

YES OR NO?

Shall British Columbia Have Oriental Labor to Develop the Province?

NO.

Mr. R. G. Macpherson, M.P., of Vancouver, who has been most active in his efforts to prevent Oriental immigration to Canada, writes the Monetary Times as follows:—

The Pacific Ocean province of Canada is the port of entry for the Orient, has a climate in many respects the equal to Japan, China, and India, and is exceedingly rich in natural resources. Its fisheries are most abundant, its timber wealth enormous, its mineral wealth is an El Dorado, its valleys are fertile, and comprise an area of 357,000 square miles, it has an estimated population of 250,000, which is less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of a person to every square mile.

Two Separate and Distinct Peoples.

Japan lies within two week's journey, with a population of 45,000,000, or 440 persons to every square mile, with a natural increase yearly of over half a million. The Japanese are obliged to seek other fields for their surplus energy and population. The average man says, "Well, that is just what we need in Canada." Granted, but not of a race of people we cannot assimilate—a race of people who send their men only—a race of people who have a skin not colored like our own. The latter may not be a sin, but it is an insurmountable barrier to intermarriage. A non-marriageable people means a raising up of two separate and distinct peoples, owing allegiance to different flags, different customs, social and political, different faiths, and, in fact, as non-assimilative as oil and water.

The Japanese, if not checked, either by treaty or otherwise, will, inside of two years, number in our population 25,000 to 30,000 able-bodied males. To offset that number we will have less than 80,000 males, that is one man in every four would be a Japanese. To-day, we have nearly 20,000 Chinese, 8,000 Japanese, and 2,000 Hindoos.

When you take into consideration that an infinitesimal number of these have wives and families and do not contribute anything to all that goes to make up a strong nationality, such as white citizens do, you will readily understand the feelings of a man who has his little home, wife, and family, who contributes his share to our schools, hospitals, and charitable institutions of all kinds; and who shares the responsibilities incumbent upon every man who loves his country, when he sees thousands of an alien race landing upon our shores. Where the yellow man goes, the white man disappears.

"Where Wealth Accumulates and Men Decay."

I have lived in this province for nearly twenty years. I see to-day 5,000 Japanese employed in our Fraser River fisheries, where fifteen years ago not one Jap was employed. The white man and Indian have been pushed aside. I have no quarrel with the man who wants cheap labor, but I have with the man or men who will allow my brother white man to be pushed aside by an alien race.

Fifteen years ago our saw mills employed entirely a white crew, our shingle mills the same, our lumber camps the same. To-day not more than 5 per cent. of white men will be found in our saw mills, and in our shingle mills, about the same percentage. Lumber camps have stood the strain better, but they are fast getting into that artery of trade as well. "Ill fare the land to hastening ills a prey, where wealth accumulates and men decay."

This subject cannot be disposed of in a light manner. We are face to face to-day with the fact that unless we put up the bars, this province in a few years will be an Asiatic one. The Asiatics are usurping the land and dispossessing the whites. Why? Because we want cheap labor. God forbid that we shall ever measure the greatness of our nation by the dollar and cents standard. What has made the Maritime Provinces great? Was it Coolie labor? What has Coolie labor done for the grand old Province of Quebec?

Country Built by Kith and Kin.

Tell me who has made two blades of grass grow where none grew before in my native Province of Ontario? Has it been done by an alien race? And so on to the foothills of the Rockies. It has been our own kith and kin. They have built churches, schools, railroads and cities, and all without the aid of an alien race.

Why, then, deliver our beautiful province into the hands of a yellow people? Is our destiny not bound up with that of old Canada, our homes not as sacred as the Easterners? Who should be the best judge of this matter—we who live

YES.

On the other hand, there are men who say, "Develop the province, be it by white labor or yellow." Here are the views of a prominent Vancouver bank manager given last week to the Monetary Times:—

In my opinion the development of this province is prevented to a serious extent by the absence of sufficient labor of any kind, and the interests of the white laborer retarded to an enormous extent thereby. The head tax, viz., \$500, on Chinamen has resulted in a large advance in the wages of these men, and it is almost impossible to secure competent Chinamen for domestic servants under \$40 a month, and all found.

Strong and Intelligent Japanese.

Our industries, particularly agriculture, are suffering by the absence of sufficient numbers of that kind of labor.

Last week 1,200 Japs arrived at this port from Honolulu, and they were found to be strong, intelligent men, and I believe most of them have already obtained employment. These men have had considerable experience as laborers on the sugar plantations in the Sandwich Islands, and as far as I can ascertain are a very desirable class. The labor agitators and politicians who pander to the labor element to obtain votes and influence have made a great outcry, but the great majority of people are in favor of increasing the number, and also removing the head tax from Chinamen.

Our farm lands are undeveloped and will continue in that condition; our fisheries suffer in the same way, and our forests are not developed to anything like the extent they would be had we a sufficient supply of cheap labor. The skilled white man receives good wages, and will continue to do so, even although we had a large influx of Oriental labor, and he will work to much greater advantage by having the assistance of the Orientals. These men are now in receipt of such wages, and will continue in that condition, that they can afford to have Chinamen to assist in their household duties provided the wages were lower, but as it is they and their families suffer from lack of sufficient domestic help.

Would Prefer the Japanese.

White servants are difficult to get and frequently difficult to please. There is no doubt that the future of British Columbia depends upon the influx of large numbers of men who are capable of hard work as menial laborers, such work as a white man would as a rule not undertake, and if he does it is only transitory. As far as I have seen, I would prefer the Japanese and the Chinaman to a number of immigrants who come from the Southern parts of Europe.

I am creditably informed that last year hundreds of acres of excellent fruit in this province were left on the ground to rot, owing to lack of labor to pick it at a modest profit; such fruit that could not be excelled in the same quantity elsewhere in any part of the Dominion. The Chinaman of all adapts himself most readily to our labor conditions, and if 20,000 were admitted free we would have such a development that would astonish and profit, not only the owner of land, but the skilled laborer.

Large Resources, Small Population.

Our resources are so enormous, our population so small, that without the assistance of cheap labor untrammelled by the restrictions of labor organizations and beyond the control of the politician—Orientals would be free from any such local control—the Pacific Coast of the Dominion will undoubtedly be put off many years in its natural development.

This is what the manager of a British Columbia timber company, says:—

Labor is so urgently required in British Columbia, that when employers are unable to obtain it of the most preferable kind, they must of necessity get what is available, if the development of the country is not to be retarded.

A committee of the Victoria Board of Trade recently recommended that the provincial and federal alien laws be immediately suspended, that the Provincial Government immediately appoint one or more competent agents, to act under the supervision of the agent general, to travel through the industrial centres of Great Britain and give information as to the labor requirements and conditions in British Columbia, and that some plan of assisted immigration be extended to farm laborers, unskilled workmen and domestics. "We believe," they said, "that employers of these classes would readily undertake to reimburse the Provincial Government for any outlay on this account."