

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

Nisei Of The Week

"NISEI of the Week" laurels go without stint or reserve to the Powell Young People's Dramatic Group, that once again brings honour to all of us through their sterling performance in the Greater Vancouver Young People's Drama Festival.

Their achievement this year has won for us new friends, and added much to contacts already established in the amateur theatrical world. And the storm of applause that greeted the awarding of the Best Actress Trophy to a Nisei girl for the second successive year bears tribute to the ungrudging admiration of a host of Canadian friends.

We have here, moreover, the most convincing evidence of the manner in which each of us may work with his own talents for the betterment of our relations and the cultivation of our understanding with the average Canadian citizen. For it is wholly true that we must work from among and amidst the great body of the people themselves, prove to them that we are fully qualified as citizens, and secure their willing admission to our claim to an honourable place in Canadian society. And such an admission, the only true and satisfactory basis for our future welfare as Canadians, rests ultimately upon the understanding and friendship that we gain from our fellow citizens.

If we can work toward that end through such cultural avenues that afford us in themselves the pleasure and enjoyment of art, as our amateur actors have fully demonstrated, then we have cause to rejoice.

There are many growing possibilities for such contacts—in sport, music, drama, community service and hobbies and cultural pursuits of every kind. If anything, in the past we have been too prone to wrap ourselves up in our own "right little, tight little" community, and neglect what ought to be a fundamental phase of our activity. Amateur theatricals are showing to all of us a path with which we should be already acquainted.

Participation in cultural pursuits with our Canadian friends will bring its own rewards of pleasure and enjoyment. And to them will be added the great asset of friendship and understanding.

NOTHING TO DO

Mr. Hashimoto, who owns a ten-acre farm out Haney way, wanted a Nisei boy to work in the fields. But being a hard taskmaster, he found difficulty in finding anybody who could stay as long as two weeks.

But at last, Mr. Hashimoto finally found one stalwart Nisei youth who was a demon worker. His name was Susumu.

Well, Susumu was a hard worker. He laboured in the fields from dawn until dark, day after day, at times even finishing his chores by lantern light.

But at the end of the month, Susumu went to Mr. Hashimoto and said: "I'm going to quit. You promised me a steady job."

"Well, you have one, haven't you?" Mr. Hashimoto asked in surprise.

"No," said Susumu. "There are three or four hours every night when I don't have a thing to do except fool away my time sleeping."

Protection for Japanese Canadians

THERE need be little doubt in the public mind today, if ever such existed, that the primary motive behind Alderman Halford D. Wilson's anti-Oriental campaign is a Hitleresque attempt at racial persecution. The obviously contradictory attitude he has maintained in his most recent drive for segregation of Orientals in Vancouver gives ample evidence of that fact.

Certainly his acrobatic performance in jumping from attempted discrimination against a Canadian-born Chinese couple to a drive against Japanese aliens is as characteristic of the alderman as his previous flip-flop from direct charges of disloyalty against all Japanese Canadians to an attack on language schools.

Defeated and confounded in his "ghetto movement" by elemental principles of British law and justice, and having led the city fathers into an Oriental-baiting chase which ended in a fiasco, the alderman has again switched fronts. In another of his familiar face-saving gestures, he announces that the root cause of the trouble is the "Gentlemen's Agreement of 1913." Once that is done away with, he claims, there will be no difficulty in initiating a completely legal campaign of persecution, especially against Japanese Canadians.

It ought to be common knowledge in British Columbia today, and even Mr. Wilson should know this, that the genuine "Gentlemen's Agreement of 1928" concerning immigration is a far different matter from the "Japanese Treaty Act of 1913," which concerns relations between Canada and Japan. The former agreement, in force since 1928, sets a maximum quota of 150 annually for immigrants to enter Canada from Japan.

Under the latter treaty, it is provided that Canadian citizens in Japan, or Japanese citizens in Canada, "shall in all that relates to the pursuit of their industries, callings, professions, and educational studies be placed in all respects on the same footing as the subjects or citizens of the most favoured nation." That, in short, guarantees that the Japanese Government in Japan shall not impose upon aliens of Canadian citizenship more severe restrictions than upon any other aliens, whether they be American, French, German, Peruvian, etc.

Similarly, in Canada the treaty guarantees that Japanese aliens (that

is those who are not British subjects by birth or naturalization) shall not be more restricted than any other alien. Thus, if the Provincial Government enacts legislation aimed specifically against Japanese aliens, and has the effect of discriminating against them, such legislation would be beyond provincial power, and would be a breach of a Federal statute, in this case the Japanese Treaty-Act of 1913.

