

British Columbia Fisheries and Asiatics

SOME objections have been taken to the attitude of the editor of this journal on the British Columbia fisheries and the relation of Asiatic fishermen thereto. It is contended by some that these Japanese are "naturalized British subjects," and have equal rights with white men. It is further claimed that if we interfere we shall cause trouble between Canada and Japan. We purpose answering both these objections.

In the first place we affirm that the *naturalization of Japanese in this province is a gigantic farce*. These men are naturalized (?) by the score, and no one knows who they are, or if they even exist. It is purely a *paper* naturalization for purposes of gain, to secure business privileges which cannot be obtained otherwise, and in no sense with a view to becoming citizens, nor do they become any the less subjects of the Mikado. Again, if they are really citizens *why do they not vote?* Would any of these apologists for Japanese labor publicly advocate giving the 10,000 Japanese fishermen the franchise? The fact is we do not recognize them as citizens, nor dare we do so, for they could easily swamp the whites at the polls and would vote as instructed. Few of them understand English and they know little or nothing of our institutions or history, and we *dare not* grant the franchise, therefore we contend in spite of the legal farce that they are not British subjects.

As another proof of this we point to the contention that is made, *that if we interfere the Mikado of Japan will be appealed to*. If these men are British subjects *what right would the Mikado have to interfere?* The

very fact that it is constantly argued that the Japanese Government would be offended if these fishermen were refused rights here is *prima facie* evidence that *they are still subjects of the Mikado* and therefore cannot claim rights as citizens of Canada.

Our contention is that the time has passed when such "milk and water" arguments may be accepted, but rather that we should face the question, and no matter who is "hit," decide it in the best interests of Canada. For years political heelers have been getting fat off British Columbia's fisheries and by an unholy, unpatriotic alliance with Japanese merchants and coolies. If this system is allowed to continue it will be a monument of shame to the Conservatives of this province. We have, as a party, condemned the Liberals, and it is now up to us to make good.

If, in doing our duty, some political favorite is the loser, he must go in the interest of the whole community.

Reader, keep this fact in mind, viz., that whereas ten years ago there were 9,500 white fishermen on this coast, now there are very few, but in their place there are upwards of 10,000 Japanese, who have a secret society at which and through which they manipulate this great industry.

This organization is under the control of a syndicate, which operates from Seattle, Tacoma and Kobe, and is backed by the largest and most powerful financial interests in Japan. Shall this condition continue, or shall we administer our affairs in the interests of our own citizens?—*The Western Call, Vancouver.*