

ORIENTAL IMMIGRATION

Views of One Long a Missionary Among the East Indians.

Rev. Dr. Kenneth J. Grant, now of Vancouver, who for many years was a missionary to the East Indians in Trinidad, contributes the following article on the subject of Oriental immigration:

"I have read with much satisfaction the editorial article in The Presbyterian of Jan. 1. May I crave a little space to remark on the East Indian side of this huge, perplexing, pressing problem. Indians under the same flag as ourselves, stand in peculiarly close relations, and bald legislation of exclusion from the Dominion, notwithstanding the urgency of economic and racial arguments, would be impolitic and unjust.

"If we can justify our entrance into India's foreigners in the days of Queen Elizabeth for the purpose of gain, much more may East Indians now, not as foreigners, but as subjects of His Majesty King George, claim admission to Canada to improve their circumstances. And yet unrestricted Oriental immigration is inadmissible. This is the prevailing, if not the universal sentiment.

"What can we do? On us as a British people rests a heavy responsibility. We have created present conditions. When we entered India there was no disposition to emigrate. Caste regulations forbade, on pain of forfeiture of all privilege, embarking on the high seas. But we have taught India the folly of caste limitations. We found India a congealed mass, but we have introduced the chemicals that have liquefied it, and obedient to law, it flows, and it flows with greater volume and increasing momentum. We can't check the flow. If we can't dam the stream, is it possible to guide it? An attempt, we think, should be made even though it requires effort, perseverance and sacrifice.

"1. Let an imperial selection be made of suitable territory under the flag, having due regard to favorable conditions, such as climate, fertility, water supply, trade facilities, etc., etc. The climate of northern Australia, unsuited to

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the white man, would in many respects resemble that of India: the Soudan has already been named; a limitless area awaits occupancy in British Guiana; Trinidad and Jamaica have tens of thousands of East Indians now and could accommodate many more, and Honduras, with millions of acres unbroken by the plough or the hoe, might offer an inviting field for the hard-working, thrifty East Indian.

"2. Land now unalienated by the crown, and untilled, supplies no revenue. True it is an asset, but for the present, an unremunerative asset. Why not designate such territories as may be available, and invite occupancy. To encourage those who would emigrate but are without any considerable means, let the government provide temporary shelter for the newcomers, open up roads as required, and so apportion the lands that the frontage on the road might be so narrow that the families might dwell near to each other. The initial expenditure, prudently made, could be fairly levied on the land, and paid in installments covering, say, five years, and thus the advances could be fully reimbursed. We would advocate a generous policy, which after all, would simply be a loan to be returned with interest through the sale of crown lands, now unremunerative.

"3. The question may be asked, how much action on the part of the government would affect East Indians now domiciled aboard? I think the East Indian in British Columbia would probably remain where he is. His prospects of accumulating here are too bright for him to assume the risks involved in a removal. But his experience here might be utilized to the advantage of a new colony. Progressive, influential men of character and with a vision, and acquainted with English might be selected and placed on a liberal salary from the outset, to assist in the formation, development and government of the new settlement. A fruitful source of disquiet in India is the filling of positions by white men, which the natives claim is rightfully theirs. Now, if the course suggested were adopted, confidence would be inspired, complaints reduced to a minimum(Sic) and possibly problems solved, that still wait a solution in the homeland."