

No. 2.

The Japanese press and publicists talk bitterly about our limitation of the immigration of Japanese laborers and now more recently about the San Francisco authorities' withholding from Japanese licenses to carry on certain trades. Their tone is as if something unwarranted were being done in this country. Of course by the closing paragraph of Article II of the Treaty of 1894 the United States and Japan respectively reserved within their jurisdictions complete liberty of regulation with respect to the subjects of the immigration of laborers, police and public security, and trade (The context of the Treaty shows the word "trade" to be used in contradistinction to the larger meaning of "commerce" as used therein).

It is noteworthy that directly after the operation of the Treaty of 1894, the Japanese Government itself availed of the right above reserved by ordaining that foreign laborers should not reside or carry on business outside the former Settlements unless with the special permission of the administrative authorities, which might or might not be given. (Imperial Ordinance No. 352).



Home Office Notification No. 42 under the above Ordinance explains that the laborers referred to were men engaged in agriculture, fishing, mining, civil engineering, architecture, manufacturing, transporting, carting, stevedoring, and other miscellaneous work, excepting domestic service. Thus the freedom of movement and the occupation of the American laborer in Japan outside the former Settlements has been since seven years placed by regulation entirely at the discretion of the administrative authorities.

It is observed that the Japanese press and publicists encourage their public to believe that American regulation of the immigration of Japanese laborers and even of Japanese participation in local petty trades, distasteful as such regulation may be, is otherwise than in strict accord with the Treaty.

Another aspect of the way these matters are presented to the Japanese public is that the simple basis of the agitation for exclusion is seldom or never mentioned, while the Japanese are continually urged to suspect race prejudice and indignity. Every disagreeable remark in the American press is widely circulated, not so the great volume of friendly and sympathetic American comment.

Before the Treaty of Portsmouth the same Japanese press and publicists were allowed to build in the public mind such dreams that riots and threatened assassinations

inations

sinations resulted upon the publication of the peace terms. The Japanese Government apparently could do nothing to destroy the public's false dream because any such step would be diplomatically disadvantageous vis-a-vis Russia. Can the Japanese Government have a similar reason now to do little or nothing to awaken the public from its misunderstanding?

The basis of the agitation for exclusion is of course purely economic. Can it be doubted if thousands and thousands of Americans went to Japan and began drawing jin-riki-shas and engaging in other trades at half the prevailing compensation that a movement for the exclusion of American laborers would immediately issue? This view of the question is simple enough to be readily comprehended by anyone, yet it is never explained to the Japanese public.

It should be remembered too that since some thirty years there has been among the people of the Pacific Coast a chronic fear that they were to be economically and numerically flooded by people from across the Pacific. The evidence of the numerical and economic preponderance of the Japanese in the Hawaiian Islands is before their eyes and represents to their minds what will be their own position if Japanese immigration be not checked.

As for the occasional riotous damaging of Japanese premises in San Francisco, these seem to have been incidental to the riotous conditions generally prevailing, which equally caused violence to Americans and injury to their property. To illustrate the general effect of the peculiar conditions in San Francisco, it is remarkable that even American laborers from the Eastern States were actually excluded by the labor unions in San Francisco. ^{TP}In writing of the unfortunate incident of May 20th, when a Japanese restaurant and bath house were damaged in San Francisco, the Japanese press generally clamors for the settlement of the matter as a diplomatic question, which it of course could not become unless all the legal remedies should first have been exhausted and justice should have still remained undone. Redress is now being sought in the courts of California and a representative of the Federal Department of Justice has instructions to assist the plaintiffs so far as possible.

Whatever anti-Japanese prejudice has grown up on the Pacific Coast has simply been brought into existence by the agitators for exclusion as a means to their ends.

Among the friends of Japan in this country it has been a matter for surprise that such violence of speech and such wholesale assumption of race prejudi-

has been evidenced by even respectable Japanese newspapers and publicists of standing, from whom a greater moderation and a deeper appreciation of the real conditions were expected. This has been a disappointment to the friends of Japan and a delight to her enemies, who say that an older established power would show more reserve and confidence.

With a respectable government in San Francisco, which is hoped for in the near future, and with evidence that the influx of Japanese labor is really diminishing, - to satisfy the exclusionists, - the position of Japanese on the Pacific Coast should cease to give cause for complaint.

Referring to the recent regulations to limit the immigration of laborers, it is very noteworthy that statistice show that since the enforcement of those regulations the monthly immigration of Japanese into the mainland territory of the United States instead of diminishing has actually increased. It is feared that a large number of petty tradesmen who readily become laborers on account of the exorbitant wages now prevailing may be obtaining passports and so defeating the purpose of the Japanese Government to restrict the immigration to the United States of Japanese subjects of the class to which these actually join after entering this country. For six months prior to the enforcement of the restrictive

regulations

regulations, the average Japanese immigration was about 937 per month; since their enforcement it has been about 971. Moreover, very large numbers of Japanese laborers are reported to be making their way across the borders from Canada and especially from Mexico. In the face of these facts it is difficult to satisfy the agitators for exclusion.

There is no blinking the fact that this Government is compelled to restrict the immigration of Japanese laborers and petty tradesmen. It remains for the Governments of the United States and of Japan to see to it that this inevitable circumstance shall not have the unnecessary and deplorable effect of in any way interfering with the relations of friendship and commerce which have always so happily existed and which are important to both Governments and to both peoples.

As a matter of fact it is supposed that the Japanese Government would prefer that its people should migrate to Korea, where Japan has such a great work to do, and it is understood here that the Japanese Government is not at all averse to the cessation of the immigration of laborers and petty tradesmen into this country. It is important however that the Japanese people should understand the real reason for this policy and should not make the mistake of supposing that the character and fine

qualities

qualities of the Japanese nation are not appreciated in America.

It seems likely that before long there must be greater restrictions on general immigration into the United States. Meanwhile it is natural that such restriction should begin with the laborers whose presence most seriously affects the standard of wages and who are least readily assimilated with the rest of the population.

July 6, 1907.



Montagu Wilson.