

A JAPANESE HORNET'S-NEST FOR JOHN BULL

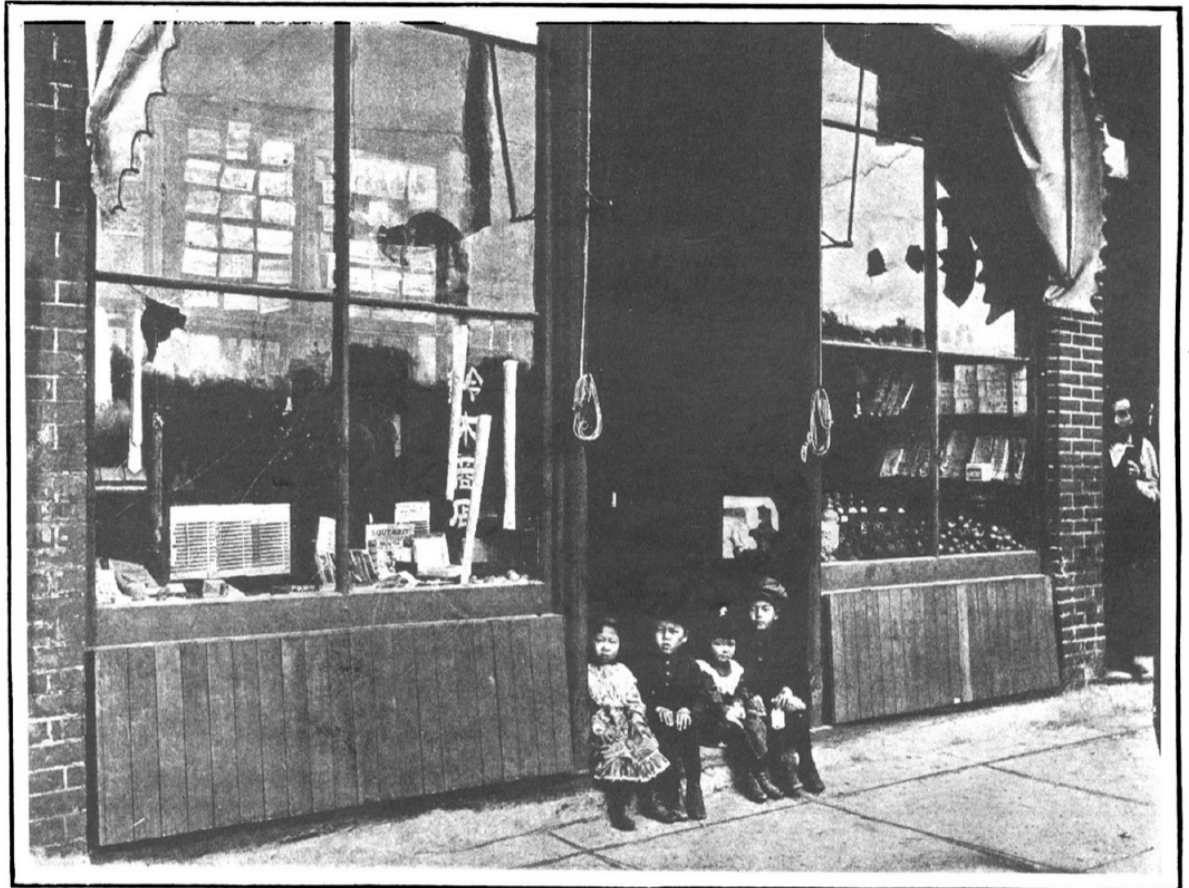
By WILLIAM HEMMINGWAY

THE dust has settled. Yells of rage and the crash of pillage have given way to a forced calm. The Asiatics of Vancouver are no longer in danger of being stoned and beaten on sight, and the hoodlums who delight in Jap-baiting are safe from the rifle-bullets of the proud little brown men who have sworn to die fighting rather than be kicked about by white ruffians.

