roger Burritt, Dylan Walker and Amanda Carter

* * *

Note about the authors:

Roger Burritt is Professor in Accounting and Director of the Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability in the School of Commerce at the University of South Australia. Roger is widely published and his long term research interests in corporate sustainability look towards improving understanding of business and the social and environmental contexts in which it operates, something with which Way Lee was closely associated.

Dylan Walker is a published historian specialising in South Australian cinema history. He has an interest in South Australian social history and has also written on subjects such as the Irish potato famine and Greek cinema. He is currently studying towards a doctorate in film studies at Flinders University, South Australia.

Amanda Carter is a research assistant with the Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability in the School of Commerce at the University of South Australia and a PhD scholar under Roger Burritt's supervision. Amanda has a long-standing interest in history, having started as a history major at Flinders University before turning to accounting. Her accounting related interests include corporate responsibility, sustainability, and understanding the interaction of business and social activities. Her PhD is a study of accountants living and working in regional and remote areas of South Australia.

Y.S.W. Way Lee

Yett Soo War, better known in Australia as Way Lee, was born in Tungkun, Canton, China in 1852 to Yett She Clum and Cau She Ho King¹. He came to Australia from Jingshan local government area, Dongguan county, Guangdong province, near the border region with Zengcheng county². Yett Soo War is the English pronunciation of Ye Xiu Hua the Cantonese name³. Way Lee & Co.⁴ is the business name of an importing firm reportedly established in Adelaide by Yett Soo War around 1878 and which eventually had branches in New South Wales, the Northern Territory, and Western Australia. The custom was for Chinese people to be known by their business name when outside China⁵, hence Yett Soo War was known as Way Lee.



Yett Soo War Way Lee, ca 1907

From the cover of Y.S.W. Way Lee, The Chinese question: from a Chinaman's point of view (1907) by Y.S.W. Way Lee, published by J.L. Bonython, Adelaide

Little is known about Way Lee's time in China before his emigration to Australia around 1874, only that he was married and had a son, Yett King Sum⁶.

Way Lee, then aged around 21 years, arrived in Sydney and resided with his uncle, Way Kee, a prominent merchant. Way Lee moved to Brisbane shortly after arriving in Australia to attend school and remained there for two years. By his own account⁷, Way Lee moved to Adelaide in 1880. There he continued his English language lessons with the Adelaide City Mission, with which he had a long association, and started his own business, Way Lee & Co., operating from Hindley Street.

¹ *The Advertiser*, 23 August 1909, p. 6.

² Hoy, K.W and Monaghan-Jamieson, P (2006) 'Chinese feasts and festivals in colonial Australia', *Journal of Chinese Australia*, Issue 2, [accessed on-line 15 June 2009]
<http://www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au/jca/issue02/03VHandMJ.html>

³ Web-posting by 'Trish' great granddaughter of Yett Soo War 2 September 2001 viewed 30 May 2009 at
<http://www.ziplink.net/~rey/ch/queries/messages/3462.html>.

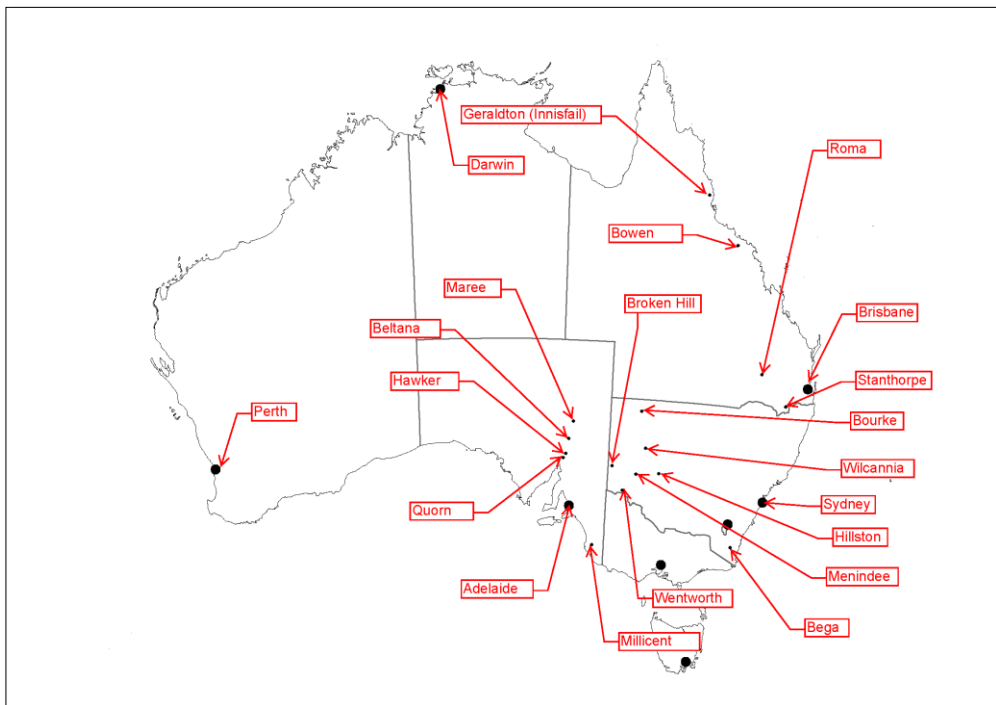
⁴ This company is also known as Way, Lee and Co. and Way, Lee & Co.

⁵ Fitzgerald, J. 2007, *Big white lie: Chinese Australians in white Australia*, UNSW Press: Sydney, p.68.

⁶ Gibbs, R. M. 1990 'Way Lee, Yet Soo War (1853? - 1909)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 12, Melbourne University Press, p. 420.

⁷ Ritchie, E.J. 1890, *An Australian ramble, or summer in Australia*, London: T. Fisher Unwin.

Way Lee & Co. is described in business directories as an importing business, and in its early years specialised in various China wares and tea before moving on to importing fireworks⁸. Way Lee & Co. started in Currie Street before establishing a long held association with Hindley Street's west end and Rundle Street's east end. Way Lee created an extensive network of business branches and interests around Australia. In South Australia this included branches in Quorn, Hawker, Beltana and Marree (Hergott Springs) through the southern Flinders Ranges, following the construction of the rail lines and mining centres. In New South Wales, branches are known to have existed in Broken Hill, Wentworth, Menindee, and Wilcannia, focussing along the steamer route of the Darling River⁹. He had interests in Western Australia especially Perth. In Queensland, business partners were located in Bowen and Geraldton (now known as Innisfail)¹⁰, and there was a connection to the various goldfields in the State. Finally, there were interests in the Northern Territory, although the nature of these interests is unknown¹¹. Way Lee remained a senior partner in his uncle's business which had its main office in Sydney and branches throughout Queensland¹².



Way Lee's known business interests

⁸ Sands & McDougall directories were standard directories for use during the nineteenth century around Australia.

⁹ Rolls, E. 1996, *Citizens: flowers and the wide sea*, University of Queensland Press: St Lucia, p. 247.

¹⁰ Fiji and Queensland Banana Co. was a partnership amongst Way Lee and 10 others with the headquarters located in Adelaide and operations in Geraldton and Bowen (Queensland), *The Advertiser*, 2 June 1910, p. 2.

¹¹ *The Advertiser*, 9 September 1887, p. 5; *The Advertiser*, 23 August 1909, p. 6; *The Observer*, 28 August 1909, p. 40; *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 4 February 1888, p. 2. Map is based on GEOCAT: 61756, Geoscience Australia, http://www.ga.gov.au/image_cache/GA5566.pdf.

¹² Letter to the Honorable Minister Home Secretary dated 1899 from Way Lee.

Way Lee emigrated to a country which had widely-held antipathy towards Chinese immigrants. Much of the ill-feeling stemmed from events in the Victorian goldfields during the 1850s. As a result many colonies had legislated against Chinese immigration. This severely restricted not just movement between colonies but also the ability of immigrants to hold property.

In 1882 Way Lee was naturalised as a citizen of South Australia and he quickly became a significant person and over time became known as leader of the Chinese community in Adelaide. In 1884 the rotunda in Elder Park was opened with a great picnic with Way Lee & Co. contributing Chinese lanterns for the event¹³. In the same year Chinese residents in Adelaide held Chinese New Year celebrations and two years later Way Lee hosted a formal celebration of Chinese New Year and invited members of parliament and other prominent residents. By all accounts the event was highly successful. By 1888, the celebrations were moved to the Adelaide Town Hall to accommodate the expanding numbers¹⁴. The Jubilee Exhibition of 1887 saw Chinese commissioners, General Wong Yung Ho and U Taing, arrive in Adelaide. After their stay, Way Lee was charged with conveying a memorial to the Chinese government on behalf of the Chinese in Australia when he returned that year. It is during this journey that he was appointed a Mandarin (of the fourth level)¹⁵.

Way Lee's return to China, planned for 1888, sparked outcry amongst some of Australia's newspapers. One of the primary reasons for this journey was to recruit up to 50 Chinese agricultural labourers and their families to work at the Daly River Plantation Co. in the Northern Territory¹⁶. South Australia's *The Advertiser*, was one of the most vocal opponents printing an editorial scathing of Way Lee's plans. The editorial's main objection, apart from the arrival of additional Chinese immigrants, was the proposal to appoint Chinese Justices of the Peace and the possibility of exempting the Chinese labourers from taxes. However, it appears this was a misunderstanding. Way Lee explained in subsequent communications, that his concern was with unfair taxes such as poll taxes and residential taxes applied to Chinese residents only, and not generally applicable income taxes¹⁷. The editorial was reprinted in entirety or edited form in newspapers around Australia¹⁸. Ultimately the government of the day prohibited the recruitment and importation of Chinese agricultural labour under this plan.

The question of Chinese immigration was a key issue of the times in Australia. So critical and contentious was this that public meetings were held throughout the country. In Adelaide Way Lee addressed just such a meeting. Even though many Chinese traders were accepted into wider society there was hostility towards their

¹³ Adelaide Parklands and Squares [accessed online 1 July 2009]
http://www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/adccwr/publications/reports_plans/apl_3.1.25_pk_26_tarndanya_womma_report_pt1.pdf

¹⁴ Rolls, E. 1996, *Citizens: flowers and the wide sea*, University of Queensland Press: St Lucia, p. 247.

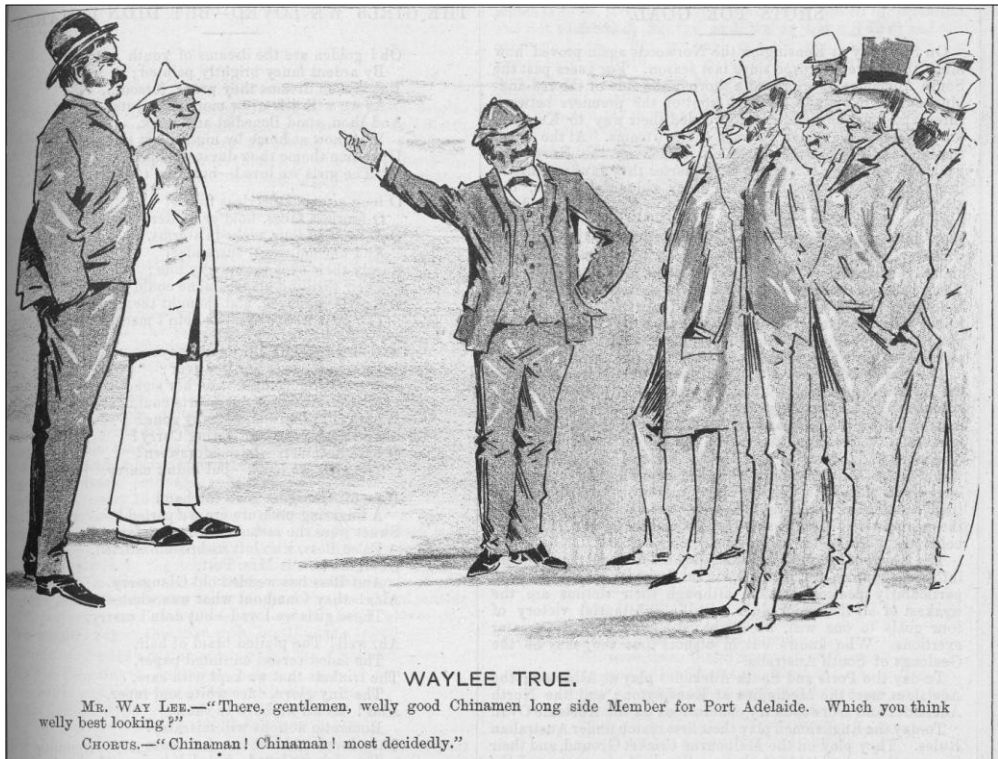
¹⁵ Ritchie, E.J. 1890, *An Australian ramble, or summer in Australia*, London: T. Fisher Unwin, p. 178. A mandarin was a bureaucratic appointment, and the fourth level was equivalent to a British earldom. Whilst mandarins were generally appointed as a result of a rigorous examination process, it appears that Way Lee's appointment was honorary, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandarin_\(bureaucrat\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandarin_(bureaucrat)).

