

Murakami, Asomatsu

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#41

married 1906

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Asamatsu Murakami

"When I became a boss, I still had a sailboat. At that time, people came from my district. These new men didn't know anything. They were older, maybe ten years older than me, they had wives, but they didn't know where the fish were, they didn't know anything. I had experience...so I couldn't help becoming a boss."

"I used the cannery's boat and bought my own nets. I had to have somebody to row the boat. There were a lot of fish at that time. The fish rushed to us and we caught them. Gradually the fish disappeared and it got more difficult to catch them."

Q: Is it because of the increase of people fishing?

"Yes, more fishermen came and it got difficult to catch the fish. ~~xx~~ There were many fish then the net was improved, then engine boats came -- they go very far, far places that nobody had been, fast boat. If one knows where the fish is, the boat zooms in."

"So we didn't have to worry about ^{buying} selling. Whatever amount we ~~caught~~ the cannery ~~buys~~ from us. Without canneries we would have ^{had} to worry about a way to sell. We didn't have that problem because a cannery backed us."

Q. What cannery did you work for first?

"There were a lot of small canneries then. (I worked for) a little cannery called Mr. Higgins. Mr. Higgins was an honest kind man. Ten years later all those small canneries were combined."

Q. Where did you live in Steveston?

"First, Felix Cannery, and then ⁹ moved to Imperial Cannery. It was with Felix Cannery for a long time. A cannery provided us with a house, free, a poor house of old (?) It was very cold in the house, we collected wood on the beach, dried it, no heater those days. We burned that wood. A Gangara stove, tin stove, ~~put~~ a lot of wood to burn at night to keep warm. The wood was free, we picked it up on the beach, on the island, and piled it up in front of the house to dry... This country has a lot of trees... The house was made of only one layer of board and we put papers on and so on to improve it. It was such a poor house at the beginning."

Q. How many people lived in a bunk house?

"It depends on the bunkhouse. Some bunkhouses had twenty, thirty, ^{all} forty people with a cook. They ~~all did not~~ have wives. They were only single men. They had a boss, a boss who hired a cook. They paid board monthly. There were only men, they were wild. With a

winter work
sawmill life
saving money

drink they started a fight. I was scared, I saw them fighting often. Some killed each other, some were put in jail. There were no women, so no wonder the men became wild. Later the wives started to come in from Japan, their lives were improved, they started to have their own houses. When the wives came, they could not live in a big bunk house together with the others so they were given small houses by a cannery."

Q. At what age did people get married in those days?

"They married late. There were no Japanese girls in this country. A picture marriage, I was also married by a picture with my old woman. It was good. I sent a picture, I was asked to receive this woman. Finally I did picture marry with my old woman. I lived my life with her without a quarrel."

"In the winter time there was no job in those days, it snowed and was cold. In the winter I couldn't make money. My brother was a ship carpenter, I helped him build a boat. If I didn't do anything I couldn't eat. Sometimes I went to catch fish to the Island, sometimes worked at a sawmill. The fishermen all went in different directions. When the spring came they all came back to catch fish. That was our life..."

Q. Where were the sawmills?

"In Vancouver and various places. Also in the mountains, cutting shingles and logs... there were a lot of jobs in the mountains."

Q. When you worked at a sawmill did you live near there?

"There was a boarding house where we ate and slept. A Japanese boss provided the food and got paid. As for the food, it wasn't a feast, but we did eat rice, not a day without eating rice, miso soup or something like that. There was no fancy food. It was cheap of course, we couldn't complain. We paid only 7¢ or so, it wasn't reasonable to ask for fancy food."

Q. How much did the boarding house cost?

"How much? Well, it was very cheap. Ten dollars or so. Twenty to thirty dollars for board and room I think. We worked for one dollar a day, no money left. If a man worked hard, he could still save only a little bit..."

Q. Where did you keep your savings? In the bank?

"Never saved enough money to put in a bank. In those days we couldn't earn money like some hundred dollars. I earned a lot and spent a lot."

Q. How did you spend your money?

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drinking / bars
business

"Food, clothing. There were many clothing stores, groceries, liquor stores, drug stores. I used to like to drink in my forties and fifties. I don't drink a sip now, never. I drank a lot in my ~~old~~ ^{young} days."

Q. Many men were drinkers, weren't they?

"Yes, there was such a bunch, they were called the "let's have a drink, let's go" bunch... Treat and be treated, like this, and people drank a lot."

Q. Where did you drink?

"At the bars. In Steveston at that time there were about 20 bars in this little place. All single men, Germans, Italians, Russians, all single men in the temporary houses, so they all drank... The bars had round tables, like day's ones, like beer parlors now. Beer, whiskey. They drank like fish... The beer was cheap, only 5¢ a ~~glass~~ big glass. We could have many glasses."

Q. You became a boss at 18?

"A boss is a captain. I hired a partner who rowed, I caught the fish. If ^{not} only one, he cannot both row and catch. We went through such a slow thing... That time there were only a few seine nets, not many trap nets were produced. The fish came and we caught them. After more seine nets were produced, the fish decreased rapidly. With seine nets you catch the fish like you tie the mouth of a pouch. They are huge nets. There came more and more seine nets, the fish grew less and less. // Then came restrictions on fishing salmon on the weekends. In the old days we could fish seven days, then that became six days, four days, one day. Now we have one day."

Q. Who makes such a decision?

"An officer of the fishery Department makes the decision, B.C. Government. If the fish are not protected, they will all perish. Then the Canadian industry will be damaged... The right of fishing abides with the Minister of the Fishery Department. He opens and closes the season."

Q. Who could get a fishing license?

"Without citizenship, one was not given a license. It was easy to get ~~xxx~~ it. If one applied, he could get citizenship without trouble. If he lived in this country, everybody could get one, it was very easy... No test. If one lived in this country for three years, 'Were you here for three years?' 'Yes I was,' that was enough."

Q. You got your licence at 17 then?

"We had to get a paper, a citizenship paper. Without it we were of different nationality, we were not given a paper if we were foreigners. It was only after 3 years in this country that we were given the paper. 'How many years have you been in this country?' Then I said, 'Three years.' 'Do you have a witness?' 'Yes, I do.' This and this the names were written on the paper beforehand. 'Is this your

license cut-back

signature?' 'I will not tell a lie.' After placing a kiss on the Bible, holding a hand up, then, 'Here you are, the paper.' We received the paper like this. However some told a lie to get the paper. 'Koyamasa Kato,' etc. all lies. Some even got 2 or 3 papers for himself, but at the end they were taken away; one who had 3 names, it was known later, and at the end everybody could get only one paper. Some borrowed somebody else's names when the licence cut-down came."

Q. When did the cut'down start?

"Well, probably about 40 years or so ago? 50 years?

Q. You had been fishing a long time before that?

"Yes, as for me, I had been one of the seniors, my name was registered without falsity. The illegal licences were the licenses borrowed from somebody or rewritten ones of their fathers'. Some people carried such illegal license. Since we had to cut down the licenses we did a research and cut down those illegal licenses. Every year we were cut down, 10½%, 20%, etc. every year cut down. Those who lost their licences cried, but couldn't help it. They had to do some other work. They did logging, farming, something else. it's the same with the other jobs, if you work hard, you can make money. The worse comes to a lazy man. It was the same in those days. If one worked hard, he could make a lot of money. With a fisherman too--no good a lazy man."

"Many risky experiences I had with the fast tide and deep fogs; some unfortunate people had bad accidents and deaths from time to time. However, it is up to one's fortune. I did fishing for 70 years and didn't meet such fatal accident. If one has a bad luck he can get trapped in or something in the place which does not look dangerous at all. It depends on the destiny that one is born with. If one is lucky, things go well with him, if one has bad luck, he will get wounded or killed sometimes. Such is the world."

Q. What do you mean by "trapped"?

"Sometimes a boat tips over, when big waves come, even if one thinks it is a right place, if something wrong, then a boat will be swallowed." *gale*

"~~My friend's son~~ My neighbour's son, both the father and the son were on board and ~~the~~ wind came ^{up}. One of them was steering and fell into the water, he was dead when found, a young man. It happened a long time ago. He was the only son, ^aprecious precious son... He ~~was~~ killed and his mother ~~was~~ ^{cried} cried, poor thing. The son had weak sight so he stepped out of the boat, thinking it was the right way because of his weak sight, then looked behind him to find ~~the~~ ^awave was coming and he was ~~swept~~ ^{you} swept into the sea. They found his body by dragging with a net. So if ~~one~~ ^{you} has bad luck ~~he~~ ^{you} will get into such trouble. With good luck he will not have trouble. Destiny...