In the calm following the wild night of rioting, one fact emerges with great clearness—the attacks upon Asiatics in Vancouver, like the attacks upon them in San Francisco half a year ago, were due, not to ignorant race rivalry or race jealousy or race hatred, but to economic differences. White laborers, whether British subjects or American citizens, who earn from \$1.50 to \$2 a day, will not allow themselves to be forced into losing competition with Japanese or Chinamen who are rolling in wealth if they are lucky enough to earn seventy-five cents or \$1 a day. Race, color of skin, slant of eyes, are all outside the question. The two-dollar-a-day man won't put up with the rivalry of the one-dollar man. He is bound to get rid of the cheap fellow, peaceably if he can, riotously if he must.

The present violent outbreak against the Orientals is the illegal outcome of years of law-abiding objections to their presence in British Columbia, similar to the exclusion agita-

tion among the American Pacific Coast States. The Mongolian influx began in the middle eighties, when the railroads were being built in the province. Chinese coolies swarmed in, earned wages



The Shop at the Door of which the Children are sitting was one of those attacked

continued...

that were big to them, saved money, went back to China and lived on the fat of the land. More coolies came in their places and hoped to do likewise. While Chinese immigration has been much reduced of late, the Japanese have been migrating into this province in great numbers, especially since the close of Japan's war with Russia, two years ago.

The cheap yellow and brown men have driven out the whites and Indians from the salmon fisheries and canneries, the farms, and the mines. Orientals form one-quarter of the population of Vancouver, the principal city of British Columbia, which contains in all seventy thousand people. During the last two years thousands of inefficient Hindus have come in, too; but the chief objection to them is that their poverty makes them a heavy drain on public and private charity.

Year after year organized labor bodies and associations formed to oppose Asiatic immigration have sent memorials to the Dominion authorities, who ignored them. Year after year the legislature has passed an act to limit coolie immigration into this province as it is limited in Natal; but the act has never been approved, and therefore has failed to become a law. This year the act was passed as usual, and Lieutenant-Governor Dunsmuir refused to sign it. The fact that he disapproved the measure under the instructions of Premier Laurier did not lessen the indignation of the people. The Premier dared not allow a law that discriminated against the subjects of the Emperor of Japan, warm friend and ally of His Majesty, King Edward VII. Under the terms of the treaty between Great Britain and Japan, six hundred Japanese were allowed to enter Canada each year.

When the governments of the United States and Japan reached the agreement which has practically put an end to Japanese coolie immigration from Honolulu into the United States, the undesired Japanese began flocking into Vancouver by every ship from Honolulu. Two months of this influx wrought mightily upon the temper of British-Columbians.

The Oriental Exclusion League held a public meeting on Saturday night to protest against the inaction of the Dominion government. Four thousand men crowded the City Hall of Vancouver, and thousands more flocked about the outside. Protestant clergymen and other prominent citizens made speeches in favor of exclusion of the Asiatics, but urging that nothing be done which could possibly arouse ill feeling. After the meeting was adjourned the crowd in the street formed an impromptu procession, paraded for an hour or longer, and with many loud cries of execration burned an effigy of Lieutenant-Governor Dunsmuir.

It was Saturday night. A great deal of whiskey had been sold over the hotel bars. The crowd was inflamed. Moved by impulse and apparently without any concerted plan, a mob started for the Chinese and Japanese quarters of the city. Individuals were not attacked at first, but property was destroyed right and left. With hoots and yells the crowd surged through Chinatown and the Japanese quarter, smashing every shop front, store, or restaurant that they passed. Paving-stones were hurled through plate-glass windows. Silks, porcelains, objects of art and valuable pieces of bric-a-brac were trampled and ruined. There was no robbery, but there was unlimited destruction.

Taken by surprise, the Chinamen fled from the mob, aided now and then by kicks and spurred by volleys of stones. They never offered to resist the roaring white men. But the Japanese were made of different stuff. They seized planks, clubs, and bottles and put up a stout resistance for a while, though the mob at last prevailed because of its greater numbers and superior strength.

Baron Aikujiro Ishii, a special envoy sent from Tokio by the Mikado to study the conditions of Japanese immigration into Canada, arrived in Vancouver that evening and was caught in the midst of the mêlée. With him was Sabura Hisamédzu, Japanese consul at Seattle, Washington. Their prominence did not save these eminent gentlemen from volleys and hustling. They withdrew to safety amid a shower of stones and bottles.

