

OTTAWA, 20th November, 1885.

The undersigned, Minister of Customs, having had referred to him by the Governor General in Council the petition of the anti-Chinese Union, of Victoria, British Columbia, bearing date the 7th October, 1885, signed on behalf of said Union by its Secretary, Archibald Dods, Esq., addressed to His Excellency the Marquis of Lansdowne, etc., Governor General of Canada, "thanking the members of His Excellency's Cabinet for the Act passed last Session of Parliament restricting the immigration of Chinese into Canada, and complaining that the Act, though in itself a wise one, is made virtually inoperative by the fact that proper means have not been secured to insure its being carried into effect," has the honor to report thereon as follows:—

The Act provides, among other things, that His Excellency the Governor General may appoint one or more persons to carry the provisions of the Act into effect, and assign the duties in connection therewith to any officer or person in the employ of the Government. As the Department of Customs is constituted, it has the necessary and complete machinery in the *personnel* of its staff for the effective and economical administration of the Act, its officers being stationed in every port, town and city of importance in the Dominion. These officers, with such assistance as may be found necessary at one or two places, are competent and available for the service.

Every care has been taken to provide for the effective enforcing of the provisions of the Act, collectors of Customs at the various ports in the Dominion having been appointed controllers and furnished with forms and explicit instructions, calculated to guard against preventable errors and to meet all foreseen difficulties.

The appointment of special controllers at the various ports of entry, under the circumstances, is wholly unnecessary.

The Minister submits that in putting into force the provisions of a law restricting the immigration of Chinese into Canada, some friction and errors may occur; but with the aid of a staff of experienced Customs officers such friction and errors must be less than would be the case were the administration of the Act entrusted to new and inexperienced officers.

The officer of the Department of Customs to whom has been entrusted the important duties of inaugurating a system by which the provisions of the Chinese Restriction Act can be enforced, has given much attention and study to the working of somewhat similar Acts in the neighboring Republic and other countries, and is therefore eminently qualified to prepare such rules and regulations as will fully and effectively carry out the intentions of Parliament in placing such a law upon the Statute-book, and to provide against the failures and difficulties which have been experienced in countries where laws of a somewhat similar character are being enforced.

For these reasons the undersigned is of opinion that it would be impolitic and detrimental to the proper and effective working of the Act to make any change in the regulations which have been adopted providing for its enforcement.

M. BOWELL.

VICTORIA, B.C., 13th October, 1885.

DEAR SIR,—I desire to call your attention to the fact that in my opinion the appointing of Customs officials to carry out the provisions of the Chinese Restriction Act is a farce. I propose to give one or two reasons why I think so.

In the first place, so far as Victoria is concerned, the whole of their time is taken up in connection with the Customs, and if they had time they have not been notified that they were to receive any extra pay for the extra work, and hence they could not be expected to take the interest in it as is necessary; the result is, the law is hardly enforced in any one particular. I know of cases myself where one Chinaman has been guilty of personating another Chinaman, and the matter has been brought to the notice of Mr. Hamley, and yet the provisions of the sixteenth clause of the Chinese Act has not been put in force.