

# THE BRITISH COLONIST.

Sunday Morning, April 7, 1872

## The New Franchise.

The Franchise has been changed so as to include every bona fide resident British subject who shall take the trouble to have his name placed on the Voters List ; and it has also been changed so as especially and effectually to exclude Chinese and Indians. Our local contemporary feels 'quite certain' that this last provision 'will have the effect of killing the whole measure.' No one can be surprised that the local Chinese organ should take this stand. It will be remembered how it opposed every attempt to make that class of residents contribute their fair quota of taxes, and how it clamored against the effort made by the member for Nanaimo to prevent Chinese labor coming into direct competition with that of the whites. Now, consistently enough, the Chinese organ is up in arms against the exclusion of its almond-eyed pets from the political franchise, and it protests that 'There are hundreds, ay, thousands of Chinese in the country, natives of the Colony of Hong Kong ;

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&c, who are legislated against in this instance.' There doubtless are; and that circumstance constituted the chief reason for the explicit exclusion of Chinese. The British Government has an undoubted right to breed long-tailed subjects in Hong Kong; but we claim that this Province has the constitutional right to decide whether that peculiar breed of subjects shall be entitled to vote for members, or sit as members of our local Parliament. The Constitution gives us the undoubted power to say who shall and who shall not vote at our political elections, and British Columbia is not likely to surrender that power in favor of Chinese residents. But it occurs to us that, in the case of our contemporary, the wish is father to the thought, in this instance. It is 'quite certain' that the liberal and improved franchise will never become law, because it does not desire that it should. Its pro tem editor has long been inspired by a desire to enter Parliament. He has already made two unsuccessful attempts and, in both instances found himself at the foot of the poll. He doubtless contemplates another effort; and, could he lead his long-tailed pets to the poll he might possibly succeed. There's the rub!

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