The attack was so unexpected that the police were not prepared to resist it, and more than half an hour passed before order was restored. Meantime the police formed lines across the streets leading into the Asiatic quarters and arrested twenty-six white rioters, who were afterward punished in the police courts with heavy fines and imprisonment.

The Japanese merchants and tradesmen estimated their losses at from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Baron Ishii wired a report of the outrage to Consul-General Nosse at Ottawa, concluding as follows:

"Twice again they tried to attack the Japanese stores, but on account of the vigilance of the Japanese and the city police, and also the late hour of the night, their number gradually decreased, and by three o'clock Sunday morning the rowdies scattered everywhere, and tranquillity was restored by dawn. The damage done to the Japanese stores is as follows: general stores, 13; hotels, 9; candy and confectionery shops, 7; bath-houses, 2; barber shops, 5; shoemakers, 2; banking office, 1; newspaper office, 1; employment offices, 4; restaurant, 1; rice-mill, 1; hatter's shop, 1; tailors, 2; watchmaker, 1. Of these fifty stores all the window and door glass was smashed. Two Japanese were wounded."

Compared with this wholesale smashing, the damage done by a few hoodlums to two Japanese restaurants and a bath-house in San Francisco is the merest child's play. Remembering the long and loud shrieks emitted last winter by the jingoes and the yellow press of Japan over the really trivial outbreaks in San Francisco,

one would expect to hear much more protest against this outrage, ten times greater in extent and perpetrated by subjects of an allied power. But there was hardly a ripple. *Hochi*, the Tokio organ of the jingoes, declared that the riot was due to "the failure of Minister Hayashi to rise to his full responsibility in the San Francisco episode." The government newspapers expressed their belief that the British authorities would bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion and see that full indemnity is paid.

The attitude of that dear old Thunderer, the *London Times*, has been pathetic and ludicrous in turn. At the first news of the outbreak it solemnly proclaimed the following beautiful thought: "It is not at present obvious how a permanent amelioration of the situation is to be effected." Next the *Times* thundered: "These shameful riots were organized on British soil by American labor agitators. The agitation has nothing to do with the moral uprising against Orientals, but is based upon self-interest which has been frightened by competition." The *Times* has not been able to produce, although fiercely challenged by the American press, one scrap of proof of its ridiculous assertion.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* took a saner view.

"The Asiatic," said the *Gazette*, editorially, "makes his entry into Canada under the auspices of the Great God of Cheapness. He comes with an offer to take work at half the rate or less than is paid for white men's labor, an arrangement which none the less can be carried out on a basis which involves a great advance upon the scale of remuneration enjoyed in his own country. In competition of this character the Caucasian believes, and all economic reasoning seems to support him, that his own standards of life are certain to be depleted and destroyed."

Thanks to vigorous work by the police, there has been no more vandalism in Vancouver, though there was much muttering of threats among the people, and the Japanese are known to have provided themselves with hundreds of guns and thousands of cartridges. Judging by their truculent attitude for a whole week, they would joyously welcome a renewal of the rioting.

But the British and Japanese home governments have done everything in their power to stamp out the sparks of the conflagration and prevent the possibility of a rekindle, although the people of British Columbia are still determined to put an end to Chinese and Japanese immigration and maintain their province exclusively as a "white man's country."

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has suggested to Baron Ishii that the British-Japanese treaty as to immigration be changed. Baron Ishii has replied that Japan is still strictly limiting the number of her emigrants to Canada to the six hundred a year allowed by treaty; but as to the migration from Honolulu, which is under the American flag and therefore, unfortunately, uncontrollable by his Imperial Majesty Mutsuhito, nothing can be done. Incidentally, Baron Ishii declared that there will be the greatest difficulty in obtaining amendments to the treaty at present.

Thinking men in Vancouver opine that Uncle Sam is not worrying much over the Japanese question at present, but that John Bull is finding in it material for abundance of deep and disquieting thought.