Q. Were there other ~~such~~ ^{like this} troubles in the days of rowboats?

"In those days if there was a little wind we all ran back to port. The boat was ~~tiny~~ ^{very small} and dangerous so we didn't go very far. If a wind started to blow we came back right away. A rowboat had a mast and sail, a ~~tiny~~ ^{small} sail which moved the boat with the wind. So we didn't try too hard. We didn't go too far outside. We could easily fish a lot just in front of the cannery... If ~~it~~ ^{after} was after ~~motor~~ ^{motor} boats came in that we started to go outside. In the days of rowboats and sailboats we hardly went so far outside, if we did we were scared.

Q. What did you do when you didn't go fishing? Sometimes you didn't go fishing?

"Sure, there were days when I didn't go fishing. One day, two days when the wind blew hard, it was dangerous, the boat would have ~~been~~ tipped over, I would have been killed. Of course then I was broke but life is everything. If I had been out at sea for the money, I would have been killed. Life is more precious than money. Without life there is nothing... We waited until the wind was gone. It didn't take too many days, maybe even six or seven hours... In the old days, there was more difference between hot days and cold days. Some days were really hot and some days were really cold. Maybe because of the increase in population, there is not much difference ~~between hot days and cold days~~ now."

"After becoming a boss, I grew up and I married in 1906 by picture marriage. The boss of the cannery said to me, 'Now you deserve a boarding house since you have a wife. I ~~will~~ give you a big house,' So I looked after four ~~hundred~~ or five hundred fishermen. I fed them and gave them beds. (After becoming a boat-boss, I became a house-boss)."

Q. What does a house boss do?

"A house-boss negotiates with a cannery for the fishermen on matters like jobs, equipment, money (lending money) etc. The fishermen didn't go to the cannery boss directly when they had claims. The business was handled between the house boss and the cannery boss. For example, I would say, 'This man needs some money. Will you lend him some?' The cannery boss agreed to lend some if the boss became a ~~gaarantor~~ ^{guarantor}. The boss controlled 20 or 30 boats. That's

English

Murakami 6.

how we did things then.* Then the time came when all the men were married. They no longer needed a boss to look after them. So each had his house, each became his own boss."

"In the old days the fishermen didn't have any money, didn't know English, so even if they wanted to negotiate with the canneries they couldn't do so, they needed somebody's help. So a Japanese boss talked to the cannery about lending or buying nets and things for the fishermen. The boss was responsible, very responsible for them. If a fisherman got into debt, the boss had to pay it off. So the boss had to be careful to eliminate bad habits like drinking, otherwise he lost his money. After 1935 or so, the fishermen started to have their own boats and houses."

"When the fishermen were single, they couldn't feed themselves so they were looked after by a boss. In a boarding house there were a lot of bunk beds for 15 boats, and they had cooks, men or women. When the birds started to come from Japan, they got their own houses from the canneries. The houses they were given were like long barracks partitioned off -- very poor houses. Each had a kitchen, a bedroom and a bath, but it was good that we didn't have to worry about those others."

Q. Were they free?

"No charge. Instead the cannery bought our fish cheap. The cannery lent us boats, money, the water was free, but later we had to pay \$24 ~~am~~ for water and electricity because of the increase in fishermen. They all had their houses, a lot of houses all over. The cannery couldn't afford to pay electricity and water for all those houses."

"Before I married, nobody was married. After, they all started to get married. They thought this was not a good place for wives, that they would get in trouble because the men were always in fights. Then they married picture brides, in my days all picture marriages. The fishermen didn't have much money to go back. Yet a lot of women came, they thought America must be a good place. They came here to find such a hard life -- 'I wish I hadn't come' they said. Too late."

~~Can't hear?~~
Q. Could you speak English?

"No I couldn't. I went to school for six months, only six months at the public school here. I only finished ~~the first~~ ^{elementary} grammar. If I had done ~~the~~ ^{the} second ^{grammar} I would have understood English better, but in those days I was always in the Japanese community, I didn't go out in the white people's community, I didn't have a chance to speak English so I have been here for 70, 75 years but I don't know English."

Q. You didn't associate with white people at all?

"Well, I spoke with the boss but I didn't talk about a lot of details. I worked for white people for two years before I got married. I was a cook and dishwasher for a white family in Salt Spring Island, rich people. The cook was a man, he taught me how to cook... He said, 'Asa, you make breakfast,' 'You make lunch,' etc."

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cook
gold
Vancouver

He let me do all the cooking. I cooked during the wintertime, and in summer I went fishing. The cook was a white man."

Q. What was the ^{shujin} ~~master~~?

Master?

"He was a very rich man who worked in the gold mine. He had a big house on the island and hired many servants."

Q. Were there other Japanese servants?

as for as Western
cooking is
concerned.

"Yes, a few. They cleaned the house and so on... The kitchen had all the facilities. I did just what I learned, I was still young, and it was easy, it was interesting. I learned to cook beef steaks, chops, etc. Since he was a male cook, he was as good as a female, but maybe such is the western dish. The ^{shujin} ~~master~~ was so rich, the butcher would come with a huge chunk of meat and we cut it."

Q. Did he have a lot of guests?

"He was very rich. Before the ^{shujin} ~~guests~~ would arrive, other cooks were called. As for the guests they were all single men."

Q. Was hte ^{shujin} ~~master~~ single too?

in a mine?

"Yes, he said that if he had a wife he wouldn't be able to drink. He drank a lot. He said if he wanted a woman he could go to Victoria. He often went to Victoria. He was already in his fifties. He was a good man, came from England. He worked in the gold mine, he worked hard and made money. In the old days there were a lot of gold mines, in Alaska and elsewhere, there was a lot of gold. They could get gold endlessly in the rivers in those days. Some people must have made a fortune."

Q. Did you think of going to a gold mine?

"The Klondike was in Alaska, not in Canada, so I couldn't go. Englishmen could go everywhere. The Japanese, belonging to a different country, would have been able to go if we went through the proper proceedings. The Japanese who landed in America could go to Alaska to work in the gold mines and canneries, but it is very cold."

Q. Did you come to Vancouver sometimes?

all in bush.

"There was nothing very much in Vancouver. I landed in Victoria and came to Vancouver, boarded in Mr. Nagao's hotel, and rode on a wagon to get to Steveston. We piled our belongings on the wagon. There was a hill on the way. The horseman said, 'Get out, the horses are in trouble,' so we got off and pushed the wagon. There were several passengers, they all got out. When we got over the hill, we climbed on the wagon again. It took us half a day to get to Steveston from Vancouver. In Vancouver there was only Cordova Street. Granville Street and Hastings Street were in the mountain. ~~It was covered with bush~~ ^{without any} particular thing to do, I didn't go to Vancouver -- too far, ~~to take~~ ^{took} half a day by wagon. It was a lonely place too without any Japanese around. There was no Powell Street then."

Q. When did Powell Street come in?

prejudice

"Much later. In ten years a lot of houses were built, Cordova Street was built, Hastings Street was built. Cordova was the main street. It's a shabby street now, but it was the first street, ~~on which there was the only theatre~~ ^{where}."

Q. Did you go to the theatre?

"Yes. I went for 40 or 50¢. If ^{some} one shot that way, ^{some} one shot this way, 'Oh he shot a gun,' ~~they said~~ ^{they} 'He was shot in the back.' I don't know if it was an American or Canadian film. It was a funny film, but that was the only one we had. People were ^{were} they would say, 'Ah, he ^{shoots} the gun,' 'Ah, he ^{chops} a tree.' ^{looking} ^{coming down}"

Q. Did many people go to see the film?

"Yes, they did... ~~There was no theatre before that. That was the first movie theatre.~~ Charlie Chaplin was the funniest one."

Q. There were no other theatres?

"Not for the Japanese. There were some for the white people. Gradually more theatres were built. We just had the BC Centennial, you know. It's only a hundred years since Vancouver was built. When I came, ~~to~~ Vancouver was only 20 or 25 years old, so there was nothing."