¹⁶ The Daly River Plantation Co. had leased 100,000 acres from the South Australian government (which had jurisdiction over the Northern Territory) for the purpose of growing sugar. However, the company had difficulty in securing labour and approached Way Lee to act as an agent to recruit Chinese labourers. *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 3 December 1887, p. 3; 21 August 1888, p. 2; *The Argus*, 31 January 1888, p. 8

¹⁷ *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 4 February 1888, p. 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid*; *The Brisbane Courier*, 2 February 1888, p. 4.

community¹⁹. Anti-Chinese leagues were formed by trade unions and gold miners. In March 1888, the Fifth Intercolonial Trade Union Congress in Brisbane resolved to take coordinated action. Three months later, the Intercolonial Conference on the 'Chinese question' was held in Sydney²⁰. This resulted in laws being passed in New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland, uniform in their intention to restrict Chinese entry to the colonies. There were few exceptions, such as Chinese who had been naturalised and accredited representatives of foreign governments. After Federation, one of the first acts passed by the Commonwealth Government was the *Immigration Restriction Act* 1901.



Waylee True

The Lantern, 16 June 1888, p. 19

Despite being well respected, naturalised Chinese citizens were not fully accepted within Australia. In 1888, *The Lantern*, a satirical newspaper in South Australia, carried an article on Way Lee and his potential political aspirations. In it was outlined Way Lee's alleged intention of running for the Legislative Council. *The Lantern* was adamant Way Lee may be given 'lee way' but a Chinese citizen in parliament was unacceptable – 'we do not want South Australia to be a paradise for

¹⁹ Harvest of Endurance Scroll 'General shopkeepers and traders' viewed 30 May 2009 at http://www.nma.gov.au/collections/collection_interactives/harvest_of_endurance_html_version/

²⁰ Way Lee attended the conference as the representative of South Australian Chinese residents, *The Argus*, 11 June 1888, p. 8.

celestials'²¹. It was suggested that the Moon would be more appropriate for the Chinese to colonise, anywhere but Australia. This was not a one-sided debate. In contrast to *The Lantern*, Ritchie makes the case strong case for a more tolerant approach to human rights in Australia:

Why, asks the paper which has taken, and rightly taken, up his case, should Mr. Way Lee, who has established as strong a claim upon the goodwill of his fellows, and the protection of the State as any of his trade competitors, be placed at a serious disadvantage in carrying on his business, because he happens to have been born in the Flowery Land? Why should he be held up to the ridicule and scorn of his fellow colonists because he hails from China? The time will come when Australia will be heartily ashamed of conduct which savours more of the narrow and intolerant spirit of the dark ages than of the enlightenment and liberality of modern times²².

Way Lee challenges the poll tax

During 1888 Way Lee approached the New South Wales government about waiving its poll tax on people entering the colony. It was his intention to travel to Sydney in January to visit his uncle, Way Kee²³. He made numerous representations to Sir Henry Parkes, then Premier of the colony. He was informed he would be required to pay £100 each time he crossed the border into New South Wales²⁴. To give some idea of the size of this poll tax £1 a week was at the upper end of wages paid to agricultural workers in Queensland at this time.²⁵ Way Lee appealed to the South Australian government to no avail, being reluctant to interfere in matters outside their jurisdiction. However, he did receive a letter from the South Australian Premier recognising his citizenship of Adelaide and guaranteeing his landing on his return from a trip he was planning to China²⁶.

Poll taxes²⁷ were common throughout the colonies, levied under various immigration acts. In New South Wales this was the *Chinese Immigration Act*. Way Lee had been naturalised in 1882, but this meant little when trying to cross colonial borders. The issue of Way Lee's citizenship was raised in the South Australian Legislative Assembly for clarification about whether he was a naturalised British subject²⁸. Under the *Aliens Act 1864*, non-naturalised residents were prohibited from holding public office or private property, amongst other things. However, naturalisation only afforded the citizens the same rights as those of a British subject within the confines of the province and did not extend beyond its jurisdiction into other colonies. Way Lee, in effect, was a naturalised citizen of South Australia and not Great Britain.

²¹ *The Lantern*, 10 May 1888, p. 21.

²² Ritchie, E.J. 1890, *An Australian ramble, or summer in Australia*, London: T. Fisher Unwin, pp. 178-179.

²³ *The West Australian*, 18 February 1889, p. 4.

²⁴ *The Brisbane Courier*, 2 October 1888, p. 5.

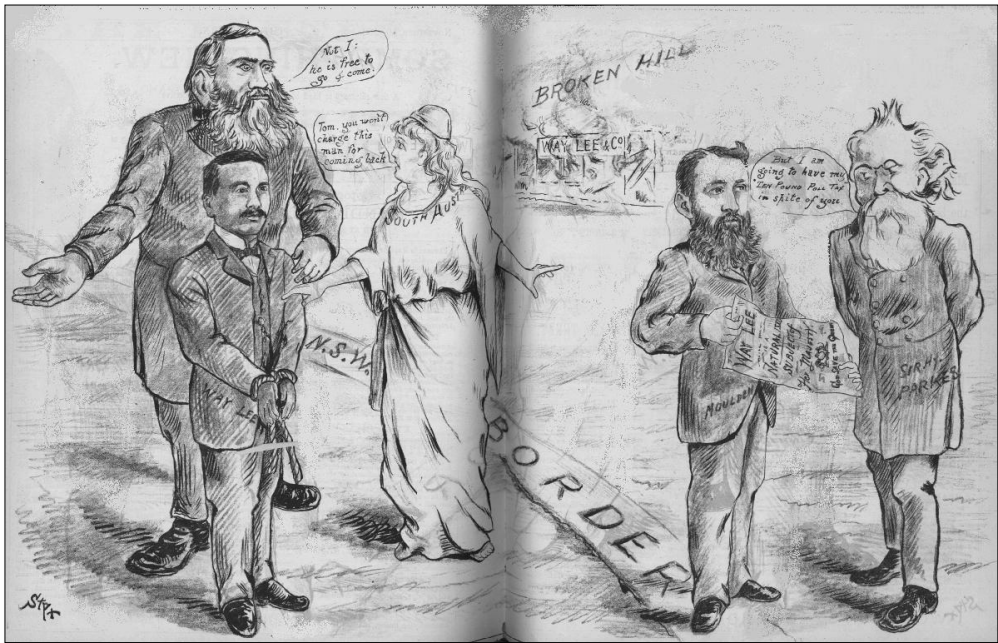
²⁵ Jupp, J. 2001, *The Australian People*, Cambridge University Press, U.K.

²⁶ *The Brisbane Courier*, 12 May 1888, p. 5.

²⁷ In addition to poll taxes, residential taxes were proposed in most colonies. These taxes were annual levies against Chinese residents in amounts greater than £10, Victoria proposed a residential tax of £25 per annum in 1901 (*The Advertiser*, 11 November 1901, p. 5).

²⁸ *Hansard*, South Australian Legislative Assembly, October 11, 1888.

In November of 1888, a massive fire swept through the commercial district of Broken Hill destroying 80 businesses and leaving a large tract of the town razed save for a few chimneys²⁹. Way Lee now needed, as a matter of urgency, to visit Broken Hill to assess the damage but was denied entry unless the poll tax was paid. Way Lee was determined to see Parkes, who was visiting Melbourne at the time of the fire³⁰. Armed with a letter of introduction from the South Australian Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, and representations from members of several other colonial parliaments, a meeting occurred during which it was informally suggested that Way Lee travel on the same train as Parkes from Melbourne to Sydney, although in different carriages³¹. Matters came to a head at the Albury station, where Way Lee was confronted by customs officers. Not only denied entry, he was fined £50 for trying to enter the colony illegally. Knowing Parkes was in the refreshment room of the Albury station, Way Lee made a direct appeal. Parkes took Way Lee under his protection allowing him to enter the colony³². Ultimately the issue of Way Lee's entry into New South Wales became a parliamentary matter. Parkes was asked to explain his actions to the New South Wales Assembly. Parkes noted that he had violated the poll tax law but felt it justifiable under the circumstances. The Assembly agreed³³.



Way Lee, naturalisation and the poll tax

The Lantern, 10 November 1888, pp. 12-13

Way Lee was a strong advocate against restrictions on Chinese movement through the colonies. In an interview with the *South Australian Register*³⁴, he noted his

²⁹ *The Brisbane Courier*, 7 November 1888, p. 5.

³⁰ *The West Australian*, 18 February 1889, p. 4.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *The West Australian*, 11 January 1889, p. 3.

³⁴ Reprinted in *The West Australian*, 18 February 1889, p. 4.

displeasure at the way he and his countrymen were being treated by the various colonial governments, and expressed the view that while they were always treated well by the Australian people the same could not be said for the law.

The experiences of Way Lee and others resulted in representations to the Chinese government by Quong Tart of Sydney. New South Wales especially hampered the travel of Chinese into the colony. Merchants in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide, many of whom had business interests in Sydney, were all but prevented from visiting Sydney personally³⁵. In the case of Way Lee this was especially troublesome given he had lived in Sydney, with his uncle Way Kee, for some years, and his Adelaide businesses were described as beginning as an 'offshoot of a bigger concern in New South Wales'³⁶. During 1889 Way Lee sent messages of protest to the Premiers of Victoria and New South Wales, regarding the taxing of Chinese moving between the colonies³⁷. In 1891 a petition was presented to the South Australian parliament³⁸ to remove restrictions on Chinese immigration into the colony and thus allowing free movement between South Australia and Victoria.

Over the 15 years following the poll tax event Way Lee became an outspoken advocate against Chinese immigration restrictions. The early 20th century newspapers in Adelaide and Perth published articles which were written by Way Lee in which immigration issues featured prominently. In 1901, an article titled *Alien immigration* is a response to the new Federal parliament debate regarding Chinese immigration:

The position members of the Federal Parliament seem to have taken is this — Treat those aliens who have become good subjects in the different States as human beings, but take care that in future only white Europeans shall be allowed to come and live, and work, in any part of this great island³⁹.

Way Lee and trade

Chinese traders were visiting the north coast of Australia at least from the 1750s. After the British settlement of Australia in 1788 a few Chinese men arrived as indentured labourers, convicts and free settlers⁴⁰. However, the number of Chinese immigrants to Australia did not really become significant until the Victorian (1850s) and New South Wales (1860s) gold rushes. From the first Victorian gold rushes onwards the number of Chinese people in Australia quickly reached about 50,000. This number was maintained until the formation of the federation of Australia in 1901.

Way Lee found himself in the colonial Australian setting of the latter part of the nineteenth century whereby there was an increasing number of Chinese people coming to Australia for business and gold mining opportunities⁴¹. He had a family background linked to trade, especially with China, the British Straits settlements and

³⁵ *The West Australian*, 18 February 1889, p. 4.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 4 May 1889, p. 2.

³⁸ Parliamentary Paper No. 128/1891.

³⁹ 'Alien immigration', *The Advertiser*, 31 October 1901, p. 9.

⁴⁰ Darnell, M., *Indentured Chinese Labourers and Employers Identified*, New South Wales, 1828-1856, Asian Studies Program, Chinese Australia, La Trobe University, viewed 30 May 2009 at <http://www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au/indentured.htm>.

⁴¹ Comments about Way Kee are taken from *Australian Dictionary of Biography* - Online Edition viewed 30 May 2009 at <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A120463b.htm?hilit=way%3Blee>

Hong Kong⁴² and this set the scene for his own life and activities. In Sydney, where he first landed, Way Lee went to (English) school⁴³ and worked briefly for his uncle, Way Kee, before setting up his own business.

Way Lee's uncle, Way Kee, was typical of wealthy Chinese merchants and owned and ran a regional trading network through his business in George Street, Sydney. Way Kee's trade was to import Chinese goods for sale in Australia, including through country stores at Bourke, Bega and Hillston and at Stanthorpe, Queensland. Way Kee was also a philanthropist who accepted the responsibilities of being a wealthy Chinese merchant for example by, between 1857 to 1889, serving as treasurer of the Koon Yee Tong, an association that returned the bodies of deceased Chinese to their homes in China; by accepting responsibility for the savings of poorer Chinese gardeners and hawkers and bailing them out of jail if they were in trouble; by sponsoring Chinese migrants, housing new arrivals, and by channelling job-seekers to the market gardens or country towns.

