

theme bids fair to continue to be agitated for a considerable time to come. One of the leading questions now forced upon the attention of civilized nations is: "What shall we do with the millions of Russian Jews?" No adequate solution has yet been reached. Divine Providence will point it out when the proper time approaches.

### TAX REDUCTIONS.

THE resolution introduced by Councilor R. W. Young before the Board of Equalization, reducing the city valuations on real estate twenty per cent, gives general satisfaction, as far as it goes. It will afford considerable relief to the overburdened taxpayers. It was a good stroke of policy, and, more than that, it was done in the public interest.

The only objection we have heard against it is, not that it is wrong or unwise, but that it is limited to a reduction on realty valuations. It is urged that the values placed on personal property are as excessive as those on real estate. Merchants, bankers and others consider they have been unjustly assessed, and think they are entitled to as much consideration as the realty owners. There is no doubt some ground for this, and before the matter is finally settled, it would be well to consider whether the reduction can be properly extended to the personalty valuations.

As to the powers of the City Council in relation to the proposed reductions, we think there is little ground for argument. The charter gives the Council power to "charge the valuation of assessment of any real or personal property, by increasing or diminishing the assessed valuation thereof, as shall be reasonable and just, to render taxation uniform."

This is under the law of 1888. The City Attorney was in doubt, when the resolution was passed, how far the Council was acting under that law. But the original charter confers similar if not wider powers on the Council, stating that "they shall have power to alter, add to, take from and otherwise correct and revise said assessment roll."

The ordinance provides that the City Council, as a Board of Equalization, "shall have power to determine all complaints made in regard to the assessed value of any property and may change and correct any valuation, either by adding thereto or deducting therefrom." This ordinance does not exceed the powers given by the charter or the amendments thereto, and it covers all complaints and all property, whether real or personal. If the Board

can change "any valuation" it can change all, and the object is to make assessments not only "uniform" but "reasonable and just." If the valuations on personal property, then, are unreasonable or unjust, they may be reduced just the same as the valuations on realty can.

We believe the course pursued by the board will have a good effect, not only on the feelings of the public, but on the minds of persons who contemplate residing here or investing in city property or business interests. Excessive taxation is not attractive to any one, and when the few public improvements are noted as compared with the taxes assessed, it becomes a standing notice to capitalists to be cautious and tighten their money bags.

We hope this matter of complaint about the valuations on personal property will be carefully weighed before the Board adjourns, and that public sentiment and the public welfare will receive due consideration. While the matter is in hand, justice might just as well be made complete.

### LORD SALISBURY'S MESSAGE.

LORD SALISBURY's message to the Chinese government is "If you cannot protect our citizens on your own soil, we shall have to come there and do it for you." This has a very exalted sound of patriotism. But down in the lower tones, if one observes right sharply, will be detected a good deal of the straight guttural bravado which has made John Bull suspicious among the nations from the beginning. The fact is no power on earth has been trying harder than China, during the past century to be respectful to foreigners and to throw about them its protection. That missionaries to China have been persecuted has not been through the will or neglect of the Chinese government. The territory of China is packed about as thick as the nation will hold with a people the most superstitious that the earth contains. The missionaries who go there understand that fact perfectly, and when they go there they do it at their own risk. The government can protect them only within certain limits, and no government on earth could do any better under the circumstances, as England very well knows.

We have an example in this country, indeed right in one of our adjoining States, which is good material on this point. A few years ago nearly a whole village of Chinese residents were massacred near Rock Springs, not through any impulse of superstition, but because the Mongolians were in

the habit of laboring for less wages than the white people of that neighborhood were willing to accept for their services in the same occupation. Did the United States government turn in and hang the mob that did the dastardly deed? Or could it have done so without running a great risk of adding to the graves which the affair had already made, twenty times as many more? The government did the best it could under the circumstances. It appropriated from the public money a sum for the benefit of the survivors.

The trouble with China and Chinamen is not half so much their ways as their weakness. If China was as strong as Great Britain, Lord Salisbury would not discover in the recent persecution of missionaries there any affront to his government, or any demand for armed interference to vindicate the honor of England. While the Chinese government is doing its best to protect the foreigners who go there it is doing its full duty in the premises.

### LABOR CONGRESSES.

NEXT to the excitement in Europe relating to war, perhaps the labor question engages most attention. Only a few weeks ago an International Labor Congress was held at Brussels. Every country in Europe was represented except Russia and Portugal. From the United States there were six delegates. One of these startled the congress by his wild utterances. He hailed from New York. His name was Sanial. He said that "in the United States seventy billion dollars was annually stolen from the hands of those who produced them. He also said that "misery increases so fast that the land of the free and the home of the brave is in reality a hell."

The total wealth of the United States is less than sixty-seven billions; therefore Mr. Sanial could not have considered what he was talking about. As to his statement that the United States was a hell upon earth for labor, if it obtained credence, it ought to discourage European immigration to some extent. He was not an anarchist, for delegations from anarchistic societies were refused seats. But his utterances would indicate that he is one of that hare-brained fraternity.

The questions discussed at Brussels were familiar topics—the eight-hour day, universal suffrage, the Jewish question, labor and militarism, strikes, boycotts, trusts and legislative protection of labor. These are all American issues as well as European. They are not new. Some of them have been agitated for the last half-century. However, their discussion shows that