

Chinese Immigration

Mr. BAXTER: So far as national status is concerned it would depend on the father, yes, but—

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): There are many cases where Englishmen are married to Chinese women. Their offspring would be barred if there were not such a clause in the bill.

Mr. BAXTER: If whites choose to let down the racial standard to that extent, should not they keep their progeny in the East instead of bringing them in here? Does the minister think the bill is quite definite enough as to the exclusion of Chinese women? Of course they have to fall within the definition of merchants or students, but even as merchants I fancy we do not want them here. Would it not be well to make it absolutely clear that Chinese women cannot come in under any circumstances? I am very glad to see that section 5 begins with a declaration that Chinese origin or descent is to be irrespective of allegiance or citizenship, so that we cannot, as I understand it, have under this section any so-called Hong-Kong Chinese claiming British citizenship. That is a very good provision, but I would suggest that it might be made a little more emphatic as to the exclusion of women. I would also suggest that the minister reconsider the definition clause.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Since the bill was published a great many representations have been made from people in British Columbia—I am bound to say that they have no other motive apparently than that of a desire to be generous—asking particularly that the wives of Chinese merchants be admitted. Such women are not provided for in this bill. There is a fairly wide clause in section 9 of the Immigration Act which gives the minister discretion to admit anyone whom he may think it wise to allow to enter Canada.

Mr. NEILL: Could the minister give us an idea of who these bodies are in British Columbia who are so generous as to want the wives of Chinese merchants admitted?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): They are mostly representatives of religious bodies throughout Canada who are interested in this question. In addition there are a great many legal gentlemen, who no doubt are interested because they have Chinese clients. In fairness I ought to state that to the committee.

Mr. LUCAS: Are these bodies in British Columbia?

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Quite a number of them.

Mr. CLARK: Have any legal bodies in British Columbia made representations? I never heard of them doing so.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes.

Mr. CLARK: What organizations?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I do not suppose I have this in confidence; I have a letter from Tupper & Tupper, of Vancouver, appealing on behalf of certain clients of theirs. I suppose it is a matter of business with them.

Mr. CLARK: I was not asking for individuals, but for organizations. Have any representations been made by the Law Society, for instance?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Only religious organizations, or representatives of religious organizations.

Mr. McQUARRIE: Has the minister heard anything from Bishop A. U. de Pentier, of Vancouver?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): No.

Mr. McQUARRIE: The minister knows that he has publicly stated that in his opinion orientals should be excluded from British Columbia. I think the minister has been furnished with the newspaper reports of the bishop's speech.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes.

Mr. McQUARRIE: I would like the minister to explain what changes will be made effective by reason of the passing of this bill. As I understand it, at the present time Chinese labourers are not admitted to Canada. As a matter of fact, under the regulations as they exist now the only classes admitted are merchants and students. If I am right in that respect, is this bill making any changes at all? Is this bill carrying out in any way the terms of the resolution which was passed last session calling for effective restriction of oriental immigration, and if so in what way?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): My hon. friend is quite right. Under the regulations merchants and students are practically the only people to be admitted. Under the old act, as my hon. friend knows, the admission of Chinese was permitted upon payment of a head tax of \$500, and there was no restriction as to numbers; so they came in. By regulation we have been doing this for the past two or three months, but we have no statutory enactment under which we might act. We