As a businessman with an ongoing concern about trade and commercial opportunities Way Lee engaged with the issue of trade between China and Australia. A proactive approach to the matter was raised through a conversation with the Prime Minister, Sir Edmund Barton, and a series of letters with the Minister of Defence, Sir John Forrest, the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs (the Minister being Sir Edmund Barton), and the Comptroller of the Department of Trade and Customs, over an eighteen month period between 30 April 1902 and 8 October 1903. The letters are all held by the National Archives of Australia.

The first letter about improving trade with China was addressed to the Minister of Defence, Sir John Forrest, and was raised with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence in conversation in Melbourne and by letter a year later on 22 August 1903. The comments are very pertinent to the current business environment where trade has been opened up between Australia and China. In particular a letter to the Minister of Defence dated 30 April 1902 draws attention to the view of Way Lee that increased trade with China presents a golden opportunity for Australia. The products Way Lee mentions for export have changed little over the century, minerals exports being included albeit without mention of coal and iron ore⁴⁴:

The following is a list of the leading products here, for which an almost unlimited demand exists in China, but which does not, however, by any means exhaust the possibilities of Australian production.

Flour: The Southern districts of China, being as densely [sic] populated, have little available land for wheat fields, as most of the suitable land is used for gardening purposes and rice fields; and, in consequence of this, an enormous amount of flour is imported; a considerable portion of which comes from America and Canada.

Wool: The Chinese are large buyers of calico and cotton goods, but there is a growing tendency to substitute woollen [sic] materials for cotton. As you are aware, large schemes are on foot to at once erect factories to manufacture

⁴² Fitzgerald, J. 2007, *Big white lie: Chinese Australians in white Australia*, UNSW Press: Sydney, p.68.

⁴³ He later went to Brisbane and continued his education, Gibbs, R. M. 1990 'Way Lee, Yet Soo War (1853? - 1909)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 12, Melbourne University Press, p. 420.

⁴⁴ A full copy of this letter is included in *Way Lee in his own words*, which follows this chapter.

both cotton and woollen goods; which will undoubtedly prove very successful; as the cheapness of labour is such, that the material manufactured on the spot will be able to more than hold its own against the imported article. So soon as these manufactures are commenced a very large import trade in wool will spring up; as very few sheep are reared locally. This trade ought to be, and I have not the slightest doubt, by immediate energetic action, could be secured for, and practically monopolised by, Australia, with the natural result that wool must rise in value with the additional enormous demand created, the enhanced value representing direct gain to Australia.

Butter and Cheese: There are not a large number of cattle in China; and, therefore, a very considerable trade in these commodities could be established.

Frozen Meat: The above remarks apply to this industry.

Cattle and Sheep: A considerable trade could be effected in live stock; and the Northern portions of Western Australia and Queensland, and the Northern Territory of South Australia, from their nearness to China, could be particularly benefitted.

Fruit: The fruit ordinarily grown in China differs considerably from that cultivated in Australia and abroad; but the foreign fruit, which is being imported at the present, is highly appreciated by the Chinese, and a steadily increasing demand has arisen, which assures a lucrative trade in the future.

Timber: As I have before mentioned, most of the best land in China is occupied by gardens and rice fields, which are under intense cultivation, and, as a result, most of the timber has been destroyed, and there is great scope for the introduction of Australian hardwoods. The first step which will be taken in the opening up of China, is, of course, the establishment of railways; which will at once create an immense demand for sleepers. The present inland trade in China is chiefly carried by water on the numerous navigable rivers, but there is no reason for supposing that the introduction of railways will materially alter this; and there is, therefore, at the present time a good market for piles and other timber for the construction of wharves, warehouses, &c.⁴⁵ on the banks of the rivers; as well as for erecting ordinary houses and buildings. So scarce is wood in China, that, I am inclined to think, even firewood could be profitably imported into the country, but I should require to give this suggestion further consideration before recommending it.

Silver and Copper: The coinage of China consists exclusively of these two metals; and silver is also very much used for personal ornaments, of which the Chinese are excessively fond.

Lead: is also in demand for building purposes.

...

The conclusions to be arrived at from the foregoing considerations point, as I humbly venture to think, to the extreme importance to Australia of the Federal Government taking some immediate action; and I have the honor (sic), most respectfully, to lay before you the following suggestions.

- (1) That the Federal Government should forthwith appoint, or authorise, an agent to represent Australia in China.

⁴⁵ &c is an abbreviation, not in use any more, for et cetera.

- (2) That such Agent should immediately proceed to China; and approach the Chinese Government, with a view to arranging for a commercial treaty between the two countries.
- (3) That such agent should also travel through the various provinces and districts of China, for the purpose of introducing the products of Australia to the notice of the leading people; and do everything in his power to promote and encourage trade, and bring the Chinese consumer in touch with the Australian producer. In particular, he should endeavour to establish trading Companies amongst the leading merchants of China, who are by custom favourably disposed towards this form of trading.
- (4) That such Agent should act generally in China as Commercial Representative of Australia; and should also act, so to speak, as an 'Intelligence Officer', to advise Australian Merchants, as to the best markets &c., and to give information to the Chinese, as to Australian products, and how to obtain them.

What happened to Way Lee's foresight is a matter of record. The letter was passed by Forrest to Barton and an acknowledgement was received by Way Lee on 27 August 1903. A formal reply was issued on 2 September 1903 referring the ideas on to the Department of Trade and Customs to consider, with the following précis attached:

Suggests that an Agent be appointed to represent Australia in China, who will immediately proceed to that country, with a view to arranging with Chinese Government for a commercial treaty between the two countries.

That the Agent should then travel through China to introduce Australian products to the various firms, and should act as an Intelligence Officer, advising Australia re trade in China & vice-versa.

As the Agent should be thoroughly familiar with China & also Australian products, Mr Way Lee offers himself for the position, and in case of non-success, agrees to ask no more than bare expenses.

His reasons for advocating trade treaty are that China is rapidly becoming converted to European manners and customs, and there will be an almost unlimited demand for many articles produced in Australia, among which he mentions:—Flour, Wool, Butter & Cheese, Frozen Meat, Cattle & Sheep, Fruit, Timber, Silver, Copper, & Lead, none of which are at all plentiful in China. These remarks may also apply to Japan.

The Comptroller General of the Department of Trade and Customs minuted a note to the Secretary of the Department on 21 September 1903 that should the necessity arise the Department would probably be able to satisfactorily arrange with the Government of New South Wales to permit the Commercial Agent in the East to act in the direction suggested. Way Lee received this message by mail on 8 October 1903:

With reference to your letter of the 30th April last, addressed to Sir John Forrest, on the subject of the possible Australian trade relations with China and the East, I have the honour to inform you that your communication has received the careful consideration of the Commonwealth Government, who, however, do not see their way, for the present, at any rate, to take any steps in the direction indicated by you.

The development of trade appeared to be an opportunity missed at that time.

Chinese Empire Reform Association

Way Lee was also concerned for social reform for Chinese people, particularly in Australia. In October 1906, a branch of the Chinese Empire Reform Association was established in South Australia electing Way Lee as its president. The Chinese Empire Reform Association had its roots in China following the failed reforms of Emperor Guangxu⁴⁶. From June to September 1898, Guangxu along with his reform-minded supporters attempted to bring in sweeping social and institutional changes including the rapid industrialisation of China through manufacturing and commerce. The conservative ruling elite led by the Empress Dowager Cixi staged the Coup of 1898 in which Guangxu was placed under house arrest until his death in 1898. Speaking at the Association's rooms in Rundle Street in celebration of Guangxu's 36th birthday, Pack Queen, Chair of the function, commented:

The Emperor still supported the reform movements, and was a great lover of civilised nations. Reform associations had now been established in China and all over the world. They all sincerely hoped that their efforts would help to bring China into the front rank of the nations of the world.⁴⁷

His comments were followed by cheers.



Prefect Hwang Hon Cheng, Mr. Way Lee (right of Prefect in picture), and the officials of the Chinese Reform Association

The Adelaide Chronicle, 24 November 1906, p. 27.

Way Lee travelled to Western Australia in 1905 to establish a reform society in that state before South Australia. His intention was to seek members by going from house to house – an onerous task considering that there were more than 4,000 Chinese people in Western Australia at that time, causing a newspaper to comment it will take him three to four months to do so⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ Pronounced by Australian papers of the day as Kwong Sue.

⁴⁷ 'Chinese Reform Association', *The Advertiser*, 6 August 1907, p.10.

⁴⁸ *The Advertiser*, 25 April 1905, p. 4.

A Chinese Empire Reform Association was established in Victoria in 1898 and New South Wales in 1900. However, by the time a South Australian branch was established there seems to be some disparity between the objectives of each Australian branch. Following a restructure of the Victorian association in 1904, the Sydney arm disassociated itself from the Melbourne group as it was very different from when it was originally founded⁴⁹. Indeed, in South Australia there was some question as to its status. While *The Advertiser*, in describing it as 'the most important political and social movement that has ever been undertaken in Chinese circles in this State',⁵⁰ attributes it as a part of a powerful and world-wide organisation, in contrast a reader claiming to be a member of the world-wide association, suggested such a claim was 'destitute of foundation'⁵¹.

While the main focus of the association was 'enlightening the people of China and introducing to that country western ideas and modes of living'⁵², the association and its members, acting individually, acted in the interests of Chinese people living in Australia. One of the first condemnations made by the Association was the treatment of Chinese passengers on the SS *Australian* which struck Vashon Head Reef along the coast of Arnhem Land in November 1906. The Australian government refused to allow the Chinese passengers, which included 'a well-known Chinese merchant of Rundle Street', to land on Thursday Island. The association received a telegram from Thursday Island advising that the Chinese passengers were still on the ship and being tossed about by a very rough sea. Way Lee proposed that a formal protest be sent to the Prime Minister and the Chinese Ambassador in London⁵³.



Chinese Empire Reform Association picnic

The Chronicle, 23 February 1907

⁴⁹ 'Melbourne Chinese Empire Reform Association (1898-1910s)', <http://www.chia.chinesemuseum.com.au/biogs/CH00029b.htm> accessed 30 May 2009.

⁵⁰ 'Chinese Reform Association - Anniversary Picnic', *The Advertiser*, 18 February 1907, p.6.

⁵¹ 'Letters to the Editor', *The Advertiser*, 4 March 1907, p.11.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.10.

⁵³ 'The Shipwrecked Chinese', *The Advertiser*, 4 December 1906, p. 8.

As within other states, the Association served as a nexus for bringing Chinese and non-Chinese people together for events such as the anniversary picnic⁵⁴. At the South Australian branch's anniversary picnic held at Long Gully in the Belair National Park, Way Lee spoke to the gathering of about 300 saying that although some had been born in China, they had proved themselves to be 'law-abiding colonists' of South Australia. Emphasising the point that, as with immigrants from other countries, no one should think any worse of the Chinese people living in South Australia if, on occasions, they chose to remember their homeland or that of their parents. 'All people agree to consider their homeland the best in the world, and there is no reason why we should quarrel with one another for holding such an opinion.'⁵⁵



Way Lee and his wife Annie, ca 1900

Courtesy: P. Monaghan-Jamieson

⁵⁴ Hoy, K.W and Monaghan-Jamieson, P. 2006, 'Chinese feasts and festivals in colonial Australia', *Journal of Chinese Australia*, Issue 2.

⁵⁵ *The Advertiser*, 18 February 1907, p.6.

Family

While in Australia Way Lee's father died in China in 1887. Two years later, in 1889 he married Annie McDonald. Annie was the 8th child of James and Margaret McDonald, from Victor Harbor. Annie was a businesswoman in her own right and took over the management of Way Lee & Co. after Way Lee's death. She went on to run the Forest Inn, a temperance hotel in Glandore, during the 1920s and 1930s⁵⁶. Way Lee's mother died in China in 1901 aged 82.

The first of their children was born in 1890, a son named John Ernest (Jack). Daughter Lily Taipoo (Lily) was born in December of 1891. Annie was born in 1893 but sadly died just six weeks later. The last of their children, daughter Vera, was born in 1900. Each of the children attended a different school with Jack at Prince Alfred College, Lily at the Dominican convent Cabra and Vera at Sisters of Saint Joseph's in Port Adelaide.

