

THE PROVINCE

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WEALTH SENT TO ASIA.

A correspondent has asked The Province to inform him as nearly as possible what amount of money the Oriental population of British Columbia sends out of the country yearly. The question is one which it would be impossible to answer except approximately and in this case approximation ranges from one hundred thousand dollars to perhaps three million. To obtain anything like a fair idea of the amount of money which is sent from this province to Asia annually, and for which there is no return, the business of the banks would require to be scrutinized, and even then the full volume of transmission would not be learned. Many returning Orientals carry with them large sums which they convert into English money when they reach Hongkong. But the leading business men of the Chinese colony in Vancouver possess a fair understanding of what their countrymen send in the aggregate and they place the amount at between two and three million, nearer three, perhaps, than two.

The Chinese residents are, of course, those who send the largest sums away. The Japanese are not only less numerous but, as yet, they are not in the same way of making money as the people from China and besides they do not appear to have in the same equal degree that abiding affection for their relatives at home and that rooted love for their native land which distinguishes the Chinaman the world over.

The steamers plying between Vancouver and Hongkong seldom leave this coast without carrying bills of exchange amounting to between one hundred and fifty and two hundred thousand dollars payable to Chinamen whose relations in this country are making fortunes for the family. As a steamer leaves every three weeks for Hongkong, an idea of the annual tribute of British Columbia to China may be obtained.

Of course, it would be unfair to say that this is entirely lost money to this country. Some of it may be, but for a very considerable portion of it value has been given and the most ardent and embittered anti-Orientalist should recognize this. If he does not any argument against Oriental immigration which he might deduce from it would suffer as a consequence. But the argument might fairly be drawn that with a white instead of a yellow population in the province the money so sent abroad would remain here to build up and develop the country.

Still it cannot be denied that of the Chinese population a fair proportion

Colonial Government seemed to fear—but for the purpose of ascertaining what the existing treaty engagements are."

But the Americans interposed. It appears that the issue shall be not. What were the actual terms arranged in 1818? but What terms would now be reasonable in view of the altered economic conditions which, in modern times, have made profitable fishing more difficult for Massachusetts fishermen? Hence their eager anxiety and astute manoeuvring to make the British Government admit beforehand that the terms of the modus vivendi—which in effect concede the extra-treaty privileges desired by the Americans—are in themselves a reasonable engagement.

The whole business is unpleasant to those Englishmen who cling to the traditional British theory of judicial function, and who have been attracted by the idea of accepting, as a basis of settlement in treaty disputes, a judicial interpretation of historical fact, not of modern reasonableness—which, by nature is a non-judicial problem. It now appears that international arbitration, even in these treaty disputes, is nothing better than a disingenuous method of gaining, or retaining, by means of cunning something which is not worth an appeal to war. If so, let the judicial make-believe be dropped, and let the Court consist of an equal number of assessors, with a statesman-umpire to adjust the differences on a "reasonable" basis. There might then be less recourse to arbitration, but the parties would at least go into it open-eyed, and the British peoples would not be called upon to sacrifice the traditions which are the soul of their common life.

Another unpleasant reflection is that by yielding in this instance the Government will have encouraged the United States to try the same game again—just as the Alaska experience has brought forth in due time the present fruit. At the outset, two and a half years ago, Sir Edward Grey seemed inclined to adopt the statesmanlike course of enforcing the British interpretation of treaty rights in British waters, while offering to go to arbitration at once upon the historical question of actual fact. Unfortunately he was induced to abandon this position by the threats of the Americans that otherwise their fishermen would make a disturbance in Newfoundland waters. Instead of then dispatching a cruiser—to uphold British law rather than to protect a breach of it—he agreed to a "purely temporary" arrangement giving the Americans all they desired "pending arbitration." The following year arbitration was still pending and a second "purely temporary" arrangement was concluded, again giving the Americans extra-treaty privileges. Now for the third season a similar modus vivendi is concluded, and arbitration is still pending. It will continue pend-

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