

The New Canadian

THE VANGUARD OF NISEI OPINION

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A paper published by and for second generation Japanese in Canada, and devoted to their welfare as citizens of Canada.

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The Sane, Just Approach

Indicative of the sane and responsible attitude which a growing proportion of Canadians are taking towards the so-called "Japanese problem in B. C." is the editorial stand of the Vancouver Province in its comment upon the resolution recently adopted by Vancouver's City Council.

On minor points we should like to take issue with the Province, particularly in its description of the second generation as "unassimilable," and in its suggestion that smuggling of alien Japanese into Canada still exists. But with the greater part of the Province's thesis we are in complete agreement.

And most of all it is reassuring and heartening for us to hear from an organ as responsible and influential as the Province remarks such as these:

"Can we expect to get any answer that will be final by treating these people harshly or unjustly, by badgering them or driving them from one occupation to another? After all, they are here and we cannot send them away. Most of them were born here and belong nowhere else. If we are sensible and just we shall recognize that fact and do what we can to create a condition which will be comfortable and just both to them and to us. We shall not annoy or persecute our Japanese fellow citizens or make political footballs of them and their necessities.

On the contrary, we shall approach the problem with what intelligence and ingenuity we possess and endeavour to find a formula that will be satisfactory all round . . .

With this sane, cool-headed attitude toward a problem so often aggravated and distorted by political opportunists and their emotional appeal to blind prejudice, we are confident that a just, fair and studied solution can be found, which will be worthy of the best trained statesmen of this nation.

Practical Citizenship

A valuable lesson and example in community co-operation was brought to public attention this week in National Registration, when some two hundred Canadian citizens of Japanese descent gave a demonstration of their practical citizenship, offering their services to ease the difficult task of registering Vancouver's Japanese community.

Throughout the province, in every Japanese community of any size, this spirit of service and co-operation was much in evidence; and above everything else, it gives us reason to hope and to believe in the second generation, and in their ability to achieve citizenship, no matter what the obstacles.

In Vancouver it is no accident that of Nisei organizations it should have been the Japanese Canadian Citizens League, which, along with the older community organizations, the Canadian Japanese Association, stepped into the picture, nor is it an accident that a large burden of the organizational work fell upon the shoulders of a few officials of the League.

The smooth functioning of the registration will be a stimulating and heartening experience for those few, who have taken up difficult responsibilities in attempting to provide the community as a whole with much-needed leadership—heartening and stimulating principally because large numbers of the second generation, so often accused of childish indifference to anything more than the satisfaction of their senses, proved themselves ready and willing to rise to the demands of the situation.

To those who, often at considerable trouble to themselves, were big-enough to offer their services for the common good, we have the pleasure of extending the thanks of the community. For the many who though able, remained as small and indifferent as ever, we reserve comment.

ROOF-TOP RETREAT

By M. N. T.

High on this pebbled roof-top
where the heavens begin,
Where moon-glow soothes with silver
black tar and tin,
Is a little roof garden
cherished by my hands,
Scented shadows that spring from
old coffee cans.

This is my haven,
a roof-top retreat,
Where I do not hear those voices
that bray and bleat,
"You can't live in quiet,
you're the wrong race,
You can't be so human,
you've got the wrong face."
Oh if I could get them up here
to look down at my street,
Where Picadilly and Ginza do
come together and meet!

But then, I love my pebbled roof-top
and how can they know
The beauty of my roof-top, if they should miss
the great truth below.
So let me stand in silence here,
facing the big clean sea,
And feel the sea-mists come
drifting with velvet mystery
And hear stars at my finger-tips
beg symphony.

Voice of the Nisei

Editor, The New Canadian —

Dear Sir: We are in the midst of war, the real thing and the home-made variety. Because we are in between we can feel it coming and going. Without asking . . . we know war to be the expression of the spirit of hatred! When such a thing is foot-loose, the exact opposite emotion, love, is almost sucked under.

And yet, all of us know that the period of the greatest progress is always made when the product of love—peace, tolerance, goodwill and intelligent thinking—occupied the minds of men. And yet the very reason for war, provides us with power that might well be harnessed to work for us! ITS NAME IS DETERMINATION.