Lily became closely associated with Way Lee's businesses, accompanying him on business trips around Australia and was involved in his various diplomatic relations with the Chinese consuls. She married Rowland Thomas Latham in 1921 but had no children. She died in August 1973.

Of Jack little is known about his occupation, although at the time of Way Lee's death was a butcher. Jack married Ada. Jack and Ada had no children.



Lily Taipoo Way Lee, ca 1914

Courtesy: P. Monaghan-Jamieson

⁵⁶ <http://www.pictureaustralia.org/apps/pictureaustralia?action=PADisplay&mode=display&rs=resultset-185839&no=3>



Vera Pretoria Way Lee, ca 1914

Courtesy: P. Monaghan-Jamieson

Vera, like Lily and their mother, became a business woman in her own right, and taught music for some years. Vera, who later changed her name to Veronica, married John James Monaghan. Vera and John had five children, two daughters and three sons, although one daughter, Mavis, died after only a few hours. Through Vera, Way Lee had these five grand children, eleven great grand children, 27 great, great grand children, and 23 great, great, great grand children, although none bear his name.

The benevolent Way Lee

Way Lee was generous with his time and his money. Writing in 1890, J.E. Ritchie thought that Way Lee had 'deservedly gained the reputation of being an exemplary citizen' and stated that 'he is renowned for his charity'⁵⁷. He was very civic-

minded and involved himself in a number of organisations including the Freemasons. He

was a member of the Freemason's United Tradesman's Lodge No. 4 S.A.C. and he claimed at the time that only two Chinese had been initiated into the Masonic craft, himself and Quong Tart of Sydney⁵⁸.

In 1880, Way Lee attended the Chinese School at the Adelaide Central Mission⁵⁹. According to one educationalist, this school taught English to the Chinese in the hope of converting them to Christianity⁶⁰. It may have been at this stage that Way Lee converted to Christianity. Regardless, he was grateful to the Mission and through his goodwill, and that of other Chinese community leaders, the school was able to enrol about 15 students per year from the broader Chinese community in Adelaide⁶¹. 'The Chinese were considered incapable of learning geography, but excelled at bookkeeping'⁶².

For some time prior to 1886, Way Lee celebrated the Chinese New Year by entertaining at dinner a group of Europeans. These dinners, while introducing

⁵⁷ Ritchie, J.E. 1890, *An Australian Ramble or a Summer in Australia*, pp.177-180.

⁵⁸ *The Observer*, 28 August 1909, p.40.

⁵⁹ Rolls, E. 1996, *Citizens: flowers and the wide sea*, University of Queensland Press: St Lucia, p. 247.

⁶⁰ R.C. Petersen, 'Chinese School', *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History*, p.104.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

Chinese customs to the notable Adelaide citizens, took into consideration that Chinese food and eating customs were a quantum leap for them. 'English knives and forks' were placed before European guests just in case they could not master 'the little bits of wood'⁶³. One newspaper reported that a few of the guests 'managed to lift pieces of duck, but dropped them in the communal soup on the way to their individual basins, splashing soup all over the pristine tablecloth'⁶⁴. In 1886, the dinners' popularity increased significantly, when nearly 100 notable Adelaide citizens, including members of parliament, attended a banquet in Beach's Rooms in Hindley Street.⁶⁵ Way Lee's Chinese New Year dinners grew to such a size that from 1888 they were held in the Adelaide Town Hall⁶⁶.

During the Boer War, Way Lee started 'a movement among his fellow-countrymen in South Australia'⁶⁷ to raise money towards the Transvaal Patriotic Fund. According to one newspaper of the day, the movement had been taken up with great enthusiasm. The success in South Australia led Way Lee to write to Quong Tart, an influential merchant in Sydney, suggesting that the Sydney Chinese community could do the same. This idea was taken up and Quong Tart advised Way Lee that amongst their proposals was a Chinese procession and a theatrical performance to augment the fund. Way Lee also wrote to Chinese residents in the Northern Territory and the other colonies and they also responded favourably⁶⁸. Way Lee estimated that there were 50,000 Chinese in Australia and that a large sum should be realised⁶⁹.

Way Lee was also involved with the Sick Poor Fund, a benevolent organisation formed in Adelaide in 1891, and along with such notables as the mayors of Unley, Kensington and Norwood and Port Adelaide he was appointed to the Asylums for the Aged Infirm sub-committee⁷⁰.

When Lady Tennyson launched a public appeal in December 1900 to raise money for South Australia's first maternity hospital, Way Lee gave his backing and rallied the Chinese community in Adelaide into raising a collective donation.

Another example of Way Lee's generosity was when the Chinese Empire Reform Association called for donations towards the relief of people suffering from the devastation of the Chinese Famine of 1907, which it has been estimated had claimed 24 million lives. Way Lee contributed £5/5/-⁷¹. The money was sent to the Tung Wah Hospital in Hong Kong for distribution to the famine-stricken districts of the provinces of Kiang Su and Gan Huei⁷².

The examples given here are but a few of Way Lee's benevolence in the time he lived in Adelaide.

⁶³ K.W. Hoy & P. Monaghan-Jamieson, 'Chinese Feasts and Festivals in Colonial Australia', *Journal of Chinese Australia*, Issue 2, October 2006.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ 'Celebrating the Chinese New Year', *The South Australian Register*, 9 February 1886, p. 5.

⁶⁶ Rolls, E. 1996, *Citizens: flowers and the wide sea*, University of Queensland Press: St Lucia, p. 247.

⁶⁷ *North Otago Times*, 16 February 1900, p. 1.

⁶⁸ 'Chinese and the Patriotic Fund', *The Observer*, 24 February 1900, p.28.

⁶⁹ *North Otago Times*, 16 February 1900, p. 1.

⁷⁰ 'The Royal Visit: The Sick Poor Committee', *The Advertiser*, 2 May 1901, p.6.

⁷¹ *The Advertiser*, 15 March 1907, p. 5.

⁷² Ibid.

The death of Way Lee

Late in his life Way Lee travelled to Perth. He returned to Adelaide but did not recover from the illness he developed while in Western Australia. Court records show that in the two weeks before his death, his doctor visited and treated him every day. For a short time the family lived at Henley Beach before returning to Rundle Street East. It is here that Way Lee died on Saturday 21 August 1909.

The funeral held at West Terrace Cemetery on the Sunday afternoon was witnessed by thousands of people⁷³. 'In fact the assemblage was so vast that the comparatively small group of Way Lee's own countrymen could scarcely be distinguished⁷⁴.' The large number of attendees, estimated at 4000⁷⁵, was in large part a desire to observe what was expected to be a traditional Chinese burial. However, Way Lee requested that his funeral should be Presbyterian and the burial was conducted by a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. W. Gray, who had been attending during his last few weeks. The pallbearers were six of Way Lee's Chinese friends. In attendance was W.L. Stuart representing the Chief Justice. Mr Stuart conveyed the sympathy of Sir Samuel Way to relatives⁷⁶.

Way Lee and the University of South Australia

Way Lee, with his inherent care for and about the welfare of Chinese people in Adelaide and Australia, would most likely have been surprised at the number of students whose home language is Mandarin studying through the University of South Australia. Table 1 shows the recent rising trend in non-Australian citizen numbers and the smaller number of Australian citizen numbers.

Table 1: Students enrolled at the University of South Australia with Mandarin as their home language

Non Australian Citizens: Home Language – Mandarin

Students	2009*	2008	2007	2006	2005	All Enrolment Years
Onshore	294	275	216	219	235	706
Offshore	1130	1452	1134	579	478	2449
All Onshore Offshore	1423	1722	1348	795	711	3089

Australian Citizens: Home Language - Mandarin

Students	2009*	2008	2007	2006	2005	All Enrolment Years
Mandarin	28	34	38	46	46	86
Mandarin	28	34	38	46	46	86

Source: University of South Australia records; * = partial year

⁷³ *The Observer*, 28 August 1909, p. 40.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Likewise, the number of students identifying themselves as being from Chinese communities continues to grow as shown in Table 2. Two statistics are of interest. First, in the last five years there has been a larger number of female than male students enrolled at the University. Second, by far the largest proportion of students, about two thirds, are enrolled in the Division of Business, particularly impressive given that it was in business that Way Lee's reputation was established.

**Table 2: Students identifying themselves as Chinese
(by citizenship, birth country or home country)**

Year	Males	Females	Students	Division of Business
	Total	Total	Total	Total
2009*	1099	1554	2653	1715
2008	1376	1741	3117	2118
2007	1217	1543	2760	1858
2006	1038	1458	2496	1610
2005	1076	1196	2272	1549
2004	1168	942	2110	1660
2003	1152	848	2000	1551
2002	1073	633	1706	1265
2001	727	504	1231	903
2000	415	336	751	585
1999	163	188	351	240
1998	113	118	231	138
1997	96	80	176	74
1996	86	84	170	58
1995	71	42	113	31
1994	69	43	112	31
1993	61	43	104	25
1992	49	40	89	26
1991	36	31	67	15
1975-1990	20	14	34	13

Source: University of South Australia records; * = partial year

* * *

Way Lee was a man before his time, forward-thinking in terms of Chinese-Australian trade and a vocal advocate of human rights. The University of South Australia, commemorates the 100th anniversary of Way Lee's death to recognise the contribution he has made to both business and social development in South Australia.

Chronology for Way Lee

1852	Born in China to Yett She Clum (father) and Cau She Ho King (mother)
Before 1874	Marries (spouse's name unknown) and has a son Yett King Sum
ca 1874	Emigrates to New South Wales staying with his uncle known as Way Kee
1875-76	Attends school in Brisbane
1880	Emigrates to South Australia and begins 'Way Lee & Co.' an importing company, establishes premises in Currie Street and at 145 Hindley Street. Attends English classes at the Adelaide City Mission
1882	Naturalised as a South Australian citizen
1884	Chinese residents hold Chinese New Year celebrations Opening of the Elder park rotunda – Way Lee provides Chinese lanterns Way Lee & Co awarded supply contracts for the Port Augusta to Hergott Springs railway
1886	Hosts a formal Chinese New Year celebration for MPs and invited guests
1887	Father dies in China Appointed by the Chinese commissioners visiting Adelaide in connection to the Jubilee Exhibition, amongst others, to convey a memorial to the Chinese government from the Chinese in Australia Returns to China (SS Tsinan) and appointed fourth mandarin Plans to recruit Chinese agricultural labourers and families for work on Daly River plantation Speaks at a public meeting on the Chinese question, reported widely throughout Australian media Way Lee and partner Wing Soon sent to talk with NT's Minister of Education to discuss Chinese fears over a proposed opium farm near Darwin Delivers the eulogy for Captain Ellison (SS Tsinan)
1888	Gives interview with JE Ritchie who reports in his book <i>An Australian Ramble</i> (1890) Premises in Broken destroyed by fire Tries to visit Broken Hill and denied entry without paying a poll tax of £100

Article: Mr Way Lee on the Chinese question, published The Advertiser, 5 June

Chinese New Year celebrations moved to Adelaide Town Hall

- 1889 Marries Annie McDonald under Chinese rights
Chinese Famine Relief Fund – gives official thanks on behalf of fund recipients and the Chinese community
Article published 'The Chinese and their troubles: A chat with Way Lee' in *The West Australian*, 18 February
Protests sent to the Victorian Government regarding Chinese immigration restrictions
Appeals to the Chinese ambassador in Britain regarding the treatment of Chinese in Australia, with a response noting the Chinese authorities indignation
- 1890 Jack Ernest Way Lee born
- 1891 Branches of Way Lee & Co have been established in Quorn, Hawker, Currie Street (Adelaide), Wentworth (New South Wales), Menindie, Wilcannia, and Beltana, with interests in plantations at Daly River (Northern Territory) and Millicent (South Australia)
Requests permission from Adelaide City Council to store fireworks
Sends petition to Victorian government on behalf of South Australian Chinese regarding immigration matters
Lily Taipoo Way Lee born
- 1892 Returns to China with uncle's body
- 1893 Daughter Annie Way Lee born dying 6 weeks later
- 1895 Quorn premises destroyed by fire
Requests permission from Adelaide City Council to store fireworks
- 1897 Premises established at 232 Rundle Street, Adelaide
- 1898 Contributes to the Children's Hospital Fair (Western Australia)
- 1899 Involved with the Adelaide charity carnival
- 1900 Article published in *The Register*, The Chinese question from a Chinamen's point of view.
Vera Pretoria Way Lee born
- 1901 Mother dies in China
Alien immigration: first published October 29, 1901

- Attends reception at Government House for the Duke and Duchess of York
Raises money amongst Adelaide's Chinese community for a donation to the establishment of South Australia's first maternity hospital, the Queen Victoria at Rose Park
- 1902 Marries Annie McDonald under civil rights in Melbourne
- 1902-1905 Resides in Perth, 15 Queen Street
- 1902-1903 Correspondence with Sir John Forrest re. discussions of the Far East and trade
- 1905 Article published: Australia and China: Should there be a commercial treaty? Opinion of a prominent Chinaman, Some interesting correspondence: first appeared in *The West Australian*, September 19, 1905
Article published: The opium trade: why it should be prevented in Australia: first appeared in *The West Australian*, September 19, 1905
Visits Perth to establish a Chinese Empire Reform Association
- 1906 Article published: Australia and the East, to the editor: first appeared in *The Advertiser*, November 2, 1906
Article published: Australia and the East, to the editor (response): first appeared in *The Advertiser*, November 7, 1906
Fire destroys a shed rented by Way Lee behind the Tavistock Hotel (Rundle Street)
President of the Chinese Empire Reform Association
- 1907 Publishes a collection of works including all articles published in newspapers and Missionaries in China with a comparison between doctrines of Jesus Christ and Confucius
Way Lee first falls ill
- 1908 Small fire reported at Rundle Street premises
- 1909 Appointed Chinese Vice-Consul for South Australia but dies before taking office
January: Rundle Street premises reported destroyed by fire
April: Accompanies Chinese Consul to Melbourne
August 21: Dies from chronic nephritis and amyloid disease at Rundle Street residence
August 22: Buried at West Terrace Cemetery

Way Lee in his own words

In 1907, Way Lee compiled the letters he had written to newspapers and published them in a single pamphlet. In commemoration of his death, it is fitting to allow Way Lee to have his own say on the challenges he faced. The pamphlet is reproduced here without amendment.



