

general question and to discuss here the pretensions which were lately put forward during the severe agitation that took place in British Columbia. But it must be obvious to every member of this House that an agreement such as the one which I have read to the House must necessarily infringe a principle for which I myself, and many other members of this House, have time and again contended; that is to say, that we should at all times, and in the interest of this country, and in favour, not only of the working classes largely interested, but of all classes, keep and maintain an absolute control over our immigration. This is an absolute abandonment of that principle. Now I venture to say, for my own part, that I would never give my adhesion to any such principle nor to its insertion in any treaty with any country. We have here an exceptional situation. We have an immense country, a sparse population, widely scattered, immense natural resources which are becoming daily better known. There are other countries, such as the empire of Japan, where the population is beyond the capacity of the country, and there are European countries where the population is extremely dense and where there is a continual tendency to overflow. What more natural than that the population of those countries should in large numbers, as no doubt they will in the ordinary course of things, tend towards this country where there are great facilities for settlement. It is, therefore, our duty, as I have often said, and others have said it better than I, to maintain absolute control over our immigration, so that we can stop it, or modify it, and regulate as we like the people who are coming to make this country their home.

Very far from pretending that we have any dislike for the Japanese, for my own part I have the greatest possible admiration for that people. I consider that their civilization has advanced in a marvellous manner within the past half century. They are a wonderful people, and I admire them greatly, and in many respects I am prepared to admit that they are our superiors. But there is a fact that we cannot forget, that experience has proved beyond all doubt. The civilization, the modes of life, of his oriental people are entirely different from our own. I will not discuss at present whether our civilization is superior or whether their mode of life, their method of government are better or worse than our own. Suffice it to say that they are entirely different, and the best proof of the immense difficulty of assimilation between oriental people and people of Aryan extraction is the fact that although for centuries past we have had establishments in the far east we have not assimilated with those people in any way. The establishments we have had at Hong Kong, Shanghai and all other places in the east, where Europeans are stationed, have remained isolated from the surround-

ing population. All the writers I have read on the subject have declared that the assimilation of these two races was most improbable, and indeed was impossible. Therefore it seems to me there is nothing in any way offensive in the attitude which I take, and many others with me, that we are opposed, in the present state of the development of our country, and in our present circumstances, to any surrender of our absolute right, given us, probably, for that very purpose at the time of confederation, to control immigration. There is no European country, as I have said, with whom, if we made a treaty, I would consent to the insertion of such a general clause as that. I foresee that the government will say that at the time that treaty was approved in this parliament there was no question as to these difficulties that have since arisen. My answer to that is that at that time we had the absolute assurance of the right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) that there would be no considerable immigration from Japan. He must have had some ground for that statement and the ground will probably be found when the correspondence and the reports which it is the object of this motion to have brought down are placed on the table of the House. But, under any circumstances, I am prepared to say to-day that the legislation went through too hastily. I do not know whether it was such legislation as the House had under its consideration yesterday which went through at the last moment of the session, but there is no doubt that, at any rate, from the question which was put at that time by my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Borden) or by some member in the House, objection was made and that it was overruled, or not considered because of the assurance we had from the Prime Minister. At that time and since we have been on very friendly terms with the empire of Japan, and I, for one would be very sorry to utter a single word which might be interpreted as not favouring those relations. Far from it. The empire of Japan is the ally of Great Britain and we are in very close union with the empire, forming part of it, and, for my part, I would be very pleased, to a very great degree, to see our commercial relations with the empire increased and developed and made most friendly. But, there is nothing unfriendly in the maintenance of the all-important principle that we should not be deprived of the right of exercising absolute control over our immigration. Oriental immigration, for the reasons to which I have very briefly adverted, is a particularly dangerous one. It is dangerous, not because—at least that is not the ground I take now—there is an objection to the oriental himself, but because you have there an element immensely numerous and desirous of expansion whether you consider the case of India, or Japan, or China. Japan particu-