Q. When did they start to pressure the Japanese?

"Probably about 50 years ago? The Japanese worked so hard -- if he was a fisherman, he ~~would~~ catch a lot of fish -- the Japanese were more efficient than the white people, so they were jealous. I think they had the idea that, didn't want the Japs because they would lose their ~~competition~~ ^{position} (?) It wasn't just the Englishmen who thought so. Other nationalities like Italians, Norwegians, Germans, Russians, etc. not well-educated Europeans. The well-educated men wouldn't have done such a thing. We went through a time when even 3rd-class Europeans would do such a thing to us. Whatever jobs, fishing or farming, since the Japanese had a little better brains, they thought without the Japanese they wouldn't lose their competition, ~~wouldn't~~ ^{didn't} want to have us. This was the basis of the discrimination... For example, the Japanese fishermen caught ~~the~~ fish better, or in the canneries the Japanese worked harder, so the canneries liked us better and said, 'Come on, come on.' Those guys thought, 'It would be better without the Japs. Throw them out.' ^{the} Powell street riot--there was a riot on Powell Street and the Japanese received a lot of damage, the merchants got their windows broken. I was about forty, I was in Steveston so I didn't get any damage but the people in Vancouver were scared. The mobs were drunk and dozens and hundreds of them attacked Powell Street, ~~with~~ ^{with} screaming. Those were the 3rd class Europeans, they could do such a thing."

took all their competition

fever epidemic

Q. Did you have any such incidents in Steveston?

*what they pay
for fish
wages?*

"No, in Steveston we didn't have that trouble. Although sometimes ~~drinking~~ strikes we had some trouble. A strike happened in this way: a cannery announced the fish price; the white and Japanese fishermen said, no, it's too cheap, they said they wouldn't go out fishing. The cause of a strike is generally price, at sawmills, hospitals, etc., isn't it? Today usually capitalists lose the game.

Q. Did you have many strikes?

"Yes, often.

Q. When you came was there a hospital in Steveston?

"No, none. There was nothing. Afterwards, when contagious fever was prevalent, people thought it was necessary to have a hospital and collected money from everybody. When the fever was raging, a great many patients were accommodated in a church. There was no other accommodation for them. I was sick and put in there too. It was a contagious disease. Unsanitary things came from up above the river, the people below drank the water, so they got sick. We drank the water in the river. At that time there was nothing, no train, no water, life was miserable."

Q. Did people have diarrhea?

deck (porch)

"No, we had very high fever. Your temperature went up to 35, 36 degrees centigrade. I was in much pain. The wooden beds were placed on the ~~deck~~ ^{porch} (balcony?) of the church like long radishes laid out in a line. They soaked a sheet in the bathtub to cover a patient. It was quite something. There were about 400 people accommodated there.

Q. Was it summer?

Yes... if it had been winter, the disease wouldn't have been so prevalent.

Q. Did you have a doctor?

"The doctor visited us. Nurses took our temperatures, that's all they did. It was just like an ambulance on the battlefield. The ~~balcony~~ ^{deck} (?) of the church became a hospital.

Q. Were you married then?

"Of course not, it happened in my young days, I was only 16 or 17, I was still a schoolboy."

Q. Did anybody die?

"Not too many. Usually it took from 1 month to 2 months for the disease to ~~die~~ ^{subside}." (go away)

Q. Were there white people among these patients?

"No, there were hardly any. Only Japanese. The disease didn't happen every year but came from time to time. Then the people woke up. They realized the necessity of a hospital. There was no hospital in Steveston. We had to go to Vancouver for a hospital. So the Japanese got together, consulted and built a hospital.

Q. Was it a Japanese hospital?

"Yes, it was the fishermen's hospital. It was called the Japanese Fishermen's Hospital. Any fisherman, white or Japanese, could go to the hospital. It was torn down a few years ago..."

Q. Did you have a Japanese doctor?

"Yes, his name was Tsureishi. After him another Japanese doctor came and another from Vancouver.

Q. Was the hospital expensive?

"No, not too expensive."

Q. Did you have a fishermen's union by this time?

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Mr. Okada - Immigration of a
white village to Steveston

Kumiai (union)

(fishermen) (co-op group)

We had "Gyosha-Dantai" in Steveston (fishermen's group) which almost all Japanese belonged to. The fishermen all belonged to the Dantai and paid their fees, \$3 or \$2 each was enough to manage the group."

what the difference?

"What good did the Dantai do?"

"It managed everything related to the Japanese, the fishermen. It was a consultant. In Dantai, people consulted on such fishing business as salmon consignment, etc. and made decisions.

"How about the white fishermen?"

"They had their own union. ~~xxxxxx~~ On things like the price of fish ~~On such matters as fish price~~ the white and Japanese fishermen got together to discuss whether they should accept the price that the canneries were offering. If the price was too low, the fishermen would not go out fishing. So we ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ talked it over with the white people to decide on the price."

"Did both sides agree on such matters?"

"Yes, the issue was related to the fishermen's own profit, ^{high} ~~xxxxxx~~ price for the fish or ^{low} price? This was a matter of profit so we all agreed."

"I read the other day that one time around the Sino-Japanese war white fishermen demanded 25¢ a piece, which the Japanese fishermen did not agree with, they wanted less, and at the end, the fishermen blocked, with violence, the Japanese fishermen from going out fishing. Do you remember that?" (1894)

"That might have happened, I would say...such a thing might have happened."

"Did such an incident happen to you? A white fisherman getting in your way?"

"Getting in my way... After the war when I came back, they thought that the Japanese weren't coming back any more. When they thought they had monopolized the industry, the Japanese started to come back more and more, so we faced a hard struggle (we were subject to public hostility). In spite of it we were patient, we put up with it, then gradually the anti-Japanese voices faded away. Today the Japanese are not inferior to the whites in speaking English, they are fluent in conversation. The old Japanese and the present nisei (second generation) are different. The Nisei have the same idea as the whites. Today's people study hard, the old did not study."

"Did your son come back to Steveston earlier than others after the war?"

"Yes. At that time the whites constantly got in his way."

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"What kind of disturbances were there?"

"The kind of disturbances, for example, a white fisherman put his net very close to Kiyoshi's net to disturb him. All of a sudden his net was caught in Kiyoshi's net so he could not move. Kiyoshi was kind enough to disengage his net very carefully. ~~After~~ After that the white fisherman said, I am very sorry, please forgive me, you were very kind to help me when I couldn't move, thank you, thank you. He ~~was rewarded (?)~~ ^{rewarded?} for his wrong action. If Kiyoshi had said, Look what happened to you for doing such wrong to me, to the man who did wrong -- to such an ill-behaved man, Kiyoshi was kind enough to cut the net to let him go, so that white man must have been grateful, saying, Oh I shouldn't have done such a bad thing. He must have thought, We used to look down on the Japanese but who else would have helped me in spite of having his net cut (2). I shouldn't have done such a wrong thing. After this incident, they stopped being nasty to us. At that time, the Japanese started to come back to the Coast for the first time, and we were not welcomed. There were a lot of troubles here and there all the time. Gradually these troubles decreased, the Japanese acquired the right to vote. The union was in favour of the Japanese. The Japanese ~~became members~~ ^{joined} of the union, paid \$20 for membership. The union protects its members....

I was once a president of the Japanese Fishermen's Association in my younger days. There were two associations, one was Skeena and one in Steveston. The Steveston one was called the first block (I-kku) and the Skeena one was called the second block (Ni-ku). We had a joint council to make various decisions. I was president and treasurer too at another time. I am ~~just~~ ^{ignorant} an ~~trivial fool (?)~~ ^{simple man} but I couldn't help being president and treasurer because they all chose me.

"Were they busy positions?"

"No, not busy. The presidency, well, people came and asked me ~~what to do~~ ^{what to do} about their problems, for example, they would say, President, we have such and such problems, what shall we do? The president would give them advice, do this and that. If a problem is very difficult, the president calls a meeting to discuss it and make a decision, and to act according to the decision. The president was sort of a councillor. He had the authority to decide for or against calling a meeting.

"When you were president, what was the biggest problem?"

