

*Oriental Aliens*

My hon. friend says: "Oh, yes, but China is not a first class power." Are we to modify our language according to the number of troops that there may be in the nation to which that language refers? I do not think Japan would expect us to do that; I do not think China would be flattered to know that that is the reason she is excluded. The United States has for years excluded the Chinese. I do not know whether Canada once excluded them or not; I am included to think she did. I quote this from a speech delivered by Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the 2nd day of April, 1913, in this House. Sir Wilfrid Laurier was speaking at that time on a motion by Sir Robert Borden for the second reading of a bill ratifying, on behalf of Canada, the Immigration and Trade Treaty between Japan and Great Britain. Sir Wilfrid Laurier supported the ratification and he used this language:

We did not hesitate some years ago to exclude by statute Chinese people from coming to this country, but when consideration had to be given to the question of excluding the Japanese by hostile legislation the late government—

That is, his own government.

—would not do so, for the simple reason that the Japanese were our allies, and we did not care to submit them to that indignity.

If that is correct, we did formerly exclude Chinese, and we did not maintain wholly the exclusion, but subsequently came to a policy of restriction by means of a head tax. There is effective exclusion, though the term may not be used, in the legislation in Australia as regards both Chinese and Japanese. There is effective exclusion in New Zealand of both. There is effective exclusion in the United States of Chinese now; and if Sir Wilfrid Laurier was right, we once had effective exclusion of Chinese. Why should this be offensive to any country. We do not ask for the exclusion of any people unless we are prepared to accept at their hands the very same treatment. There are reasons existing to-day why we are denied in Japan certain things that the Japanese are not denied in this country. I make no complaint of that. That suits their policy. There may be reasons why we should deny the Japanese certain rights in Canada which they would not feel like legislating as against us. But if they feel like doing that, certainly we can take no offence. We suggest, we ask for the exclusion, not out of any disrespect for the Japanese empire or the Chinese empire. We ask for it because it is for the permanent interest

[Mr. Meighen.]

of the people of both those countries, that we maintain here our racial purity, just as they have considered it in their permanent interest to maintain their racial purity. It is not that we consider them an inferior race. Who can consider the Japanese people an inferior race? They have different standards of living from ours, standards of living that we describe as lower; but the Japanese nation in the last thirty years has, perhaps, made the greatest progress of any people of the world. It has made great progress in the advancement, not only of their military standards, but of their science, in the development of their arts and literature. In all that goes to make the highest type of a civilized nation the Japanese have gone ahead in the last thirty years faster than has any other great nation in the world. It is simply because they as a people so differ from us that the two races will not assimilate. They cannot work together industrially. Therefore it is for the peace and concord of both that we wish to say to them frankly: You can keep us from your country if you desire; we must keep your people from becoming residents in our country; and we will be better friends if we adopt that policy.

Suppose we take that stand, suppose this resolution passes, it is quite open to the Government to bring about the result in the method adopted by Australia. But that is not effective restriction, that is effective exclusion. Change this resolution to read, "effective restriction", and at once there is no authorization to the Government to change the present law at all, it would simply leave things the way they are. If the Government do not care to do it that way, they can do it the way it is done in other countries for there are other ways of bringing this about. I do not see why it is less offensive to say to Japan: "We won't let your people in unless they can speak French", when we know there is not one of them can do so, than to say: "We will not let them in, and frankly the reason why is because they won't assimilate with us." I prefer to take the second course, but the first is open to the Government.

So long as there is effective exclusion of people coming here to live as defined by our law, then the terms of this resolution are sufficient; but if this resolution can be modified so that it will mean exclusion without saying so, then I have no objection at all to the modification. But I do not want to accept a modification that really does not call for any change in the present