THE CHINESE QUESTION: FROM A CHINAMAN'S POINT OF VIEW

BY Y. S. W. WAY LEE.
[From "The Register," 1900.]

The writer of this paper has been long resident in the Australian Colonies, and is thoroughly identified with them in all business transactions. He is further convinced that the relations which in the future must exist between the united Australian Colonies and China cannot be decided upon without the subject receiving the gravest consideration at the hands of both countries; consequently he submits the following statement of the Chinese Question with every desire that it may help in ever so small a way in elucidating the subject.

The following statement of the Chinese question in relation to the Australian Commonwealth from a Chinaman's point of view may not be without interest to the people of the colonies. The friendly feelings existing between Great Britain, China, Japan, and Corea have led to the large and increasing volume of business now being transacted by those nations. Great Britain, the first to open the door, has derived the greatest benefit from the trade; and during the last few years Australia, like a stupid child, has been going back upon the traditions of her mother, England, and has placed a stumbling-block in the way of progress by her impost upon and cruel treatment of the Far Eastern nations. To make my meaning clear, I need only refer to the treatment that my countrymen, together with the Japanese and Coreans, have received from the Governments of the Australian colonies.

Cruelties.

Only a few years ago over 20 of my fellow-countrymen, residents of the Northern Territory, started with the intention of joining their relatives, fathers and brothers, many of whom had monetary interests in the cultivation of plantations in Northern Queensland. On

arriving at the border they were prohibited from crossing and forced to return. Their provisions becoming exhausted, many of them died of starvation during the journey. The cry of sympathy and indignation that rang through South Australia at that time is not forgotten. Such treatment does not reflect credit on those Christian virtues of which my British fellow-colonists boast so loudly and proudly. On another occasion, only last year (1899), about 30 Chinese for the same purpose crossed into Queensland from the Northern Territory, and were promptly arrested, taken to Townsville, and put into gaol for six months. The Chinese merchants of Townsville and other places combined to obtain legal advice, with the object of securing the release of these poor men, but all to no purpose, although their only offence was that natural desire to meet their relatives, who were near and dear to them. On the expiration of their sentence they should have been allowed to remain in Queensland, but no; the humane Government of the country chartered a steamer and returned the poor fellows to the Northern Territory.

In Justice to Settlers.

Look also at the different treatment accorded the Chinese residents as compared with that of other settlers by the Government of Queensland, particularly with respect to banana cultivation and other industries. When a Chinaman arrives in the country, he is neither a thief nor a vagabond, but is generally possessed of a little capital and a desire to work. The European settler takes up land at £1 per acre, the payment for which extends over 20 years. This land he sublets to the Chinese for five years at an annual rental of £1 per acre per year; and under agreement the latter has to clear the

scrub and improve the land — which means that he has no return for the investment of his capital or labor [sic] for more than a year. Is this fair treatment? The money invested solely by Chinese cultivators in the districts of Cairns and Geraldton embraces an area of about 25,000 acres, which at the moderate estimate of £14 per acre represents £350,000. If no Chinese labor and enterprise were available what would be the position of those districts? Why, the steamers that call regularly would find no cargo awaiting them. I believe the freights paid at Geraldton represent about £700 per week, while at Cairns they amount to between £800 and £1,000. Withdraw this capital and those districts are doomed, there being no inducement for settlement or business of any description. The importers of Adelaide and Melbourne would be great sufferers, as would also the different Governments in losses on Customs duties and railway revenue.

An Unsympathetic Government.

In November last year I waited on the Government of Queensland with a deputation from the Northern Territory and residents of Queensland to endeavour to improve the conditions of my countrymen, the Chinese settlers; but all to no purpose, the supposed friend of the working man, the labor member, blocked the way; for he seems to be dead to the claims of the hardest worker of any of the colonies of Australia, the unfortunate Chinaman. During my last visit to Queensland I had a long conference with the Japanese Consul, who was quite at one with me in his opinion of the treatment of his people in this connection. The leading men in the sugar industry, acting under permission of the Government, approached him and solicited his assistance to secure the importation of labor to work in the plantations and mills in the interests of business. The labor was procured; and, having gained its end, the self-same Government manifested gratitude by the introduction of legislation for the

exclusion of the Japs, who, by increasing the capital as well as the labor of the country, would have rendered material assistance to the colony, besides fostering desirable trade relations with Japan.

More Unpleasant Facts.

With regard to New South Wales, it must be said that this colony bears the palm amongst all the Australian colonies for its cruel treatment of Chinese and Japanese immigrants, in proof of which the following facts may be mentioned:— In the first place, let me record my own experience. About 20 years ago I was in Sydney with my uncle, Mr. Way Key⁷⁷, the well-known merchant. From Sydney I went to Brisbane to school, and on returning proceeded to Adelaide, where I began establishing a business, with branches at Broken Hill and several places on the Darling. After a time my premises at Broken Hill were destroyed by fire, and I was naturally anxious to cross the border to look after my interests; but, though a duly-naturalised British subject and though my request was supported by the Hon. Mr. Playford, who was Premier at the time, and brought my case before the Parliament of this colony, while numbers of telegrams were sent and representations made to Sir Henry Parkes, then Premier of New South Wales, I was debarred from the privilege that I was so justly entitled to expect. I have been informed that the Premier of New South Wales did not even reply to any of the communications forwarded on my behalf. At different times several Chinese men in business have crossed the border, and on refusing to pay £100 poll tax and £50 by way of penalty have been arrested and subjected to two years' imprisonment. These were all honest men — neither thieves nor robbers — and that they should be treated in this manner by a colony whose foundation was largely due to the forced immigration of the criminal class may

⁷⁷ More often seen referred to as Way Kee

well be a matter of surprise and indignation to every right-thinking Englishman. Only last year a Chinese lady, accompanied by her brother as escort (it being an established custom of the Chinese that some near relative must travel with a female when she leaves home), arrived in Brisbane from China, and from there proceeded to New South Wales to meet her husband. The travellers reached the border of the two colonies, but were at once arrested and were mulet⁷⁸ of the statutory £150 apiece. The unfortunate husband, not being at the moment able to raise the whole amount, had to allow his brother-in-law to remain two years in gaol. What barbarism! Place an English lady and gentleman who might chance to be travelling to China in the same position, and they would be treated in a very different manner. So long as they behaved themselves, and did not interfere with the established rules and customs of the country, they would not be the subjects of molestation. Even before the detestable and inhuman poll tax was first enforced in New South Wales it is a fact that Chinamen have been refused permission to land and compelled to return to China. Under such conditions, having neither money nor friends, it is within my knowledge that some have been driven to destroy themselves. These are facts that cannot be disputed; and, to aggravate the complaint, neither the Government of China nor the officials at Hongkong were notified of the action the Government of New South Wales was taking for the exclusion of Chinese immigrants. Again, the labor members of the New South Wales Parliament made a great point of the competition of the Chinese workmen, although for years the only trade in which the Chinaman entered into competition was in the manufacture of furniture, and even in this industry he purchased his material from European merchants, and generally produced a cheap article that was often a great

benefit to the working classes. The Chinese are said to be addicted to the vice of gambling, but when a Chinese lottery was started the Chinese merchants of Sydney combined and took legal proceedings against the promoters of the lottery. On the case being brought before the court the gamblers won the day. As to the reputed dirty habits of the Chinese, and their opium dens in Sydney, who should be held responsible? Why, in 1836, when the opium trade was prohibited in China, is it not a fact that England forced that trade by means of her warships and bayonets? No one would be more pleased than myself to see opium smoking discontinued and the consequent slovenly and dirty habits removed; but I am afraid it has taken the same hold of my countrymen that tobacco smoking and the craving for alcoholic drinks have taken upon the English. But very much could be said on this subject. In concluding my remarks respecting the treatment of Chinese by New South Wales, let me say that not even the emergency of death is allowed to be presented as a valid excuse for a Chinaman crossing the border. A son dare not attend the funeral of his father, who may have died only a few miles away from him. New South Wales does indeed bear the palm for cruelty to and the oppression of my countrymen, and the laws enacted against them in that State are still in force.

Other Hardships.

Victoria is not quite so harsh in its treatment of the Eastern peoples, but one very hard case can be mentioned:— A Chinaman who had married a European wife paid a visit to his native country, and on his return to Melbourne was not allowed to land, but was compelled to return to China, and leave his poor wife on the wharf lamenting. This case, it will be remembered, was the cause of action being taken before the Privy Council of England. What I said about opium smoking in New South Wales applies also to Victoria.

⁷⁸ The meaning in this context is unknown, the strict translation of this French term is 'mule'.

How South Australia Acts.

In her treatment of the Chinese South Australia does not compare favorably with Victoria. The case of Mr. John Egge may be given as an example. This gentleman had a steamer on the Murray, and on one occasion he was not allowed to land at Morgan without paying a poll tax of £10. Seeing the unfairness of this a few Adelaide gentlemen subscribed the amount, Mr. Egge would not accept their kindness, but paid the demand himself. Sir John Bray was Premier when this hard law was made, and Sir Henry Parkes told me that he wrote to Sir John on the subject, but did not receive a reply. When Sir Henry visited the Adelaide Exhibition he waited on Sir John Bray, and endeavoured to obtain a refund of the £10, but without success; and he then remarked that, as Mr. Egge was a citizen of New South Wales, he would insist on a similar sum being paid by Chinese residents from South Australia crossing their borders. Now, Mr. Egge had an extensive business, and always obtained his goods from South Australia. He married a European lady, and educated his family at one of the principle colleges in Adelaide, in the State of South Australia. Notwithstanding these circumstances, Mr. Egge is debarred from crossing into this State even to see his family until he had paid the iniquitous poll tax required by the law of this State. Only last year a Chinaman landed at Port Pirie, and was at once placed under arrest. The local newspapers directed attention to the matter, and my assistance and co-operation were asked, but at the time I happened to be in Queensland. The small storekeepers in this colony complain that Chinese and other hawkers rob them of their bread and butter, but the authorities grant the licenses, and so long as the authorised regulations are complied with the Chinese resident should have equal right with the European to earn an honest living. If the Government will pass an Act to prohibit hawking, as in Western

Australia, the Chinaman will be quite content to sell his wares in the shop.

Western Australia's Attitude.

