

by judicious exclusion our own civilization as much as possible, and we must be prepared to maintain the rate of wages in this country so that the workingmen, the artisans and the labourers, may preserve that high civilization for which they are working and struggling so manfully. It is impossible to be consistent if you will not afford some protection for the rate of wages in this country and yet allow the products of cheap labour to come in, because that happens to be your idea of free trade. It is the old question all over again. It is all very well to interchange with a country like Great Britain, with a civilization like our own if not higher; but free interchange with a civilization which is lower and where the rate of wages is lower, tends to depress and ruin our civilization. It would be far better for us to put a Chinese wall around this country than to submit to such a degradation. The centre of gravity would be changed from the northern hemisphere to oriental countries, and in 200 years, or less, we would see those countries producing a magnificent civilization while we had sunk to the lowest levels, because we had stuck to a theory which in itself has neither common sense nor consistency.

Hon. W. J. ROCHE (Minister of the Interior): I quite agree with the hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) that the question of immigration is one of the most important matters that could possibly engage the attention of this House, important not only to the nation at the present time, but for the future as well; but more especially is the question of Oriental immigration of great significance to Canada as a whole. The question has been treated to-night from the standpoint of the Chinese, from the standpoint of the Japanese, and from the standpoint of the Hindu.

Chinese immigration is regulated, as the members of the House well know, by a special Chinese Act and not by Orders in Council or any departmental regulations. Chinese immigration to this country steadily increased from the year 1904 until July, 1913. When the head tax of \$500 was first imposed, there was a considerable falling off in Chinese immigration for a year or a little more, but since then it has been gradually increasing until the middle of last year; but from that time there has been a marked decrease in immigration. Several reasons may be assigned for that. In my opinion it is in no small degree attributable to a certain circular which was issued by the Chinese of the province of British Colum-

bia, and circulated in that portion of China from which we draw our immigration. That circular exaggerated the difficulties and hardships which Chinese had to undergo in Canada, and minimized the monetary advantages to a Chinaman coming to Canada. As that was circulated very largely in their own country by their own people, it has had a very great deal to do, in my opinion, with the decrease in Chinese immigration since the middle of last summer. It is somewhat more difficult to realize just why that circular was issued by the Chinese; some people have assigned one reason, others another. Some have stated that a certain number of the Chinese contemplating the possibility of an exclusion law being enacted thought it would be better to discourage at least for the time being, immigration, so as to render such a law unnecessary. Whether that is so I am not prepared to state. Some have attributed it to the fact that the Chinese resident in British Columbia desired to have no more of their fellow-countrymen brought to Canada at the present time to enter into competition with them, and thereby depreciate their earning powers. Again, it has been attributed to the \$500 head tax and the passage money. The withholding of the head tax and passage money by the Chinese merchants resident in British Columbia, and those resident in China has undoubtedly had a great effect in limiting the number of Chinese coming into this country. Why these gentlemen refused to put up the head tax is another matter. It may be that in view of the financial stringency and the curtailing of operations in which Chinese immigrants could be employed, they thought it advisable for the time at least to withhold the head tax and transportation. But whatever may be the reason, I attribute, in no small degree, the falling off in Chinese immigration to the head tax and the circular distributed in that country. Some 5,800 Chinese came to Canada in the first 11 months of 1913, as I stated in answer to a question by my hon. friend from Edmonton, but the greater number of them came in the early part of the year. During the latter part of the year very few Chinese came to Canada. Since November, 1913, I have not got the accurate figures with me, but very few Chinese have come into this country—comparatively few.

So far as Japanese immigration is concerned, it stands in very much the same position it did when the late Government went out of power. The Japanese made a