

commend that assurance be sought from the Japanese government at this time. If they give an assurance that their action will not be revoked, it will be unnecessary to pass any legislation here; but should they revoke their action, it would mean more agitation in this country, and perhaps more friction between this government and the imperial government, and Japan. All this could be avoided by getting an assurance from the Japanese government at this time, and I think it could be got if it were sought.

Mr. INGRAM. If I remember rightly, a Bill was introduced last session to divide the capitation tax among the different provinces, I am not sure whether that is the law or not.

The PRIME MINISTER. It is the law.

Mr. INGRAM. Now that it has been increased, is it still the intention of the government to divide it among the different provinces.

The PRIME MINISTER. Certainly.

Mr. MORRISON. I would like to ask the right hon. first minister, in the event of Japan receding from the position it has taken, say after the session of parliament, what machinery could be invoked to stop an influx of 8,000 or 9,000 Japs within a few weeks or months? If that number were to go into British Columbia, it would have a most disastrous effect. It strikes me that before legislation could be passed, a great deal of harm would be done.

The PRIME MINISTER. I have to say to my hon. friend that he is contemplating a contingency which has not the slightest probability of taking place.

Mr. MORRISON. It is not remote.

The PRIME MINISTER. I consider it is not only remote but improbable, because all the negotiations we have had with the Japanese government—and our negotiations can only be through the Japanese Consul at Montreal—are of such a character as to assure us that there is not the slightest intention on the part of the Japanese government of revoking its present orders with respect to emigration.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I presume this is the despatch to which the right hon. gentleman referred a moment ago. It is a despatch from the colonial office to the Governor General, dated 9th April, 1899. The first portion of the despatch up to and included in the 7th paragraph, is taken up with the reasons alleged against the passage of such legislation as was adopted by the British Columbia legislature. The 8th and 9th clauses are as follows:

8. Her Majesty's government earnestly trust that on consideration of these explanations the government of British Columbia will at once procure the repeal of the provisions complained

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of and the substitution of legislation on the lines indicated above.

9. If this is impossible, Her Majesty's government feel compelled, however reluctant they may be to cause inconvenience to the province, to press on your ministers the importance in the general interests of the empire of using the powers vested in them by the British North America Act, for cancelling these measures to which Her Majesty's government object on grounds both of principle and policy.

Is that the despatch to which the right hon. gentleman refers?

The PRIME MINISTER. It is.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). That brings me to quote to my right hon. friend the language of one of the sections of the Natal Act:

The immigration into Natal, by land or sea, of any person of any of the classes defined in the following subsections, hereinafter called 'prohibited immigrants' is prohibited namely:

Any person who, when asked to do so by an officer appointed under this Act, shall fail to write out and sign, in the characters of any language of Europe, an application to the colonial secretary in the form set out in schedule B to this Act.

This provision, it is needless to say, would absolutely prohibit any immigration from China or Japan into the colony of Natal. I think that provisions of a similar character have been passed by some of the Australian colonies. What I desire my right hon. friend to say is whether or not this legislation of British Columbia was disallowed in consequence of this despatch I have just read from the colonial office, and if so, in what respect was the legislation passed by the province of British Columbia more injurious to imperial interests than that passed and now in force in the colony of Natal?

The PRIME MINISTER. I have nothing to add to what has been said. If my hon. friend will move for the correspondence, he will there find the reasons given. I cannot say whether disallowance took place in consequence of this legislation, I do not think it did, but my hon. friend will find all the reasons set forth in the correspondence.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I thought everything was here that is of any importance.

The PRIME MINISTER. With regard to the disallowance there is further correspondence, and I shall be very glad to take the opportunity of discussing the question from the standpoint of the disallowance of provincial legislation on some future occasion.

Progress reported.

EXPROPRIATION ACT AMENDMENT.

House again in Committee on Bill (No. 8) to amend the Expropriation Act.—The Minister of Justice.

On section 2.