With regard to the arrangements of Western Australia, I have only a few remarks to make. I was there in 1897, and had not the slightest difficulty in landing, but that colony has since learned some lessons from South Australia, and the same restrictions as obtain here are now being placed on the movements of Chinese. During my visit I made it my business to ascertain what regulations had been made to deal with hawkers, and was assured by the Chinese that they were satisfied that they could obtain more remunerative employment for their labor and capital than if hawking were legalised. It should be mentioned that there is strong feeling against the presence of the Chinese, but the Westralians overlook the benefits they have derived from the labourers imported from Singapore and elsewhere for a limited period at a few dollars per month, and after the term of agreement had expired their chief occupation was to cut sandalwood in the scrub. Since the opening of the goldfields the new arrivals from the different colonies contaminated Western Australia with their race prejudices; hence the present feeling against the Chinese and other Eastern peoples, and the result that no Chinese merchant can obtain assistants from China, because the law in Western Australia provides that immigrants must be conversant with the English language. I wonder how many of those who go from Australia and elsewhere to China have learned the Chinese language? New Zealand until lately was the paradise of the Chinaman in the southern hemisphere, but the Government of that country has followed the example of her neighbors, and it now costs a Chinaman wishing to take a trip to see his friends £150 before he can set foot in those islands. Tasmania is in a similar position, but her demands are more moderate, as the poll tax there amounts to only £30.

An Appeal to Reason.

Such are some of the laws and regulations that the different colonies have made with regard to the Asiatic races. Under Federation it is expected that an alteration will be arranged, and I hope for the sake of all concerned that the arrangement will be more satisfactory. Great benefit might be derived from the cultivation in the more tropical parts of Australia of such products as rice, sugar, and fruits that will grow only in warm and moist situations, and for the cultivation of which the labor of people accustomed to work under high temperatures will be needed; and it is perhaps not generally known that China does not produce half as much rice as is required to meet the wants of her own people. The greater part of her supply comes from India, Tonquin, and elsewhere. If the Northern Territory were only properly used and colored labor employed it might be made the most prosperous portion of Australia. There is no reason why this valuable piece of country should be held at a loss to the general community of several scores of thousands sterling a year. If the eyes of the legislators of New South Wales were opened to the possibility of establishing a market for Australian wool in Hongkong and other districts of China for weaving with cottons, the advantages of international intercourse would soon be admitted. They are in a much better position to command these markets than America. The northern districts of Queensland are well adapted for the production of coffee, tobacco, and cottons, for which ready markets in Japan and China might be obtained. Tea might also be grown in many districts of Australia, but not without the assistance of colored labor. I am satisfied that there is an opening for the introduction of South Australian flour, and a much larger

business would have been done before this but for the high freights and the unsatisfactory nature of the shipping arrangements. Such intercourse would lead to the introduction of Western civilisation to China, and bring about results that many missionaries have been trying in vain to secure. Australia is not going to remain a baby country for ever. She must grow, and when Federation is complete it is to be hoped that, whatever laws are made affecting the Chinese and eastern nations, as soon as people are allowed to land and make their homes here they will be the subjects of the same law; that there will be no partiality or animosity shown in the administration; but that all will be treated alike. The time has surely come when the peoples and nations should make friends of one another. Russia, France, Germany and America are all fighting for their own interests; and if the English only act wisely there will not be wanting in China millions of people who will stand by her in the time of trouble. The Labor members should learn to respect the claims of humanity, and not make laws that will discredit their own heads and hearts, and do no good, but cause great trouble. Whatever has been done by the different Parliaments should be remedied in the great Federal Parliament, where men will take a more liberal view of these matters in the interests of everybody. It is a great pity that the Parliaments of Australia have not followed the good example of England, under whose laws the slaves were made free and all the people kept free. With English management in China, where labor is so cheap and abundant and the resources are so great, important manufactories might be established that would soon give Britain the command of the business of the whole world.

MISSIONARIES IN CHINA. WITH COMPARISONS BETWEEN DOCTRINES OF JESUS CHRIST AND CONFUCIUS.

[BY Y. S. W. WAY LEE.]

In comparing the two doctrines of these two great teachers, I find that in the main they are very similar, and in two most important particulars are almost identical. 1. Jesus taught human nature to worship God instead of graven images, and to confess their sins before the Almighty. 2. He taught people to combat their evil thoughts and desires, and to be in charity with all men. Confucius when he conversed with any man endeavoured to get him to do the same. This statement is fully borne out by records in the "Four Books," which were written partly by the disciples of Confucius contemporary with him and partly by people living just after his death. Confucius advised people to purify themselves when they desired to worship the Most High, and also taught them that there is only one God, whom they should worship, and that He is "Omnipotent." Besides these remarks of Confucius there are numerous others of his identical with the teaching of Christ. I find one point of great difference between the two doctrines. Confucius did not give any notice or description of the next world, nor did he enlighten us as to what becomes of a person after death; but he spoke very strongly on the necessity of living very carefully in this world. The Bible bears witness for Christ, just as the "Four Books" do for Confucius.

Apply the parallel to the missionary work in China. What the Christian missionaries have said and taught my countrymen is that if a man did not worship Christ he could not be a good man. Still, if a man commits adultery, steals, or bears false witness is he a good man because he professes Christianity? I have seen missionaries in China quarrelling with one another and making enemies of each other, simply

because of the difference in their ways of worshipping Christ. Doubtless these things are very disquieting to the Chinaman who is desirous of imitating Christ. Christ said we should look to all men as brethren; and as I am sure all missionaries are well educated in their own countries, I cannot understand their hatred of each other, thus actually doing away with Christ's sacred teachings. In view of the ignorant selfishness displayed by some of the missionaries in China I must say they are quite helpless in trying to spread the Gospel in the dark country, and bring more heathen into Christianity. How can you expect the heathen to become a Christian when he sees the many different ways of worshipping Christ and the constant quarrels and jealousies of the different sects? I have received a newspaper from China containing evidence given by Prince Li Hung Chang to the Governor of Hongkong, translated into Chinese leading papers and many others, in which he stated that two heathen Chinese were brought up at court one day. One was found guilty and fined by the official, but immediately went to the missionary, described his case, and was baptised there and then, and the missionary proceeded to the court and forced the official to remit the fine and place the other Chinaman in gaol in place of the guilty person. The second Chinaman went to a missionary of another denomination and was baptised in his faith. Both missionaries were present in court afterwards, each quarrelling with the other and endeavoring to win the case for his convert, and to place the other man in gaol. The case is still unsettled, and I am certain that neither of the Chinamen is a Christian at heart, simply having been converted to win the case. What a sin on the part of these missionaries,

pretending to preach Christ, and still encouraging these men to lie in order to win the case; and, of course, the onlooking Chinese are naturally very angry at seeing such things happening.

I can also prove that in Australia many professing Christian Chinese are not so at heart, though I am glad to say some have done very good work, indeed – they have translated very useful European books into Chinese, and have strengthened the minds of my countrymen, and I thank them more than I can express. Any nation wishing to spread Christ's Gospel into my country must pay great attention to the inspection of their missionaries, not believing one side without hearing the evidence on the other. This also refers to every part of the world where missionaries are sent. True Christians are very hard to find in these days. They go to church and remember Christ's teachings, but when they leave the building they leave the teaching behind, too, forgetting it till they go to church again. Christ said – "Love all men as yourself, not forgetting your enemies." After reading this I cannot understand the treatment of my people in this country. Further, kind-hearted ladies and gentlemen subscribe large sums of money to train missionaries, and men are appointed – sometimes half-bred Chinese, who have never been in China and do not understand Chinese habits or language or Chinese education. I should like to ask the value of sending such men to convert the Chinese literary man. To explain exactly what I mean, how would the educated English people like an ignorant Chinaman to go to them and endeavour to convert them to his way of thinking? When I went to China in 1892 I was accorded a grand reception by the missionaries in Canton, the European settlement, including Mr. Hargrave, Mr. Bone, and others. I lectured on Australia, pointed out the bad treatment and cruelty experienced by my countrymen, and suggested that the missionaries should petition their various Governments on the subject. They

replied that with better treatment in Australia and elsewhere their missionary labors in China would be much easier, and doubtless the various countries would gain great benefits in the future; and I myself can bear witness to this fact.

In conclusion, let me say that God created this world for us all – not only Western, but Eastern races – and all should enjoy its benefits as brothers. The Lord's Prayer, as said so often and known by us all – commences "Our Father" – tells plainly what I mean. All men are brethren, and as such should dwell side by side in peace; and, instead of the cruelties practised against my countrymen in Australia, if your people and Government carried out Christ's teachings, as above, we should all live together in peace and unity, as God intended.

AMERICANS IN CHINA.

American laws prohibit the landing of Chinese in the States, but still are doing large business with China, greatly to their own profit. Why should not China turn round and prohibit American missionaries and business men landing in China? Let there be reciprocity in the future, more justice, and it will result in mutual benefit.

CANADA.

This nation is a good family to the British. They show to the world by hoisting the British flag, and sending large contingents to South Africa to enable their mother country to defeat their enemies, how faithful they are. England welcomes the Chinese to her shores, and they both feel the benefit of the relationship that exists between them. Now, Canadians follow the example set you by your mother. Her interest should also be yours. Open your country to our people, and you will find it be to your interest.

FRANCE IN CHINA.

She holds Annam, and is very cruel to the Chinese by imposing innumerable large taxes. If they want the public to be with them they ought to treat them properly, and create a better feeling.

RUSSIA.

All the world knows her, so I need not tell them.

GREAT BRITAIN IN CHINA.

In China the feeling towards this nation is good, because the troops keep good order and are kind to the public. When they take a place their orders are not to damage the property or take innocent people's lives. Americans have the same orders.

GERMANY IN CHINA.

China is the oldest nation in the world, and we have had very few German settlers until the last few years. Now they take an interest in her, and want to settle because they find it is a fertile country. Every nation sent Ambassadors to China. No doubt they ought to have been protected. I am very sorry that the German Ambassador was killed in Peking through the Boxers. The Chinese

Government ought to have sent an escort to protect them in dangerous places. The high officials in China should not have any connection with the Boxers to upset the whole nation. We have suffered through this more than any other country, both in loss of life and property. All the allies sent forces to protect their own people, but I never heard such a cruel order issued before as was delivered to the German forces before leaving their own country, to spare neither man, woman, or child. When the Germans reached China they carried out their orders, not taking the trouble to select the good from the bad, but killing thousands of old and young women and infants. If Germany wants to do business with her in the future she ought to give very different orders to her soldiers. If the troops treat the Chinese kindly I am sure there will be no bad feeling towards your nation. I hope in the future your orders will be different.

JAPAN IN CHINA.

The kindness of this nation surpasses all the others. No doubt it ought to, as we are brothers. I will not say anything further, only I do hope that Japan, Corea, and Annam will unite with us and make one great nation. If they do, I am sure the others would not interfere with us, because we would be related to all nations.

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Sir – Although Chinese residents and other foreigners have had little cause for complaint respecting their treatment by the people or the Government of South Australia, it was expected that under Federation great improvements would result. It was hoped that statesmen would take a more generous view of matters having reference to the different States of the Commonwealth and the different nations of the world. So far as

the States are concerned, it is not unlikely that those of us who have the misfortune to be born in Asia will be allowed to move about as circumstances may require us to do with a greater freedom than we have ever enjoyed. Hitherto we have been subjected to as many disabilities as the most questionable class of goods on the Customs tariff, but since these business barriers have been removed some of us

who have long been citizens of the different States and naturalised subjects of the Government of Great Britain are to be placed on the free list. This certainly will be a very valuable privilege, a most substantial benefit resulting from Federation. The position that the members of the Federal Parliament seem to have taken is this—Treat those aliens who have become good subjects in the different States as human beings, but take care that in future only white Europeans shall be allowed to come and live and work on any part of the great island. Now, if Australia were only as large as Tasmania this might do very well; but Australia, unfortunately, is too long and broad for this policy, as at least one-third of its area is situated in the Tropic of Capricorn, where white Europeans cannot be expected to live and work. This has been made quite plain in Queensland, in the Northern Territory, and in parts of Western Australia. There they have discovered that the Asiatic is needed, while in Western Australia a short time ago I learned that even the fish industry would not succeed, especially on the north coast, without the Asiatic. Mr. C. F. Gale, the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, in his report, dated March 1, 1901, also remarks:—The employment of Asiatics in the tropical parts of Australia will undoubtedly be a Federal question. Care, however, should be exercised in any future legislation that those engaged in the pearling industry are not driven outside of the waters over which this State has jurisdiction. The majority of the pearling banks extend further than three miles from the shore; in fact, at the present time divers are working nearer the coast. If any further restrictions are placed on the importation of colored labor there is every possibility of the pearling fleet continuing to carry on their operations outside the league of three miles limit, and in waters over which this State would have no control. This surely is a question for serious consideration, as this withdrawal of the pearling fleet from our waters would result in a loss of

revenue to the State and Commonwealth. In another place Mr. Gale remarks:—“The Asiatic question with regard to tropical Australia will, no doubt, be a Federal one, but I sincerely trust that no further restrictions than are at present in force will be placed on the importation of colored labor for the pearling industry, for it has been proved, not only on the north-west of this State, but in other parts of the world as well, beyond question that without Asiatic labor pearling cannot be successfully carried on, the conditions of working and the climate being such that few Europeans will venture to engage in it. Now, what is true respecting this industry is true respecting others that I have previously referred to, and it seems strange to me that wise members of the Federal Parliament should have already begun to set the very laws of nature at defiance, and not only are the laws of nature treated with indifference, but the trading arrangements of the Commonwealth and the Empire are in danger of being seriously interfered with. Is there any wonder that Japan complains to the home Government about the unfriendly attitude of the Federal Parliament. Oh no, Australia can only be great while she has broad-minded men managing her business. In this island there is plenty of room for all sorts of people to work – white and brown and black. All are needed, and the one sort need not interfere with the other. If the country is not to be used the railways will not pay, and steamboats need not call at our ports. Surely members of the Federal Parliament do not wish to destroy the foreign trade of Australia or put a stop to international intercourse. Then let them take care that only wise and just laws are made. – I am, &c.,

Y. S. W. WAY LEE.

Adelaide, October 29, 1901.