"There were some difficult problems. ^{Taku} The price of fish: the canneries offered a very low price. For example, the offered price was 30¢ for a fish worth 50¢. We said we could not fish for such a ~~low~~ low price, we went to the people to talk about it, and when the price was raised to about 40¢, finally we

compromised and went fishing. If we ^{had done} did as the canneries told us to do, we could ~~not~~ ^{earn} our living because the cost of living was high. The fishermen did ~~not~~ give in. On the fishermen's part, they investigated the finances of the cannery in detail. How much is a can ~~worth~~ ^{at present}? what is the cost of production of a can? what is ~~the~~ purchasing cost? what is ~~the~~ value of a can in big cities like London or Paris? Otherwise, when the cannery set the price for once and all, they never opened their mouth until then, we couldn't argue with them. With the evidence ~~(of)~~ of our investigation, here is so much of the production cost, so much of the processing cost, so much of your selling cost, so much for your profit; ~~In~~ ⁱⁿ this case we are entitled to get so much for the fish. ~~that's how we argued.~~ ^{the cannery people were amazed that the fishermen made such a fine investigation.} Without this, they would have looked down on us saying the fishermen were ignorant. There is a market price all over, in London, in France, everywhere. Today these prices are in the newspaper. We had people in charge of the investigation who went to various places to collect the information. Some pressmen used to come to the canneries. If it went on like this, ~~xxxxxxx~~ a strike was inevitable; if a strike occurs, a the cannery will lose. A fishermen's strike is different from a railway strike, the fish will be lost. ~~because~~

There were many strikes in Steveston. Suppose a strike is on: the fishermen are ~~insisting~~ ^{insisting} ~~(on)~~. After a while they end up figuring that there are no fish, nothing, ~~nowhere~~ ^{like} a burnt field. Foolish. Without a strike, they could have got abundant fish. In this sea, fish on top of another, another, like this, they could have caught many boatloads of fish. A strike, next day, since fish come in according to the days, the fish went far up the river and no fish around Steveston. Yet, if we ~~only~~ ^{only} ~~that way~~ followed the cannery's instruction, it was always the same ~~hand~~... On the other hand, a cannery couldn't make cans without fish... A strike was ~~not~~ profitable neither to the fishermen nor the canneries... In the government's or cannery's opinion, if ~~not~~ ^{the fish} ~~this year, the fish will~~ ^{don't} come next year, there will be trouble if all the fish grow extinct; ~~but~~

^{grounds} Without seed, nothing. Without seed or offspring, the Canadian industry will be destroyed. So the government said ^{in order} not to destroy the fish in order to maintain the seed as much as possible, fishing had to be closed over ~~on~~ the weekends. If fishing was ~~available~~ open on the weekends, one of the biggest industries -- the biggest Canadian industries are agriculture, forestry, and fishing -- would soon perish. ~~As for~~ ^{will} Agriculture, Canada still ~~has~~ is a big land. ~~As for~~ ^{for} forestry, there are still a lot of mountains. The government protects fishing so that the fill will not be destroyed. ~~As for~~ ^{but} fish, not all the fish should be taken, so efforts are made to keep the seed. If only the Canadians caught fish, it might be all right. However,

Series

this is the

(?)

Referring

the Americans, Russians, and the Japanese all catch fish. The fish grow ~~up~~ in the Pacific Ocean are caught by all different nations, therefore the Canadians have a hard time. The Canadians foster them in the fishbanks with great care. The fish grow fat and go out to the Pacific Ocean, the Russians, the Americans and the Japanese catch these fat fish. The Canadians plant the seed which the other nations catch. The Canadians are naturally supposed to have the first claim but it doesn't work out that way. In the Pacific Ocean everybody has the same right of catch. () miles from the shore belongs to the world, the sea of the world belongs to the people of the world. However, it becomes a problem, doesn't it? The fishermen of other countries secretly come to the Canadian sea at night and catch the fish. Some Japanese fishermen have been caught too, ~~about~~ a few years ago. They were near Alaska catching crabs or something and were probably discovered by a plane or something I think.

"In the old days did ~~the same~~ similar incidents happen?"

"They are not allowed to do it by law. They still do it. Then they are found out, naturally. As the Pacific Ocean is so vast nobody can watch without fail. The fishermen don't just sit in the middle of the sea, they are eager to catch fish. Recently, planes have been available."

....

"We had fires. The old houses were not like modern houses, so we had many fires. That (Japanese) hospital burnt down too. The town of Steveston also burnt down several times."

"Did your house burn too?"

"No, never. We lived in a little house belonging to the cannery, only the town-side burned. ~~Tenri~~ All the houses were made of wood. They used stoves, today they use gas or electricity so it's safe. but in the old days they used a stove with a big pipe, the pipe got rotten and ~~made~~ a hole from which the fire started. Today everything is electric so there are very few fires. Suppose the electricity shorts and gets slightly ~~starts~~ you can put it out very easily. ~~starts a fire~~

....

"In those days, we didn't do anything special for the birth of a child."

@Did you visit the Buddhist temple to report the birth of your son?"

"No, in those days the temple didn't have many believers. Now I am a believer, I go to Tenri church or Buddhist church or any place. I am an ardent believer in Tenri-kyo."

"When did you become a believer?"

Murakami 15

Obon (festival for the dead, in midsummer)
omatsuri (festival temple festival, after summer)
ho-on-hoon-ko (equivalent of saint's days)

"Let me see, probably 50 years ago now."

"What kinds of Buddhist festivals did you have?"

"Obon, omatsuri, hoon-ko, various festivals. Today the temple in Steveston is one of the best and biggest temples in Canada. It's a very gorgeous temple. They have Sunday meetings but I don't go. They have Sunday school too. Some people go to the temple regularly."

"How were the temple festivals? (What were the festivals like?) (Buddha's birthday)"

"The same as today. Generally hoon-ko, obon-hoe and hanamatsuri. They are the three main festivals, the biggest Buddhist festivals. Generally, I ~~never~~ visit the temple during these festivals. (I go to the temple for these festivals) Do you want to hear about religion?"

"Yes, do you have many Christians in Steveston?"

"No, not many Christians. If we had a good Japanese minister, we would have many believers, they would be convinced by such a minister. But there are not many good ministers. Without a good minister, there are not many Christians."

abbots ^{It's} ^{priests} "Are the ~~abbots~~ (priests) of the temple from Japan?"

"Yes, many are from Japan."

abbots ^{priests} "What kinds of ~~abbots~~ do you have?"

"Generally, they are graduates of the Japanese Buddhist universities. Quite respectable people."

"Were there abbots from Japan before the war too?"

"Yes, but I don't remember their names."

"What do they do?"

"They don't do anything more than perform funeral services or Buddhist memorial services. They ^{don't} do any outside jobs. They neither catch fish nor garden. ~~(make a garden? look after?)~~ They just take care of the dead."

"An abbot has an easy job, doesn't he?"

"Certainly it's an easy job. Why don't you become an abbot's wife? The people revere her as okusan okusan (Mrs....) so it's not bad. The abbot's wife in Steveston was a teacher until recently. The public built the Japanese language school and asked her to be a teacher because she can speak Japanese. Today Steveston has two Japanese language schools."

"~~Are~~ Do the children in Steveston study at the language school?"

"Their parents send them to the school. There are some who don't

do that ^{but} Some grandfathers advise them to go. As for my grandchildren, they ~~all~~ went to the language school. Once they are students they learn to speak various things. I have five children. Only the eldest son sent his kids to school. So I have 18 grandchildren and among them only my grandchildren here (who live with Mr. M.) can speak Japanese. They don't say very much but they understand almost all that we say, so even the youngest comes to me and says, "Grandfather, I'll be late back because I'll be playing at so and so's home." The other children would not say it so well. I know a little English but my old woman doesn't know any English so she can't understand a thing ~~the~~ ^{you} grandchildren say in English. It's good that ~~the~~ Japanese learn the Japanese language. Being a Japanese and not knowing the language... Well someone said, 'Nobody taught me Japanese,' she was a ~~young~~ girl, so I said to her grandfather, 'Your wife is Japanese, why doesn't she teach her?' But he said, 'It takes time to teach Japanese. When we get together and ~~speak~~ Japanese she can't understand anything. If she says something then I don't understand her, not anything in detail.' So my friend says it's not much fun to be with his grandchildren.

"What percentage of the families in Steveston send their children to the school?"

"Almost half, I would say, send ~~send to~~ them to the school. I think they ^{it's} better send their children to the school, especially the families with grandparents. People would say, probably, that English is the language here so another language is unnecessary. However, if you know Japanese, if you look at a (Japanese) book you can understand what's written there, for example. Children are bright so they learn easily and once they learn, what they have learned ^{Sinks} ~~soaks~~ into their heads. Once they've grown up, they can't learn any more, they forget."

"How old were your grandchildren when they started to learn Japanese?"

"Eight."

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ASAMATSU MURAKAMI

M When I became a boss, I still had a sail boat.

