

EXCLUSIA

I saw their learning, their great manufactures, their wealth, and their philosophy, gradually die down and almost disappear; until the great race of Alfred reached their shores and with merchantmen and mighty ships of war cut through the exclusion law, laughing to scorn the death penalty of the Japanese; and as the stream of foreigners from the West broke into the Island of Japan, from that moment the decay of Japan was stopped—their arts, their learning, their philosophy, and their wealth began to grow again. When the dual picture disappeared from the wall, I wondered what these men of long ago had to do with the politicians, the clergy, and the laity of today, and especially what they had to do with me! Vulcan, a son of toil; so I turned to the Spirit of the Night and said—‘What has all this ancient history to do with me and the men of my time?’—And he replied in the same sad voice—‘Oh! Son of Toil, your epoch is but the veriest atom in the æons of time, but the inestimable gift is given unto you of this day; to know—what has been. Wait patiently until I show you all.’ With that he touched the wall and I saw another picture flash out.

TABLEAU VI. Again the Republic of Exclusion was before my eyes; and I, Vulcan, was in great trouble; for instead of the joy and the wealth and the learning which our leaders had promised, it looked to me as if the hand of death was slowly stealing over the whole land. The City of Vancouver was a veritable City of Desolation; the population had dwindled to one lone Siwash who stood in Hastings Street, his eye fixed on a projecting sign on which I read the word—‘Sunset’. The trains that formerly had rushed in from the East, loaded with passengers and freight, now seldom crossed the border; the great merchant ships which had come almost daily from Asia, came no more to the New Republic of Exclusion; warehouses, which had been filled with wheat and merchandise for export, and Oriental goods of import, stood empty; the