**AUSTRALIA AND CHINA.
SHOULD THERE BE A COMMERCIAL TREATY?**

**OPINION OF A PROMINENT CHINAMAN. SOME INTERESTING
CORRESPONDENCE.**

[From the "West Australian." Sept. 19, 1905]

Mr. Y. S. W. Way Lee, a prominent Chinese merchant, of Adelaide, South Australia, who is at present visiting Perth, is endeavoring to arouse an interest in the subject of a commercial treaty between Australia and China. This is a matter which Mr. Way Lee has been carefully considering for some years, and he is now firmly convinced that the time is ripe for something practical to be done in the matter. In the course of a conversation with a "Western Australian" representative yesterday on the subject, Mr. Way Lee expressed the opinion that, so far as the commercial opportunities of Australia with China and with Japan were concerned, the present time offers the greatest possibilities. With the establishment of peace between Russia and Japan, there would, he said, be great commercial activity, and he considered that if Australia, being, as she is, much closer to these countries than America, did not take immediate action to get the advantage of an obvious chance, she would be neglecting her natural opportunities.

Mr. Way Lee has had this subject under attention for a considerable time. His first public action was to forward the following letter to Sir John Forrest:—

"15, Queen-street, Perth, W.A., April 30, 1902.

"The Rt. Honorable Sir John Forrest, P.C., K.C.M.G., Minister of Defence, &c., &c., Melbourne.

"Sir— I have the honor to recall to your mind the interview with which I was favored by you at Melbourne a few weeks ago on the subject of trade

relations with China and the East, and, acting on the suggestion that you then made, I beg to be allowed to offer, for your consideration, the following remarks on the subject:—

"China is at the present time passing through a period of transition, and its ancient Conservatism is rapidly giving way to modern civilisation, and the people are every day becoming more and more influenced by European customs and habits. In consequence of this there is growing up a large and increasing demand for European and American productions, with the result that the imports into China are increasing in the most remarkable way, as a comparison between the figures for 1898 and those for 1899 (the latest year for which I have reliable statistics before me) will show. In 1898 the value of the imports into China was £31,368,449, whilst in 1899 it had jumped to £39,712,268, an increase in one year of £8,343,819. It is unnecessary to point out the great importance of the future trade with China, as this is proved by the way in which all the great nations of the world are so eagerly competing for, but Australia (who from her geographical position is pre-eminently the natural country to trade with China) unfortunately only possesses a very insignificant proportion of the Chinese trade, and in spite of the activity of other nations, is, so far as I am able to judge, doing nothing whatever to increase it. It will be seen how small Australia's proportion of this trade is from the fact that in 1899 the total value of both imports and export between Australasia (including New Zealand) and China only amounted to £1,700,000. In comparison

with this amount I may mention that the Portuguese Island of Macao, having an area of 7,811 square miles, about one-third less than Tasmania), with an estimated population of only 1,004,450, had, in 1899, a total trade with China of the value of £5,000,000.

“To proceed to some practical observations, the principal articles of commerce required in China are those which form the staple industries of Australia, and every State would be able to find in China a market for its chief products. The following is a list of the leading products here, for which an almost unlimited demand exists in China, but which does not, however, by any means exhaust the possibilities of Australian production:—

“Flour.—The southern districts of China, being so densely populated, have little available land for wheat fields, as most of the suitable land is used for gardening purposes and rice fields; and in consequence of this an enormous amount of flour is imported, a considerable portion of which comes from America and Canada.

“Wool.—The Chinese are large buyers of calico and cotton goods, but there is a growing tendency to substitute woollen materials for cotton. As you are aware, large schemes are on foot to at once erect factories to manufacture both cotton and woollen goods, which will undoubtedly prove very successful, as the cheapness of labor is such that the material manufactured on the spot will be able to more than hold its own against the imported article. So soon as these manufactures are commenced a very large import trade in wool will spring up, as very few sheep are reared locally. This trade ought to be, and I have not the slightest doubt, by immediate energetic action, could be secured for, and practically monopolised by, Australia with the natural result that wool must rise in value with the additional enormous

demand created, the enhanced value representing direct gain to Australia.

“Butter and Cheese.—There are not a large number of cattle in China; and, therefore, a very considerable trade in these commodities could be established.

“Frozen Meat.—The above remark applies to this industry.

“Cattle and Sheep.—A considerable trade could be effected in livestock, and the northern portions of Western Australia and Queensland, and the Northern Territory of South Australia, from their nearness to China, would be particularly benefited.

“Fruit.—The fruit ordinarily grown in China differs from considerably from that cultivated in Australia and abroad; but the foreign fruit, which is being imported at the present, is highly appreciated by the Chinese, and a steadily-increasing demand has arisen, which assures a lucrative trade in the future.

“Timber.—As I have before mentioned, most of the best land in China is occupied by gardens and ricefields, which are under intense cultivation, and, as a result, most of the timber has been destroyed, and there is great scope for the introduction of Australian hardwoods. The first step which will be taken in the opening up of China is, of course, the establishment of railways, which will at once create an immense demand for sleepers. The present inland trade in China is chiefly carried by water on the numerous navigable rivers; but there is no reason for supposing that the introduction of railways will materially alter this; and there is, therefore, at the present time a good market for piles and other timber for the construction of wharfs, warehouses, &c., on the banks of the rivers, as well as for erecting ordinary houses and buildings. So scarce is wood in China that I am inclined to think even firewood could be profitably imported into the country; but I

should require to give this suggestion further consideration before recommending it.

“Silver and Copper.—The coinage of China consists exclusively of these two metals, and silver is also very much used for personal ornaments, of which the Chinese are excessively fond.

“Lead is also in demand for buildings purposes.

“In the above remarks I have confined myself to China, as I am most familiar with it; but they also apply generally to trade with Japan. In the case of Japan, the extraordinary increase in its imports is also to be noticed. The value of the imports into Japan in 1900-1901 amounted to £22,499,363, whilst in 1901-1902 they had risen to £29,324,646, an increase of £6,825,283. There is also a large and valuable trade to be done with Corea, but I am unable at this moment to give you exact figures.

“The conclusions to be arrived at from the foregoing considerations point, as I humbly venture to think, to the extreme importance to Australia of the Federal Government taking some immediate action, and I have the honor most respectfully to lay before you the following suggestions:— 1. That the Federal Government should forthwith appoint or authorise an agent to represent Australia in China. 2. That such agent should immediately proceed to China, and approach the Chinese Government, with a view to arranging for a commercial treaty between the two countries. 3. That such agent should also travel through the various provinces and districts of China for the purpose of introducing the products of Australia to the notice of the leading people, and do everything in his power to promote and encourage trade, and bring the Chinese consumer in touch with the Australian producer. In particular, he should endeavor to establish trading companies amongst the leading merchants of

China, who are, by custom, favorably disposed towards this form of trading. 4. That such agent should act generally in China as commercial representatives of Australia, and should also act, so to speak, as an ‘intelligence officer,’ to advise Australian merchants as to the best markets, &c., and to give information to the Chinese as to Australian products and how to obtain them.

“It will be observed that the careful selection of the agent to be sent is one of the principal factors of success in the foregoing scheme. It is absolutely essential that such agent should be, not only thoroughly acquainted with China and its languages, and the local customs and conditions of the different provinces, but also that he should have a thorough knowledge of the various products of Australia.

“The facilities for travelling from province to province, and the opportunity of placed advantageously before the leading traders the various advantages to be gained by trading with Australia, are only open and possible, beyond an extremely limited extent, to the residents of China and those who, like myself, are thoroughly acquainted with the country and people; and it may be safely said that it would be quite impossible for a European to conduct such negotiations as are herein suggested to a successful issue.

“I venture to add that I am so confident as to such a scheme as the foregoing being a huge success that I am willing (if properly accredited by the Federal Government) to proceed at once to China and work for twelve months on the above lines, with such additions or alterations as your Government may choose to make; and, if the result of my work is not satisfactory to the Government, I will not ask or expect any payment or remuneration whatever beyond the bare amount of the necessary expenses which would be

incurred by me whilst travelling in China. – I have, &c. (signed), Y. S. W. Way Lee.”

In reply to this, Mr. Way Lee received the following:-

“At sea, near Colombo, May 21, 1902. – Dear Mr. Way Lee—Your official letter to me on the subject of trade relations with China and the East I have received, but, as it is a matter dealing altogether with affairs quite beyond the boundaries of the Commonwealth, and affects our trade relations with another country, I have forwarded it to the Prime Minister (Mr. Barton) for his consideration. You will readily understand that, as he is the Minister for External Affairs, the matters you refer to come properly under his departmental control, and could not in any way be dealt with by me as Minister of State for Defence. I have read your letter with interest, and, as stated above, will forward it for Mr. Barton’s consideration.—Yours, &c. (signed), John Forrest.”

Mr. Way Lee then addressed the following letter to the then Prime Minister of the Commonwealth:—

“150a, Rundle-street, Adelaide, S.A.,
“August 22, 1903.

“The Right Honorable Sir Edmund Barton, K.C.M.G., Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, Melbourne.

‘Sir—I have the honor to forward you a copy of the letter which I addressed to Sir John Forrest last year, also his reply, stating that he had forwarded my original letter to you for your consideration.

“Reverting to my conversation with you recently, when in Melbourne, respecting a meeting of Chinese residents, at which

it was decided to ask you to confer with his Excellency Lord Tennyson with respect to forwarding a cablegram to the English Government, asking them to instruct their Ambassador to protect the Chinese journalists in Shanghai. On the following day we noticed that the British Government had already done so, and we, therefore, beg, through you, to respectfully thank them for their prompt and courteous action.— I have, &c., (signed), Y. S. W. Way Lee.”

To this letter Mr. Way Lee received the following reply:—

“Department of External Affairs,
“Melbourne, October 8, 1903.

“Sir— With reference to your letter of the 30th April last, addressed to Sir John Forrest, on the subject of the possible Australian trade relations with China and the East, I have the honor to inform you that your communication has received the careful consideration of the Commonwealth Government, who, however, do not see their way, for the present, at any rate to take any steps in the direction indicated by you. – I have, &c., (signed), Atlee Hunt, Secretary.’

Mr. Way Lee considers that, even if it is admitted that the time was not opportune for taking action in this matter when this correspondence took place, the same argument cannot now be used. China and Japan, he says, are both ready to receive goods exported from Australia and Australians should not be unmindful of her opportunities in this direction. He suggests that the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth should at once enter into communication with the authorities in these countries with a view to have a commercial treaty established at an early date.

THE OPIUM TRADE.

WHY IT SHOULD BE PREVENTED IN AUSTRALIA.