At that time, people came from my district, these new men did not know anything. They were older maybe, ten years, older than me, they had the wives, they didn't know where the fish were, they didn't know anything, I had experience, they came here for the first time, they didn't know anything, therefore, I couldn't help becoming a boss.

M Many came from Japan.

M That time it was easy to get a franchise. Many came. The Japanese increased.
to make money

M Various people came, farmers, craftsmen, fishermen, many kinds of people came.

K When you became a boss, you had to employ people, what kinds of troubles did you have?

M I had some trouble. I owed a lot of money to the cannery, many hundreds, if now it could be many thousands, if now our debts will be 3000 Yen. In my home, it was 2 or 300 Yen. A boat - cost two dollars. It was cheaper about

I used the cannery's boat and bought the nets of my own. I had to have somebody to row a boat. There were a lot of fish at that time. The fish rushed to us and we caught them. Gradually the fish disappeared and it got more difficult to catch them.

K Is it because of increase of people?

M Yes, more fishermen came and it became difficult to catch fish, if there were many fish then

the net was improved. then engine boats came, they go very far, the far place that nobody had been, fast boat, if one knows where the fish is, the boat zooms in.

K. How to catch fish
how to sell it

M. A Cannery buys the fish and process it into various things such as cans, pickle, etc. and sell them into the market.

So we don't have to worry about sale. Whatever amount we catch the cannery buys from us. Without canneries we would have to worry about the way to sell. We didn't have the trouble because a cannery backed us.

K. What cannery did you work first?

M. There were a lot of small canneries then.

A little cannery called Mr Higgins. Mr Higgins was an honest kind man, ten year later, all these small canneries were combined.

They were all independent at first. They must have made a good money, but since the fish became less, the canneries cost a big expense, so they were combined.

K. How much did you earn?

M. 3 or 400 dollars at the beginning. The fish was cheap, the nets were cheap, the food did not cost very much in the early days, so I earned about 3 or 400 dollars. Later 2000, 5000. However, gradually the price of the fish went up but at the same time the living cost became high too. The nets became expensive, the gas, the food expensive, the labor became expensive, so there was not much money left at the end.

K. Where did you live in Steveston?

and then moved to
 M. Fennix Cannery, Imperial Cannery,
 I was with Fennix Cannery for a long time. The cannery
 provided us with a house, free, a poor house of old 27032.
 it was ^{very} cold in the house, we collected the woods on the beach,
 dried them no heater those days, we burned those
 woods. a "GRONORA STOVE" tin stove, put a lot of
 woods to burn at night. ^{to be warm} The woods were free,
 we picked them on the beach, on island, and
 piled them up in front of the house to dry. We burned
 these woods. This country has a lot of trees.
 Three of lived in the house and burned the woods one
 after another.
 The house was made of only one layer of board and
 we put papers, so on to improve it. It was such a
 poor house at the beginning.

K How many people lived in a bunk house?

twenty
 M. Depend on a bunk house. Some bunk houses had thirty
 to forty people with a cook. They all did not have
 wives. They were only single men, they had a boss,
 a boss who hired a cook, they paid board monthly.
 There were only men, they were wild, ^{with a drink they started a fight,} I was scared,
 I saw them fighting often, some killed each other,
 some were put in a jail.

There were no women, so no crowds that the men became
 wild.

Later the wives started to come in from Japan, their
 lives was improved, they started to have their own
 houses, when their wives came, they could not
 live in a big bunk house together with the others,
 so they were given small house by a cannery.

K At what age did the people get married those days?

M. They married late. There were no Japanese girls in
 this country. A picture marriage, we were also

with this old woman.

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married by a picture. It was good. I sent a picture. I was asked to receive this woman. Finally I did picture marriage with my old woman. I lived my life without a quarrel with the old woman.

K. Did you go to Japan to receive her?

M. Couldn't help it. nobody was around.

K. How did you spend your winter?

M. In the winter time there was no job those days. it snowed and cold. in the winter I could not make money.

My brother was a ship carpenter, I helped him to build a boat. If I did not do anything I could not eat. Sometimes I went to catch fish to the island, some times worked at a sawmill, the fishermen all went into different directions.

When the spring came they all came back to catch fish. Such life did we have.

I worked at a sawmill too, otherwise I could not eat, without work, no food. Almost all fishermen lived in this way. With a little fish not much money was left.

K. Where were the sawmills?

M. on Vancouver and various places.

Also mountains, cutting shingles and logs, such mountain there are many on the west coast, there were a lot of jobs in these mountains.

K. Which sawmill did you work for?

M. On Vancouver Island and Vancouver, there were a lot of sawmills.

K. Did a sawmill pay you well?

M. No very cheap. One line, one dollar for one day.

K. When you worked at a sawmill did you live near there?

M. There was a boarding house where we ate and slept.
^{Japanese} The boss provided the food and got paid.

As for the food, it was not a feast, but we ate the rice
 most a day without eating rice, miso soup or some
 thing like that, there was no fancy food.
 It was cheap of course, we couldn't complain,
 we paid only 7¢ or so, it was not reasonable to
 ask for a fancy food.

K. How much did a boarding house cost?

M. How much? Well, it was very cheap. 10 dollars
 or so. 20 to 30 dollars for board and a room.
 I think, we worked for one dollar a day, no money
 left. If a man worked hard, he could still save
 only a little bit because only one dollar a day.

K. Where did you keep your savings? Bank?

M. Had never saved enough money to put in a bank?
 In those days we could not earn the money like
 some hundred dollars.

I earned a lot and spent a lot.

K. How did you spend your money?

M. Foods, clothing, There were many
 clothing stores, groceries, liquor stores, drug stores.
 I used to like the drinks in my forties and fifties.
 I don't drink a sip now, never. I drank a lot in
 my old days.

K. Many men were drinkers, weren't they?

M. Yes, there were such a bunch. They called "let's have a drink,"

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Let's go. It is not the way to be treated all the time, is it?
Treat and treated, like this and people drank a lot.

K. Where did you drink?

M. At the bars, in Stereston at that time there were about
20 bars in this little place, all single men, Germans,
Italians, Russians, all single men in ^{the} temporary
houses, so they all drank.

K. What kind of bars were they?

M. The bars had round tables, like today's ones, like beer
pavilions now, beer, whiskey. They drank like Ash.

K. What kind of people operated these bars?

M. Various people, they must have made a fortune.
Later they are gone, now we have only one, when I was
fifty there were still two or three bars, gradually
I wonder if people became wiser, they stopped
drinking, most of the bars are disappeared.

K. How much was a glass?

M. I think a glass cost 5 cent.

K. Does the beer taste same now?

M. Not so different. The beer was cheap, only 5 cent, of a
big glass, we could have many glasses.

K. Did you drink when you were fourteen?

M. I was still a student then, I didn't want one.
It was only at about thirty, that I started to drink
I didn't like it before.

K. You became a boss at eighteen?

M. A boss is a captain. I hired a partner who rowed, I caught the fish. If only one, he cannot both row and catch. We went through such a slow thing.

There were a lot of fish.

That time there were only few seine nets, not many trap nets were produced, the fish came and we caught them. After more seine nets were produced, the fish decreased rapidly. With seine nets you catch the fish,

like you tie the mouth of the pouch, they are the huge nets. There came more and more seine nets, the fish became less and less. Then came restriction of the fishing salmon. In the old days we could fish seven days, on the weekends.

became then six days, four days, one day. Now we have one day.

K. Who makes such decision?

M. An officer of Fishery Department makes the decision, BC government. If the fish is not protected, it will all be perished. Then the Canadian industry will be damaged. So saying the minister of Fishery decides so. The right of fishing abides with the minister of Fishery Department. He opens and closes the season.

K. Who could get a fishing licence?

M. If one was not naturalized he could not get a licence without citizenship one was not given a licence.

It was easy to get one. If one applied, he could get a citizenship without trouble. If he lived in this country, everybody could get one, it was very easy.

K. Wasn't there any test?

M. No test. If one lived in this country for three years, "were you here for three years?" "Yes I was", that was enough.

OK, a spokesman, at the courthouse,

K. You got the licence at 17 then?

M. we had to get a paper, a citizen paper, without it we were of different national, we were not given a paper if we were foreigners. It was ^{only after} three years in this country that we were given the paper.

"How many have you been in this country?" then G. said "Three years". "Do you have a witness?" "Yes, I do."