Alderman Wilson has an object, and in his determination to reach it he plans thoroughly and executes deliberately. It is the product of a State of Mind which stays focussed on the objective—and which knows that in order to attain it, it must also give . . . yes, even sacrifice. A purpose is the power that drives the wheels of determination which literally moves mountains in the form of opposition and obstacles.

The Nisei Cause

Now imagine for a moment what you and I could accomplish if we harnessed enthusiasm to our Nisei Cause!!! Suppose that we take the suggestions that appeared in The New Canadian for Aug. 14 (or any issue) and use them as though the situation, re discrimination, were for the moment the most important thing in our lives. Suppose that we should accept the full importance of the need for a pro-

gram of mental house-cleaning and get rid of any and everything which might in any way be construed even to suggest that we are not behind Canada 100 per cent in her war effort.

Yes, determination, which is the drive behind the fighting mood, can be used to help us as well as to oppose us. We all must use this very same kind of determination as Alderman Wilson is using to further his own political career.

More difficult times are ahead for us. We who wish to enjoy the fruits of democracy must plant and cultivate the ideals, persevering in order that the spirit and purpose may be preserved! Let us, you and I, harness the fighting mood to that unselfish end. Let's make love the fighting force. It must be if we hope ultimately to have social, economic and political equality.

Use Our Possibilities

We should not forget that the late Prof. William James of Harvard, "perhaps the most distinguished psychologist and philosopher America ever produced," said: "Compared with what we ought to be, we are only half awake. We are making use of only a small part of our physical and mental resources. Stating the thing broadly, the human individual thus lives far within his limits. He possesses powers of various sorts which he habitually fails to use.

Yes, you who are reading this, possess powers which you fail to use and therefore I ask you, What is there that we cannot do, if we used all our latent possibilities.

E PLURIBUS UNUM.

Roundelay

By R. M.

THIS couldn't be love for Shizuko. No, her conception of this delicate matter from childhood was something more noble, sublime. Love was a knight on a white charger swooping down upon her and carrying her away to new wonderlands.

But stern, stark reality was another thing. Shizuko was to be married. It was all arranged. Her mother told her so. The groom was Minoru. Besides Shizuko was getting along in her 20's and mother thought that marriage was the best thing for her.

Somehow it all transpired so very quickly. The wedding at the church, the noisy reception at the chop suey house, and the three-day honeymoon to Victoria. Though a bit tragic at first, Shizuko reconciled herself to her course of life and tried to manage.

Minoru was raised in Japan and had returned to this country only a few years ago. He was much older than she, say 12 years. And somehow he didn't seem or act like a Nisei. He had a fruit store and that was his sole career.

Shizuko's mind tossed these facts over and over. There seemed to be no solution except to be a good wife to Minoru. So with firm resolve she was wife, fellow worker, and home maker for Minoru.

All her yesterdays she cast aside. Possibly all those early notions were false, wrong; that reality was the only thing in life.

The years passed as they inevitably do. There was no regret in her soul for her loving husband.

SO one night she wrote this in her diary: "There is but slight difference in the ability, personality, genius, and compatibility of all men. As long as we can get along with a person, we can be happy. Love can be acquired and happiness can be shared no matter how insignificant the circumstances."

This Much Is Certain

By NELLIE McCLUNG
(By special permission of the writer.)

. . . We have another problem to meet in Canada. The problem of our Canadian people of foreign parentage. Foolish, misguided words are tearing down the fabric of loyalty that has taken years to build. I know Canadian-born Italian and German people who are having a bad time, through no fault of their own. A girl with an Italian name, who has been working in a Red Cross unit, was told by one of her companions not to come back. A singer who entertained at a Hostess House two nights a week was dropped because she bears a German name. In the last war, she had two brothers in the Canadian army, and no one doubts her loyalty.

These things are deplorable. We are a civilized people, and should not be guilty of such cruel foolishness. If anyone's loyalty is doubted, we have qualified people to who we can report, people trained to evaluate evidence. The police of our country are reliable men. To them we can safely leave the delicate matter of deciding the question of loyalties . . .