

[052]

# Immigration Branch

Department of the Interior

Canada



19

## Treatment of Hindus.

Editor Province.—I shall be thankful to you if you will allow me a little space on behalf of the Hindus, for the sake of justice and for the information of those who are interested in the welfare of the men from India. How they came here, what treatment they have received, who induced them to come, and in this transaction who gained and who lost, and whether they would prove themselves useful to the new adopted country or not? Such are the questions to be settled, although not in one article.

These questions require constant attention and deep study by those who are in any way interested in the good of the humanity, and the Hindus particularly. For myself I am constantly watching the movement and would be glad to see an amicable settlement at an early date.

The first time I had the honor of meeting the attorney-general I laid before him my request to make it a law that liquor should not be sold to the Hindus, as in the case of the Indians of British Columbia. He replied that the Hindus can not be classed with the Canadian Indians and that the petitions should come to him from the Hindus themselves signed by many. I then tried to co-operate with Dr. Spencer of the Temperance League, but nothing has so far been accomplished. As I understand it Hindus are not allowed to vote. Now if the Hindus are not allowed to vote, why should not a law be made to stop the liquor from being sold to them? I am not asking that the taxes on the land, which the Hindus are now paying as they are owners of properties, should be rescinded. There should be no taxation without representation is the recognized law of good government.

Mr. H. H. Stevens, M. P., though he saw, he said, "the actual conduct of the Hindu soldiers in action" considers "they are unfit for British citizenship either in their own country or Canada," and he thinks they are morally low, so they should not be allowed to come. He is also afraid of their over-population, and he insists that the policy of the ex-premier of continuous journey would not stop the Hindus from coming over here, for as soon as the direct steamship company will run from Calcutta to Vancouver or Victoria, B. C., the Hindus would come in thousands.

Some time ago Mr. Stevens said that Sikhs did not fight for the British flag in 1857, but, moved through fear of the rebels, they cast in their lot with the British. Let us hear the testimony of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in connection with the state entry at Delhi in December last. He acknowledged there the services rendered by the Sikh chiefs at the time of the mutiny. That acknowledgment appeared in the press of this city, but Mr. Stevens was then silent. Now he again utters nonsense in the House of Commons about the Hindus. Let Mr. Stevens come forward on the public platform and prove in what respect the Hindus are morally low. "A tree is known by its fruits."

Many Hindus now resident here are anxious to bring their families to Vancouver. When I requested a local official of a steamship company to issue prepaid first-class tickets for the mother and four children of Mr. Hakam Singh, who has been steadily at work here for the last six years, he told me plainly that he could not do so unless and until the immigration department allowed him. Application was then made to the minister of the interior, but the matter is yet pending, though more than a year has passed and the children are yet waiting to join their father who has settled here permanently in his own newly built house. Let some one pay a visit to his home and see who lives better, a white laborer or a Hindu laborer.

Another with whom I conversed considers the Hindus are more intellectual and advanced than the Japanese or Chinese, but he is afraid of the Hindus business competition. Do as you wish to be done by is the commonsense formula. Live and let others live is another phrase, but he does not accept both. How am I to tell him to help others to live, a nobler and higher aspiration?

In conclusion, I must thank Rev. Dr. Grant through whose activities four night schools have recently been established, and some of the Hindu laborers have joined to get free lessons there. It is further hoped that more schools would be added in the suburbs. Therefore it is highly desirable that educated Hindus should join with him and thus help their own countrymen and at the same time add something to their own knowledge.

G. D. KUMAR.

Vancouver, April 14, 1913.

"Province" Apr 15/13