This and this, the names were written on the paper beforehand, "Do your signature" "I will not tell a lie". After doing a kiss on the Bible, holding a hand up, then "Here you are, the paper". We received the paper like this.

However some said a lie to get the paper.

"Hiyomasa Kato", etc, all lies, some even got two or three papers for himself, but at the end they were taken away; one who had three names, it was known later, and at the end everybody could get only one paper.

Some borrowed somebody else's names when the licence cut-down came.

K. when did the cut-downs start?

M. well, probably about forty years or so ago? fifty years?

K. You had been fishing a long time before that?

M. Yes, as for me, I had been one of the seniors, my name was registered without false, the illegal licences were the licences borrowed from somebody or rewritten ones of the fathers; some people carried such illegal licences. Since we had to cut down the licences, we did a research and cut down from these illegal licences. Every year we were cut down, $10\frac{1}{2}\%$, 20%, etc, every year cut down. Those who lost the licence cried, but

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couldn't help it. They had to do some other work. They did logging, farming, something else. It is same with the other jobs, if you work hard, you can make money. The worst comes to a lazy man. It was the same in those days. If one worked hard, he could make a lot of money. With a fisherman too, no good a lazy man;

K. Were there a lot of lazy men?

M. Yes, in those days, all single men, the single men didn't have the responsibility, they didn't have the responsibility to support the family; only to support themselves; they did a lot of gambling and drinking; they were lazy so they could not save any money.

Many risky experiences I had with the fast tide and deep fogs; some unfortunate people had the bad accidents and deaths from time to time. However it is up to one's fortune. I did fishing for seventy years and did not meet such fatal accident. If one has a bad luck he can get trapped in or something in the place which does not look dangerous at all. It depends on the destiny that one is born with. If one is lucky, things go well with him, if one has a bad luck he will get wounded or killed sometimes. Such is the world.

K. What do you mean by "trapped"?

M. Some times a boat tips over, when big waves come, even if one thinks it is a big place, if something wrong, then a boat will be swallowed.

M. My friend's son, ^{it was} my neighbor's son, both the father and were on the boat and the wind came, one of them was steering and fell into the water, he was dead when found, he was a young man. It happened a long time ago. He was the only son, precious precious son, poor thing, he was dead, Mrs. cried, poor thing. The son had the weak sight so he stepped out of the boat. He thought this was the right way because of his weak sight, then looked at the back to find the wave was coming and was thrown into the sea. To find him, he was caught in a net. So if one has a bad luck he will get in such trouble, with good luck he will not have such trouble. Destiny.

K. Were there any other troubles in the row-boat time?

M. In the row-boat time if there was a little wind we all ran away back to the port. The boat was tiny and dangerous so we didn't go very far. If the wind started to blow we came back right way.

The row-boat had a mast and sail, a tiny sail which moved the boat with the wind. So we did not try too hard. We did not go too far outside. We could easily fish a lot just in front of the cannery, there were a lot of fish in front of the cannery.

It was after engine boats came that we started to go outside. In the days of row-boats and sail-boats we hardly went such far outside, if we did, we were scared.

K. What did you do when you did not go fishing?
Sometimes you didn't go fishing?

M. Sure, there were days that I didn't go fishing, one day, two days when the wind blew hard, it was dangerous, the boat would be tipped over, I would have been killed; of course then I was broke but the life is everything, if I had been out on the sea for the

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Sake of money, I would have been killed. The life is more precious than the money. Without life, there is nothing; nothing is more important than life. It didn't take
We waited until the wind was gone; too many days, maybe six or seven hours, after that the wind usually was gone.

In the old days there was more difference between the hot days and cold days. Some day was really hot and some day was really cold. Maybe because of the increase of population there is not much difference between hot days and cold days these days.

BC has the best climate in Canada. I travelled the east, Toronto, Winnipeg, so on, many times, but I think the West is the best. The climate is best here.

When I first came here I thought it was the very cold country, but I got used to it. I think this is the best country, not too cold, not too hot.

M. After becoming a boss, I grew old and I married 1906 by the picture marriage. The boss of the cannery said to me "Now you make a boarding house since you have a wife. I will give you a big house" so I looked after 400 or 500 fishermen. I fed them and gave them beds. After becoming a boat boss, I became a house boss.

K. What does a house boss do?

M. A house boss negotiates ^{for the fishermen} with a cannery on the matters like jobs, equipments, money (lending the money) etc. The fishermen didn't go to the cannery boss directly when they had some claims. The business was handled between the house boss and the cannery boss. For example I ask, "This man needs some money. Would you lend him some money?" The cannery boss used to lend some if the boss became a guarantor. The boss controlled 20 or 30 boats. Such was our old life.

Then the time came that all the men were married. They no longer did not need a boss to look after. So each had his house, each became a self-boss.

K. The present fishermen all have their own boats and their own house.

M. In the old days the fishermen did not have any money, didn't know English, so even if they wanted to negotiate with the cannery, they couldn't do so, they needed somebody's help.

So a Japanese boss talked to the cannery about lending or buying nets and things for the fishermen. The boss was responsible, very responsible for them. If a fishermen made a debt, the boss had to pay off. The boss had to be careful to eliminate the bad habits like drinking, otherwise he lost his money.

After 1935 or so, the fishermen started to have their own boats and houses.

Before that the fishermen were all single, they could not feed themselves so they were looked after by a boss. In a boarding house there were a lot of bunk beds for 15 boats and so and had cooks, men or women. When the brides started to come from Japan they got their own houses from the cannery. The given houses were like long barracks, they made partitions, very poor houses; a kitchen, bedroom and bath but one house had

it was good that we didn't have to worry about the others.

K. Was it free?

M. No charge, instead the cannery bought our fish cheap. The cannery lent us boats, money, the water was free, but later we had to pay electricity and water because of 24 dollars for

the increase of the fishermen. They all had their houses, a lot of houses all over.

it was too much for the cannery to pay for all these houses.

M. Before I married, nobody was married. After they all started to get married. They thought this was not a good place for wives, they would be in troubles, because the men were always in fights. ^(in my days) Later they married to the picture brides, all picture marriage. The fishermen did not have much money to go back. Yet a lot of women came, they thought America must be a good place. They came here to find such a hard life, "I wish I didn't come" too late.

K. Could you speak English?

M. No, I couldn't, I went to school for six months, only six months to the public school here. I only finished the first grammar. If I did the 2nd grammar I would have understood English better, but in those days I was always in the Japanese community, I did go in the white people's community, I didn't have a chance to speak English so I have been here for 70, 75 years but I don't know English.

K. You didn't associate with the white people at all?

M. Well, I spoke with the boss but I didn't speak on my details. I worked for the white people for two years before marriage. I was a cook and dish washer for the white family in Salt Spring Island, the rich people. The cook was a man, he taught me cooking so I became able to cook too. He said, "Asa, you make breakfast" "You make lunch" etc. He let me do all the cooking. I did cook during the wintertime. In the summer I did fishing. The cook was a white man.

K. What was the master?

M. He was a very rich man who worked in the gold mine. He had

the big house on the island and hired many servants.

K. Were there any other Japanese servants?

M. Yes a few. They cleaned the house and so on. In this country the kitchen had all the facilities. I did just what I learned, I was young yet, it was easy. It was interesting. I learned to make beef steaks, chop steaks, etc. Since he was a male cook, he was as good as female cook, but maybe such is the western dish. As the master was rich, as for a butler, he came with a huge chunk of meat and we ate it.

K. Did a master have a lot of guests?

M. He was very rich, before the guests came other cooks were called. As for the guests they were all single men.

K. Was the master single too?

M. Yes, he said if he had a wife he couldn't drink. He drank a lot. He said if he wanted a woman he would go to Victoria. He often went to Victoria. He was already in fifties. He was a good man, he came from England. He worked in the goldmine, he worked hard and made money. In the old days there were a lot of gold mines in Alaska and else, there was a lot of gold. They could get gold endlessly in the water, in those days some people must have made a fortune.

K. Did you think of going to a goldmine?

Brundage was in Alaska not in Canada, so I could not go. The Englishmen could go ^{everywhere}. The Japanese, belonging to a different country, would have been able to go if we did the proper proceedings.

The Japanese who landed in America could go to Alaska to work in the gold mines and canaries, but it is very cold.

K. Did you come to Vancouver sometimes?

M. There was nothing very much in Vancouver.

I landed in Victoria and came to Vancouver, boarded in Mr. Nagao's hotel, rode on a wagon to ^{come to} Sterston, we piled our belongings on a wagon.