In actual fact, in Canada neither the provincial nor the federal government is restricted by the constitution in its power to discriminate against racial groups. As Professor Angus writes: "No special legal protection is given to anyone in Canada on grounds of race or of nationality, and it is therefore possible for an Oriental to find that he has no redress against what seems to him very unfair treatment."

And so the situation arises whereby under the Japanese Treaty Act of 1913, Japanese aliens find they have more protection against harsh and discriminatory measures such as Alderman Wilson advocates, than those who are legally either naturalized or natural-born British subjects.

In other words, Isseis, first generation who have never been naturalized, are afforded more protection against attacks of politicians, than the Nisei, a disenfranchised group of Canadian-born citizens without power at the polls. It is this wholly anomalous situation, wherein a racial minority of citizens has no power of redress whatsoever, that Alderman Wilson has been, and is, exploiting for political advantage.

The Nisei's only protection lies in the liberal attitude of the courts, intent upon the preservation of an unwritten code of British justice, irrespective of race, color or creed. And that, in essence, is synonymous with the democratic way of life, which we seek to preserve in Europe today.

The extent of Canada's war effort today, the sacrifice of her people, as well as the storm of protest which rose over Mr. Wilson's latest "ghetto plan," is our assurance that these democratic principles are yet dear to the hearts of the majority of Canadians; and the evil forces which Alderman Wilson leads, are yet far from gaining ascendancy in Canada.

AMOR PATRIAE

By Miyo Ishiwata

Arouse Nisei, the clarions blow!
Arise, O let this epoch know!
We are a subject of this time
A dust raised from the dust sublime.

Stand with the substance in our greed!
Defend the progress of our need!
For men with shrunken sight and aim
Assail the merit of our claim.

Affirm Nisei, the clarions call!
Serve with a will, we must not fall!
Bound with our pride of heritage
Stand steadfast thru' the changing Age.

MORNING

Out of the east the dawn's pale finger
Opens a parchment edged with gold,
Spreads it across the sky—
Lets no star linger—
This is the document of day unrolled.

—E. S. L.

Never let thy ambition flag,
Nor troubles mar your soul,
For somewhere in the far horizon,
Shines hope's radiant goal.

Forever seek, forever try,
And never once decline,
From the straight, straight path that leads
you on,
To joy!
To eternal life.

—K. F.

The Nisei In Japan

(From the Pacific Citizen, official organ of the Japanese American Citizens League)

TOKYO. — Every ship sailing for the United States from Yokohama harbor these days carries a load of Nisei passengers. Ever since the U.S. State Department issued advice to American residents in the Far East who have non-urgent business to evacuate, there has been a constant stream of Nisei trans-Pacific traffic back to America.

It is quite certain too that the number of Nisei arrivals has been cut down due to restrictions on passports. This coupled with the general exodus of Nisei, especially women and children, has cut down the Nisei population in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka and Kobe considerably. One notices this phenomenon at parties and meetings when some of the familiar faces are missing.

Most of the Nisei in Japan, however, are decided to stay, provided they have some useful duties to perform. Many are engaged in journalistic work, and it is their job to stick it out no matter what happens. Those connected with missionary institutions think they can continue to do their useful work in Japan instead of going back. As to teachers of English, literature and music, as long as the situation remains just uneasy, they will not abandon their posts. They have developed their own jobs and positions and are reluctant to leave just because the international tension is a little beyond normalcy.

Most of them feel like missionaries here. They have come to do something useful and serve in their own way to improve Japanese-American relations which were none too good even at the time of their departure from the United States. Their sentiment can be summed up by Bishop James Walsh, who said: "The Catholics are devoted primarily to the cause of religion and believe it is an institution set apart from diplomacy and international disputes. Therefore, the Catholic missionaries are not planning to evacuate or to leave behind their well-established convents, schools, hospitals and churches."

Many Nisei have established themselves in Japan as businessmen, social workers, teachers, technicians, journalists or radio artists. They feel they are not responsible for the present strained relations. But they are confident that there are some things within their influence to help solve the issues between the two countries. They believe their works will have weight when properly uttered in this country as well as in the United States.

Aside from those who are gainfully employed, there is a large number of students who are primarily here to study. One of the important motives for these Nisei students studying in Japan is to grasp a working knowledge of the Japanese tongue and psychology so that they can become useful American citizens who understand the Orient and its peoples.

Certainly this is no time to suggest that they quit studying. They should be encouraged to continue their academic activities and break the deadlock that exists between America and Japan. Even if there will be a crisis it will become their duty later on to make smooth the ruffled waters of the Pacific.

Such is the consensus of Nisei opinion in Japan today. They are now caught up in the cross-currents of a strained world situation but they are not so willing to give up their posts simply because the immediate future is not too bright.