

ILLEGAL ENTRY OF CHINESE.

It is well established that both on our northern and our southern frontiers the Chinese pay no attention whatever to the provisions of the Exclusion act, but cross the borders into the United States with perfect impunity. A Deputy Collector of Customs in the Puget sound district says that he saw seven or eight well-benten trails across the line between British Columbia and Washington Territory, and that there is not a customs officer to guard that portion of the frontier, and it is well known that the Chinese cross the Mexican border in considerable numbers.

There is little use in trying to patrol the entire boundary line between the United States and British Columbia on the north and the United States and Mexico on the south. The lines are so long that it would take an army of men to watch them, and would cost an immense sum; and even then the work of excluding the Chinese would be imperfectly done. They are very cunning and very patient, and would watch the chance to slip over the line and scatter out on American territory, and then it would be too late to do anything with them.

But there is a way to distinguish the sheep from the goats; to tell those who have a right to be here by virtue of their prior residence from those who are coming here, either for the first time or upon their return, and that is by registering those who are now here and issuing to each a permit of residence. If this were done and each Chinaman required to show his permit either at stated times or whenever called upon to do so by the proper officers of the Government, it would follow that all Chinese who had not a permit were here illegally, and they could be at once deported as law-breakers. France requires the registration of all strangers who visit that country, and the authorities are in no wise bashful about making domiciliary visitations; and if civilized people will put up with that in France, surely the Chinaman could not object to a similar rule in the United States.

It is not probable that the Chinese Government sends its subjects to British Columbia and Mexico on purpose to evade the Exclusion act, but it cares very little about it one way or the other, and the man-dealers of course have no scruples about smuggling Chinese into the country. This kind of contraband trade will go on and increase until some stop is put to it, and the United States will have to take the matter in hand. Perhaps there may be some more efficacious way than the system of registration and residence permits, but in default of any other that system would put a check to the illegal entry of Chinese.