There was a hill on the way, the horseman said "Get out, the horses are in trouble." So we got off and pushed the wagon. There were several passengers, they all got out. When we passed the hill we went on the wagon again. It took us a half day to come to Sterston from Vancouver. In Vancouver there was only Cordova Street. The Granville Street ^{and Hastings street} were in the mountains.

Without any particular thing to do I didn't go to Vancouver, far enough to take a half day on a wagon. It was a lonely place too without any Japanese around; there was not Powell street then.

K. When did the Powell street come out?

M. Much later. In ten years, a lot of houses were built, Cordova street was built, Hastings street was built. Cordova street was the main street. It is a shabby street now, but it was the first street on which there was only one theatre.

K. Did you go to the theatre?

M. Yes, I did for 40 or 50¢. "If one shot on that way (=screen), one shot on this way." Oh, "he shot a gun", the gun was shot at the back. I don't know if it was the American or Canadian film. It was a funny film, but that was the only one we had; people were curious. "Oh, he shoots the gun." "Ah he chops a tree."

K. Did many people go to see the films?

M. Yes, they did. There was no theatre before that. That was the first movie theatre. Charlie Chaplin was the funniest one.

K. Was there any other theatres?

M. Not of the Japanese. There were some for the white people, gradually more theatres were built. ^{but it} we just had BC centennial, you know, only hundred years since Vancouver was built, when I came Vancouver was only 20 or 25 years, so there was nothing.

K. Were there a lot of Indians?

M. Sure, there were a lot of Indians in the old days, this was the Indians' country. When I came there were still a number of Indians around.

As more white people came in, the Indians started to disappear.

As for a work, Indians caught fish and ate them.

They moved to the places where they could catch fish well. They catch deer, bears, etc. to skin and eat their meat, so they ran away to such places.

The white people did not do much of such works.

They could get a lot of better jobs, industries, etc.

K. When did they start to give a pressure to the Japanese?

M. Probably about 50 years ago? The Japanese worked so hard, if fisherman, he could catch a lot of fish. The Japanese were more efficient than the white people, so they were jealous. I think they had the idea that they did not want the Japs because they would lose the competition. it was not only the Englishmen who thought so? Other nationalities like Italians, Norwegians,

Germans, Russians, etc, not well-educated Europeans.

The well-educated men would not have done such a thing. we went through the time when the 3rd class

Europeans could do such a thing to us. Whatever jobs, fishing or farming, since the Japanese had a little better brains, they thought without the Japanese they would not lose the competition, they would not want to have us. This was the base of the discrimination.

K Did you have the ^{incidents} accidents?

For example

M. The Japanese fishermen caught the fish better, or in the canneries the Japanese worked harder so the canneries said "Come on, Come on" ^{liked us better and} Those guys thought "It would be better without the Japs. Throw them out."

Powell Street riot, there was a riot on the Powell Street and the Japanese received a lot of damages, the merchants got their windows broken. I was about forty. I was in Steveston so I did not get any damages but the people in Vancouver were scared.

The mobs were drunk and dozens and hundreds of them attacked the Powell Street with the screams. Those were the 3rd class Europeans, they could do such a thing.

K Did you have such ^{incidents} accidents in Steveston?

M. No. in Steveston we did not have such trouble. Sometimes on strikes we had some troubles.

A strike happened in this way; a canner announced the fish price; the white and Japanese fishermen said, no, it is too cheap; they said they would not go out fishing. The cause of a strike is generally price, at sawmill, hospitals, etc. isn't it?

Today usually capitalists lose the game.

K Did you have many strikes?

M. Yes, often.

Q. When you came was there a hospital in Stereklin?

M. No, none. There was nothing. Afterwards, when the contagious fever was prevalent, people thought it was necessary to have a hospital and collected the money from everybody. When the fever was raging, a great many patients were accommodated in a church. There was no other accommodation for the patients. I was sick and put in there too.

It was the contagious disease, the unsanitary things came from up above the river, the people below drank the water, so they got sick.

We drank the water in the river. At that time there was nothing, no train, no water, the life was miserable.

K. Did people have diarrhea?

M. No, we had very high fever, the temperature went up to 35° , 36° C. I was in much pain. The wooden beds were placed on ^{the deck of} the church like long radishes were layed in line. One soaked a sheet in the bath tub to cover a patient. It was quite something. There were about 400 people accommodated there.

K. Was it summer?

M. Yes, it was summer. If it were winter, the disease would not have been so prevalent.

K. Did you have a doctor?

M. The doctor visited us. The nurses took our temperatures, that's all they did. It was just like an ambulance on the battlefield. The deck of the church became a hospital.

K. Were you married then?

M. Of course not, it happened in my young days, I was only 16 or 17. I was still a school boy.

K. Did anybody die?

M. Not too many. Usually it took from 1 month to 2 months for the disease to die.

K. Were there white people among these patients?

M. No. There were hardly any. Only Japanese. The disease did not happen every year but came from time to time.

Then the people were awoken. They realized the necessity of a hospital. There was no hospital in Steveston. We had to go to Vancouver for a hospital.

So the Japanese got together, consulted and built a hospital.

K. Was it the Japanese hospital?

M. Yes, it was the fishermen's hospital. It was called the Japanese Fishermen's Hospital. Any fisherman, white or Japanese could go to the hospital.

It was torn down a few years ago.

It was burnt by a fire a few years ago.

K. Did you have a Japanese doctor?

M. Yes, his name was TSUREISHI, after him a Japanese doctor came one after another from Vancouver.

K. Was the hospital expensive?

M. No, not too expensive.

K. Did you have a fishermen's union by this time?

M. We had "GYOSHA-DANTAI" in Steveston (fishermen's group) which almost all Japanese belonged to. The fishermen all belonged to the DANTAI and paid their fees, 3 dollars or 2 dollars each was enough to manage the group.

K. What good did the DANTAI do?

M. It did everything related to the Japanese, the fishermen, it was a consultant. In DANTAI people consulted on such business of fishing, salmon, consignment, etc and made decisions.

K. How about the white fishermen?

M. They had their own union. On such matter as fish price, the white and Japanese fishermen got together to discuss if they should accept the price that the canneries were offering. If the price was too low the fishermen would not go out fishing. So we discussed with the white people to decide on the price.

K. Did the both sides agree on such matters?

M. Yes, the matter was related with the fishermen's own profit, high price for a fish or low price? This was the matter of profit, so we agreed.

K. I read the other day that one time around the China-Japanese war, white fishermen demanded 25¢ a piece, which the Japanese fishermen did not agree, they wanted less, and at the end, the white fishermen blocked the Japanese fishermen going out for fishing.

Do you remember it?

M. That might have happened, I would say...
Such thing might have happened.

K Did you have such incident happened to you? A white fisherman got in your way?

M. Got in my way. After the war when I came back, they thought that the Japanese were not coming back any more, ^{when} they thought they had monopolized, the Japanese started to come back more and more, so we faced the hard blow. (= we were subject to the public hostility.)

In spite of it we were patient, we put up with it, there gradually the anti-Japanese voices faded away.

Today the Japanese are not inferior to the white in speaking English, they are fluent in conversation. The old Japanese and the present NISEI (second generation) are different. The modern people study hard, the old did not study. The NISEI have the same idea as the white.

K Did your son come back to Stevenson earlier than others after the war?

M. Yes, that time the white constantly got in his way.

K What kind of disturbances?

M. What kind of disturbances, for example, a white fisherman put his net very close to Kiyoshi's net to disturb him, all of sudden his net was caught in Kiyoshi's net. Kiyoshi was kind enough to disengage his net ^{he could not move,} very carefully, after this the white fisherman said I am very sorry, please forgive me, you were very kind to help me when I could not move, thank you + thank you. He was rewarded for his wrong action.

If Kiyoshi said, look what happened to you to do such wrong to me, to the man who did wrong; to such a man of wrong action, Kiyoshi was kind to cut the net to let him go, so that white man must have been grateful, & Oh I should not do such a bad thing, saying.

(He must have thought) we used to look down the Japanese but who else could have helped us in spite that his net was cut I could not do a wrong thing. After this incident they stopped being nasty to us. At that time the Japanese started to come back to the coast for the first time and we were not welcomed. There were a lot of troubles here and there all the time. Gradually these troubles decreased. The Japanese acquired the right of vote. The union was in favor of the Japanese. The Japanese became the members of the union, paid 20 dollars for membership. The union protects the members.