[From the “West Australian.” Sept. 19, 1905]

When speaking to a “West Australian” representative yesterday on the subject of the opium trade, Mr. Y. S. W. Way Lee, a prominent South Australia Chinese merchant, said: —‘As a resident in Australia for some 30 years, I wish to add to my quota to the remarks which have been made lately in reference to this matter. I have lately been in Melbourne attending a conference of the Chinese Reform Party, which was held to consider the advisableness of approaching the Federal Government with a view to prevent the importation of opium for smoking purposes into the Commonwealth. The conference was attended by representatives from all the States of the Commonwealth, namely, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. It was decided to present a petition to the Federal Parliament, praying that a law should be passed to prevent the importation of opium for smoking purposes into Australia. At the conference it was pointed out that a large number of both male and female Europeans were in the habit of indulging in this pernicious habit of smoking opium, and that it would be a very good thing for Europeans themselves if it was put an end to. A very large number, though not all, of the Chinese residents in Australia are in the habit of smoking opium, and it is desired to stop the practice altogether. I know as a fact that there are a large number of my own countrymen who are at present smoking opium who would be very pleased to give it up. The number of smokers, both

European and Chinese, is daily increasing in all the States of Australia, and it would be a splendid thing if this could be checked. There is no doubt that a vast number of people in the Commonwealth, and members of Parliament, would be pleased to support any movement which would be in furtherance of the policy to make it unlawful to import opium for smoking purposes into the Commonwealth. The members of the Federal Tariff Commission at present sitting in Perth travelled by the Kanowna, the steamer in which I have just come to Perth. During the voyage I got into conversation with Sir John Quick, Mr. McGregor, Mr. Clarke, and Mr. Fowler, and they all promised hearty support to the movement when they return to the Federal Parliament. The South Australian Government and many members of Parliament in South Australia promised me that they would give their support to the movement. A meeting is to be held at once in Perth of the Chinese Reform Party, and also the leading Chinese merchants, to express the thanks of the Chinese residents of Western Australia to the various members of Parliament and the different ministers of religion for their kindly help and the great interest that they have taken and are taking in the matter. Personally, I have lectured amongst the Chinese merchants recently, and I may state they are very pleased with the movement, and give to it their hearty support.”

AUSTRALIA AND THE EAST. TO THE EDITOR.

[From "The Advertiser." Nov. 2, 1906.]

Sir— As business has caused me to visit several of the Australian States, particularly Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia, I have had opportunity of observing how my fellow-countrymen, the Chinese residents, were affected by Commonwealth legislation and administration. Since I first began to direct attention to the possibilities of commercial intercourse with the Eastern nations there has been a considerable increase in the business done between Australia, Hongkong, China, and Japan, particularly, and I have every reason to believe that under good management and wise legislation this business might be greatly increased. Quite recently arrangements have been made for sending 600 tons of flour to Singapore every three weeks, and steamers which previously returned almost empty to the ports of Eastern countries are now carrying a considerable amount of goods. The boats of all the companies trading with Australia carry a large amount of cargo on the return trip, and every year the boats of new companies are coming into Australian waters. Without question the people of the Australian States have splendid opportunities for business with the densely-peopled Empires of the East, and if advantage is taken of these within a few years the export trade to those countries must become of great importance. It is only those who have visited the Eastern countries who can be expected to understand the advantages of such an outlet for Australian produce. The capacity of the East is simply unlimited for the absorption of almost every commodity Australia can produce or manufacture, and the sooner those who are managing the affairs of the Commonwealth come to realise this the better. But to keep up the friendly

relations that are necessary in business a better understanding must be reached. It is not to be expected that China and Japan will continue to trade with us unless the Australian people are prepared to show a little more generosity in the matter of intercourse with the people of the East. It is not good business to fall out with our customers, and on many occasions things have occurred that are calculated to disturb the kindly feeling that is so essential in business.

A wonderful development has taken place in China during the last few years. Already thousands of miles of railway lines have been constructed, and the opening up of country on the lines of Western civilisation is proceeding with great rapidity. Many ports that were previously closed are now open to commerce. The greater part of the material used has come from America, but supplies have also been received from countries of Europe. If business has to be done, the convenience of business men must be studied. So far as Great Britain is concerned, I am not aware that there is any cause for complaint. England has seldom fallen out with her customers, and under Commonwealth law, especially during the Premiership of Sir Edmund Barton, the Chinese residents of Australia have had less difficulty in moving about in the different States, which has been a great advantage to those of us in business. These privileges were not obtained without effort, but it is gratifying to know that he requests that some of us made in the interest of freedom have been attended by satisfactory results in this connection. I am pleased to know that I have done my best. I regret that the immigration laws of the Commonwealth are not favorable to intercourse as

between Australia and the East, and at present an attempt is being made to make them of a more friendly character. Business men in the East have the greatest difficulty in gaining access to Australia, and several cases have come to my notice where great hardship has resulted through the administration of Commonwealth law. It will be seen by correspondence printed that four children born of Chinese parents in Victoria, on being taken to visit some relations in Hongkong, have been denied permission to return to Australia. One member of the same family, a son, is now being educated at the Methodist College in Melbourne, while one of the girls, born in Victoria, and now in Hongkong, is engaged to be married to a young man in Western Australia. But the Customs authorities will not allow these people the rights of common humanity, brothers and sisters to meet in the land of their birth, or the bride to return to the arms of her lover. I have interested myself in many cases of great hardship, and sincerely hope that the law may soon be altered so that a better condition of affairs may come.

A great deal has been said about the benefits of Christianity, and people are often asked to subscribe money to send missionaries to other countries to make men better, but it is difficult to believe that any good is being done while unkind laws are made by people who call themselves Christians, who will not allow husband and wife to meet. China would never treat Australians thus, and such conduct is calculated to make enemies, not friends. England knows better than act in such a manner. It is a great mistake to hamper the movements of Chinese who have been living in Australia for many years, and all the time proved themselves industrious and good citizens. No harm can result to Australia in allowing business men and students to visit and stay in the Commonwealth. The nearest and natural outlet for the produce of this great island is the East. As the elections for the Federal Parliament are about to take place it is to

be hoped that statesmen will see that better arrangements are made. The effect of what has been done are now beginning to appear, and so far as we are able to judge them they do not promise well for the future. The different States of the Commonwealth need to pay some attention to a policy providing for satisfactory intercourse with other countries. It is all very well to repurchase lands that have long since been alienated from the Government, and encourage settlement on the many broad acres that are still available. To aid the producer is well, but it is no less important to see that good markets are secured and every facility is provided for the transportation of commodities. If care is not taken great trouble may be encountered before long. The Governments of the East will expect respectful treatment from the statesmen of Australia, and if we are wise in our generation we will follow the good example of Great Britain, which has prospered under the open-door policy. The fact should never be overlooked that Australia lies well within the great color zone of the globe and although it may be desirable to keep the different races from intermingling it will be impossible to keep this immense island white. It is well known that the original inhabitants were not only colored but dark; hence it will be prudent to seek to establish settlement along those lines that nature has laid down, and in the future it will be seen what a serious mistake was made by the Government of Federated Australia in the early days of the Commonwealth.

It will be impossible to establish permanent commercial relations with the East, or any other part of the globe, unless due care is taken to preserve a kindly regard for the people we are desirous of doing business with. Not only is this the case, but it should be remembered that in this age of progress they run a great risk who outrage the feelings and interest of a common humanity. Religion and science are teaching the unity of the human race, and the tendency all over the world

seems in the direction of good fellowship. As in India, China, and Japan, the representatives of different races in Australia will learn to keep themselves by themselves. But this practice is not likely to result under the system that the Government is now trying to maintain, under which the most sacred ties of family are ignored, and husband and wife are prevented meeting together should they chance to be separated by business or any other cause. The same causes which disturb the family and home must in time disturb the nation or Commonwealth. And unless a change for the better takes place who can foretell the disasters that may await Australia within the next 30 or 40 years? All the nations are moving forward. Japan during the last few years

has secured a strong position, both on sea and land. China, as I have already said, is constructing railways and educating her people. In a very few years those Eastern nations will ask for the same freedom of action that the Western nations now enjoy, and if Australia enters her protest against the operations of the laws of God and the rights of humanity, so much the worse for Australia. I do sincerely hope that the Federal elections about to take place will result in the return of statesmen who will seek to promote peace on earth and goodwill amongst mankind. – I am, &c.,

Y. S. W. WAY LEE.

**AUSTRALIA AND CHINA.
TO THE EDITOR.**

[From "The Register," Nov. 7, 1906.]

Sir—After reading the interesting, temperate, and sound letter of your correspondent, Mr. Way Lee, in "The Register," I wish to express both gratification at the evidence of such education and enlightenment in one of a race whom Australia makes a practice despising, and, at the same time, as an Australian, a sense of shame that Australians should have condemned with the severest sentence one nation can pass on another a people who manifest such excuse for humaner and wiser treatment. Mr. Way Lee—an individual of the race we designate 'the yellow crowd'—has written a plain, straightforward statement of undeniable fact, and of a glaring Australian error, and it is to be hoped that all Australians will be fair-minded enough to read his letter through, and admit the conclusion to which any sane intellect which perforce arrive. It is a question which jesting Pilate might have asked—"Why

do we set up the parrot-cry of a White Australia?" It is as unreasonable as it is inhuman. The Australian Socialists, who in these days are especially ardent in their advocacy of Brotherhood, Freedom, and Christian Equality of Opportunity—and other baseless fabrics of visions, with capital letters—have not yet satisfactorily answered the moot enquiry—"But, if you are so persistent in your statement that all men should be equal and have equal opportunities, why do you face about with the wind and deny any opportunity at all—and scarcely any status—to foreigners who come here to settle?" Let the foreigner bring a passport (the Socialists say), an emigration ticket. As well say to the man who fell down the well, and could not climb out—Let him set up a ladder. The Socialist policy is to squat on the brink of the well, squint down at the poor unfortunate, and tell him to set up a ladder—indignant, too, if anyone should

say they are un-Christian, or ought but honest British stock. A poor Chinese cabinet-maker, whom over-population in his own country has forced to go abroad to seek a living hears of a great continent with hardly any people in it, to the south of him, sparsely populated with the descendants of the British race he has been compelled to respect (in the days when they made him open his country to them) and learned to admire. The poor Chinese cabinet-maker pays his last savings in steamer fare to this great Australian country and when he, gets here he is refused permission to touch a grain of the soil. They ask what he is—a cabinet-maker. What can he do?—make cabinets. That he “make welly cheap” is not here really relevant. Then (say the white Australians, with blushes showing through the whitewash)—“Well, answer this test paper in German, trigonometry, astronomy, and a few other subjects, which will help you to make cabinets, and sign papers to say we can extract as much hard cash as we like out of you (this, when he happens to be a specially good cabinet-maker), and you can come in; but mind the wet, white paint on the doorpost.” And then the Socialists call the poor Chinaman, who cannot answer the rigmarole, “ignorant yellow scum”, which pollutes their glorious white country, and wonder why, when they toss him back again as so much flotsam, all the world gapes at them. It is hardly too much to say that, if Australia were not the British lion’s property, the world might be so impertinent as to make enquiries—and do more.

But the Socialists are in this matter not only selfish—they are also blind and foolish. Just imagine for a moment what the Far East would be like if Germany and America had Australia; and do not forget to note that foreign people imagine this sometimes, too. Are we not losing wonderful chances of trade? We might as well be at the South Pole (and we should be white enough there) as where we are for all the good we do to ourselves or others. Was Australia given

her splendid geographical position, where Port Darwin and Singapore might easily become the capitals of the Far East, and rival old Babylon, that she might sit still and grunt over an imaginary colic—never wotting that the imaginary colic was really the muscular rheumatism attendant on the sitting still? Are we fair to our neighbours, ourselves, or the glorious Empire of which we are a part, in refusing to trade and wax strong, because our commercial correspondents are a little dark of color? Can anyone help becoming brown under the tropical sun? And, even if he could, why is it righteous that he should? Is the sterility of stagnant idleness not an opposite curse to the stagnation or cabin’d and cribb’d confinement? Will Australia do nothing because she is asked, and continue to refuse till she is forced? Because that is what the future has too surely stored up for Australia. The “yellow crowd” are requesting politely now, but (and surely the Socialists are perverse and not blind), they will dispense with much good manners soon. Does any sane Australian believe that, if 600,000,000 of overcrowded people cry out in vain at the door of the almost empty house for admission, they will not, as a final resort, smash the door in? The Socialists say they find it hard enough to develop the country now, and that it will be harder than ever when wages are at a minimum, owing to foreign immigration. How else does development come but by people – home born, if possible, but essentially people, even if they have to be imported? If there is a law of equal opportunity it is not one which Nature (at the behest of the Socialists) will apply here and deny there. It is, if it exists at all, everywhere and for every individual. Battle is not the only means of bringing fame to a people; they must trade. Australia’s present duty to the Empire is not so much to fight well— that may come later— but to trade well and be populous, ready for a crisis if it should come. With what indignation did the European Powers force uneducated China to open her ports during last

century; and is not every Power demanding more and more passports of China at this present day? And Australia's idea of fairplay and compensation is to behave as we behave in return! The great fault is not in making a mistake, but in refusing to admit it and amend; and the refusal not only does not convince the outsider of your argument, but also it shatters his faith in your intentions as well as in your truth. It is time Australia learned her

lesson and her mistake, and time also that she lifted her not infallible head among the nations, admitted her error with a clear voice, and straightway set about remedying it.

I am, Sir, &c.,

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