

of England that the acquisition of the Transvaal would provide an outlet for the surplus labour of England at high wages, as it would bring the invaluable mines of that country under British control. He was returned to power on that proposition and made a settlement with the Transvaal in the interest of the British people. Did he send the surplus labour of England to the Transvaal? The same government negotiated, under an indenture with the people of China, for a supply of servile labour from China for the mines of the Transvaal. This does not seem to be pertinent to the subject, but this is the point I wish to make. What did the English people think of that transaction? What happened the moment they discovered that they and their friends had to compete in South Africa with this servile Chinese labour? They had never experienced the competition of Chinese labour before and knew nothing about it. But because British interests were being affected economically in one part of the empire, there arose in England the mightiest political force of modern times, which on that same question swept the Conservative government out of power, and the Liberal government was elected on the promise that it would change the condition of affairs in the Transvaal by giving that colony legislative authority to pass an ordinance doing away with Chinese labour. This is a clear evidence of the feeling of the British people on this subject when they are brought into contact with it.

What is the history of this question in Canada? Just twenty-five years ago the member for the district which I have the honour to represent in this House, Mr. Gordon, the member for Vancouver Island, submitted to this House the following resolution:

That in the opinion of this House it is expedient to enact a law prohibiting the incoming of Chinese to that portion of Canada named British Columbia.

Sir John Macdonald requested the withdrawal of that resolution on the promise that he would appoint a royal commission to investigate the question. That commission was appointed in the following year, the commissioners being the Hon. the Secretary of State and the Hon. Justice Grey of the Supreme Court of British Columbia. At that time the Canadian Pacific Railway was under construction and hundreds of oriental immigrants had been brought into British Columbia for the purpose of working on that railway. The commissioners reported to the House that it seemed to them that that work could not be carried on without the assistance of Chinese labour. Now, Sir, I am not prepared to criticise the condition that existed twenty-five years ago. I am not prepared, even for a political reason, because a Conservative government was then in power and its ministers stated that in their opin-

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ion Chinese labour was a necessity to the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to take the ground that they were mistaken in their judgment.

What I say is that that was the foundation of the importation in large numbers of orientals and that the Commissioners reported in favour of it. Two years later the government of the late Sir John Macdonald put on a head tax of \$50. That was the year 1886. All through this period the people of British Columbia were petitioning and protesting against Chinese immigration. The whole question was supposed to have been settled up to 1899, when the matter was brought by the British Columbia members very strongly to the attention of this government. This government doubled the head tax from \$50 to \$100, and the following year it appointed a royal commission with instructions to inquire and report in order that this question might be finally settled. They made their report, I think, in 1902, and they reported in favour of a \$500 head tax. The government carried out the suggestions of that commission. The people of British Columbia had never asked, through its representatives, for any larger restriction. There is not a petition in this House, ever made to any federal government, for any larger restriction than the imposition of a \$500 head tax on Chinamen.

But there is an important argument in connection with the Japanese immigration. The Japanese has become a factor in British Columbia between the time when this commission began its inquiry and the date of its report. In 1898 there was no serious Japanese question in British Columbia. The Japanese began to come in at that period, and before this commission got through it had to consider the question of Japanese labour in that province. In 1901, at the last census, there were 4,300 Japanese in British Columbia. But I find in this report something very important, of which this House and the government ought to be reminded, and that is that during the sittings of that commission, the Japanese consul in Vancouver voluntarily proposed to the commission to use his influence in favour of the regulation of the Japanese influx into British Columbia. The commissioners reported that as the Japanese authorities had voluntarily consented to regulate the immigration of their people into Canada, it was important that this should be understood as a settlement of the question at any rate for that present time. And I think I am right in stating that, on the strength of that report, and based on the regulation which the Japanese consul had voluntarily accepted, the recommendation was made to this government that in consideration of this understanding there was no need for legislation against Japanese immigration; and no legislation was passed that time or since:—