

ORIENTAL IMMIGRATION.

Mr. RALPH SMITH (Nanaimo) moved :

That in the opinion of this House steps should be taken to restrict the influx of oriental immigrants into Canada; and inasmuch as the policy of the government concerning Chinese immigration has proved entirely satisfactory, a definite policy should be immediately put into operation looking to the accomplishment of equally satisfactory results with regard to all other oriental immigrants.

He said : In moving the resolution which stands in my name, calling upon the government to restrict the incoming of oriental labour into British Columbia with regard to the Japanese to the same extent as they have done with regard to the Chinese, I am fully aware how the discussions on this question have been associated in the minds of certain members of the House who have not had the western experience of this question, with the principle of provincialism and race prejudice.

In 1902, when I addressed this House on this question previous to the imposition of the head tax on Chinese, one good old Presbyterian, a conscientious old gentleman, in this House, rose and said that in his opinion the policy I had advocated was contrary altogether to the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Sir, it was easy to associate a discussion of this question with provincialism. I have heard it stated repeatedly that the oriental question was a provincial question. It is true that the agitation on this subject is confined to British Columbia, because the effects are more directly felt in British Columbia. I do not think it is possible for the members of this House to have a correct conception of the importance of this question until they have had a personal experience of it in the west. I have known leading members of this House, on both sides of it, who, some years ago, expressed strong views against the anti-oriental agitation, but after they paid a visit to British Columbia and came in contact with the actual circumstances and conditions, when they met the facts face to face, they came back to this House willing to favour restrictions being placed upon that class of immigrants. This is not a provincial question. Mr. Speaker, I desire to say, as a representative from British Columbia, that we, the representatives of that province, are supposed to be informed of the actual circumstances surrounding this question. I desire to say to this House that I do not support the principle of restriction on this kind of immigration because I think it would be beneficial only to British Columbia; I want to take the broader stand that what is bad for British Columbia is so because its ultimate results would be bad for Canada as a whole. I want to take the position in this House that what is good for British Columbia can only be so considered when it can be conclusively

Mr. PUGSLEY.

proved that the operation of the same principle will be good for Canada. I am prepared frankly to make the statement and allow myself to be placed on record, that though it may appear at first sight as peculiarly affecting the interests of British Columbia, that ultimately it will be detrimental to Canada. This is a national parliament, and I am not advocating a provincial question. If it is a good thing to allow unrestricted oriental immigration into British Columbia then it must be also in the interests of Canada. Why, Sir, the protection of British people in British Columbia, the development of her industries on proper lines, are evidently and undoubtedly in the interest of the whole people of Canada.

Then this discussion has been associated by its opponents with race prejudice. Mr. Speaker, there always was a race prejudice. So far as I am concerned, I have been trying all my life to practice a belief in the equality of races and of men, and I am not easily influenced to do anything or to say anything contrary to the principle of the equality of races. But no man with observation and experience will say that there is not a race prejudice, that there is not an influence in that direction affecting men's minds. That influence has to be recognized, it is a universal principle that cannot be obliterated by any revolutionary process in a few minutes, or in a short period. Why, Sir, race prejudice is part and parcel of the inequalities existing as a consequence of the depravity of the human race, and is seen not only in the conflict of man against man but of race against race. The antagonisms existing in systems of government and in economic conditions are based on the same principle as race prejudice. I have faith enough however to believe that the words of the Scotch poet will come true :

When man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be, and all that.

But we know by experience, we know in our business operations, we know by the ordinary competition of man against man, of member against member in this House, that jealousies associated with race exist wherever we go. Then the advocates of this principle have also been associated with spoliation and injustice. I have heard it stated by members of this House that the agitation against oriental immigration into British Columbia might be considered a system of spoliation and injustice. My view is that an unrestricted system of oriental immigration into British Columbia is a system of spoliation and injustice to the British people in British Columbia. I do not think that laws protecting the interests of employees in mines, factories and railways in British Columbia can be considered a system of spoliation and injustice.

While the prosperity of the country may not consist in the enlargement and develop-