I was once a president of the Japanese fishermen's Association in my young days.

There were two associations, one is Skena and one is Sterevon. The Sterevon was called the first block (I-kku) and the Skena one was called the second block (ri-ku).

We had the joint council to make various decisions. I have been a president, a treasure too in another time. I am a trivial fool but could it help. (the positions of president and treasure) because the all chose me.

K. Were they busy positions?

M. No, not busy. as for president, people came and asked me on problems, for example, they say president, we have such and such problems, what shall we do? The president give them advice, do this and that. if a problem is very difficult, the president opens a meeting to discuss and make a decision, and practise according to the decision. The president was sort of councillor. The president has the authority to decide for or against the meeting.

K. When you were president, what ^{was} the biggest problem?

11. There were some difficult problems. As for the price of fish, the canneries offered a very low price. For example the offered price was 30 cents for a fish worth while 50 cents.

We said we could not fish for such cheap price, we went to the people to talk about it, and when the price was raised to about 40 cents, finally we compromised and went fishing.

If we did as the canneries told us to do, we could not earn living because the fishing expense was high. The fishermen did not give in.

On the fishermen's part, they did investigation on the finance of a cannery ^{in detail}. How much is a can ^{at present}? What is the production cost of a can; what is a redundancy cost; what is the value of a can in big cities like London or Paris.

Otherwise when a cannery set a price for one and all, they never opened the mouth until then we could not argue them with the result of our investigation. Here is the production cost ^{so much of}

So much of a processing cost, so much of your selling cost, so much for your profit, in this case we are entitled to get so much for a fish; thus we argued.

The cannery people were amazed that the fishermen did such a fine investigation. Without this, they would have looked down on us saying the fishermen were ignorant.

There is a market price all over, in London, in France, everywhere. Today these prices are on a newspaper.

We had the people in charge of investigation. They went to various places to collect the information.

Some pressure used to come to canneries: if it goes on like this, it is inevitable to have a strike. If a strike comes, a cannery will lose. Fishermen's strike is different from a railway strike, fish will run away because

Many strikes in Skerston.

Suppose a strike is on, the fishermen are insisting after a while they end up finding that there are no fish, nothing, nowhere like a hunt field. Foolish! Without a strike, they could ^{have} got abundant fish in fish on top of another another like this, they could have caught many boatfuls of fish. this sea

A strike, next day since fish come in according to the days, the fish went far up the river and no fish around Stevenson.

Yet, if we only followed the cannery's instruction, as it always used the same hand.

On the other hand, a cannery could not make cans without fish... A strike was not profitable either to the fishermen nor cannery, because they could not make cans.

On the government's or cannery's opinion, if not this year the fish will come next year, it will be trouble if all the fish extinct.

Seeds will be left behind like coffee.

Without seed, nothing. Without seed or offsprings, Canadian industry will be completely destroyed. So the government said not to destroy the fish, in order to maintain the seed as much as possible, fishing had to be closed over weekends. If fishing was available on weekends, one of the biggest industries, the biggest Canadian industries are agriculture, forestry and fishing, would be soon in perich.

As for agriculture Canada still has a big land, as for forestry, there are still a lot of mountains. The government protects fishing so that fish will ^{therefore}

not be destroyed. As for fish, not all fish should be fished, the efforts are made to keep the seed. the

If only Canadian catch fish, it maybe all right. However, the Americans, Russians and the Japanese all catch fish. The fish grown up in the Pacific

ocean are caught by all different nations, therefore the Canadians have hard time. The Canadians foster them in the fish banks with great care, the fish grow fat and go out to the Pacific Ocean, the Russians, the Americans and the Japanese catch these fat fish. The Canadians plant the seed which the other nations catch. The Canadians are supposed to have the first claim but it ^{naturally} doesn't work that way. On the Pacific Ocean everybody has the same right to catch.

() miles from the beach belongs to the world, the sea of the world belongs to the people of the world. However, it becomes a problem doesn't it? The fishermen of other countries secretly come to the Canadian sea at night and catch the fish. Some Japanese fishermen have been caught too about a few years ago. They were near Alaska to catch crabs or something and probably discussed by a plane or something, I think.

K. On the 1st day did the same incident happen?

M. They are not allowed to do it by law. They still do it. Then they are fined naturally. As the Pacific Ocean is so vast nobody can watch without fail. The fishermen will not just sit in the middle of the ocean, they are eager to catch fish. Recently planes are available.

K. When did you become a helieman?

K. Do you remember about the first world war?

M. About the old world, it is an old story. Such things Mr. K. HATASHI used to write in the newspaper so he knows well. He is very well informed with the old issues.

K. Have you experienced a storm in Steneston?

M. Sure we had.

We had a fire. The old houses were not like the modern houses so we had many fires.

That hospital was burnt down. ^{also} The town of Steneston was

also burnt down several times.

K. Did you get your house burnt too?

M. No, never. We lived in a little house belonging to the cannery, only the town ^{side} was burnt.

All houses were made of wood, they used stoves.

Today they use gas or electricity so it is safe, but

in old days they used a stove with a big pipe.

The pipe got rotten and made a hole from which the fire started.

Today everything is electric so there are very few fires.

Suppose the electricity shorts and gets slightly framed, you can put it out very easily.

K. When did you first have electricity?

K. When did you become a believer?

M. It was quite a long time ago.

K. Was your son born?

M. Yes, he was born. It must be 50 or 60 years ago that we started to have electricity.

K. How old is your son KIYOSHI? (The eldest son)

M. He is 59.

K. Were you happy when your first son was born?

M. Yes. I was happy.

K. Did you celebrate his birthday?

M. In those days we did not do anything special for birth of a child.

K. Did you visit the Buddhist temple to report the birth of your son?

M. No, in those days, the temple did not have many believers. Now I am a believer, I go to Tenrichurch or Buddhist church or any place. I am an ardent believer of Tenri-kyo.

K. When did you become a believer?

M. Let me see, probably for 50 years now.

K. What kinds of ^{buddhist} festivals did you have?

M. Obon, matsuri, koon-ko, various festivals.
Today the temple in Sterenton is one of the best biggest temples in Canada.

It is a very gorgeous temple.

They have Sunday meeting but I don't go. They have Sunday school too.

Some people go to the temple regularly.

K. How were the temple festivals?

M. The same as today. Generally koon-ko, obon-hoe and hanner-matsuri. They are 3 main festivals, the biggest Buddhist festivals, generally I have the temple in these festivals. ^{even visiting}
(at the time of)

Do you want to hear about religion?

K. Yes, do you have many Christians in Sterenton?

M. No, not many Christians.

If we had a good Japanese minister, we would have many believers, they would be convinced by such minister, but there are not many good ministers. Without a good minister, there are not many Christians.

K Are the abbots of the temple from Japan?

M Yes, many are from Japan.

K What kinds of abbots do you have?

M Generally they are graduates of the Japanese Buddhist universities of Buddhism, quite respectable people.

K Were the abbots from Japan before the war too?

M Yes, but I don't remember the names.

K What did they do?

M They don't do any thing more than performing funeral services or buddhist memorial services. They don't do any outside job. They neither catch fish nor making a garden. They just take care of the dead.

K An abbot has an easy job, doesn't he?

M Certainly it is an easy job. Why don't you become an abbot's wife? The people revere him as *okusan okusan* (Mrs.), so it is not bad. The abbot's wife is *stenon* he was a teacher until recently.

(Language)
The public built the Japanese school and asked her
to become a teacher because she can speak Japanese.
Today, Sometown has two Japanese Language
Schools.

K. Are the children in Sometown the students of the
Language school?

M. The parents send them to the school. There are
some who don't do so, some grandfathers
advise them to go; as for my grandchildren
they all went to the language school.

Once they are students, they speak various
things. I have five children, only the
eldest son sent his kids to the school. So

I have 18 grandchildren and among them
only my grandchildren here (who live with Mr. M.)
can speak the Japanese. They don't say very
much but they understand almost all that
we say, or even the youngest comes to me and
says "Grandfather, I will be late back
because I will be playing at So and So's home".
The other children would not say it so well.

I know a little English but my old woman
does not know any English so she would not
understand a thing of what our grandchildren
say in English.

It is good that the Japanese learn the Japanese
language.

Should

Being a Japanese and not to know the language...
one said "Nobody taught me the Japanese", it
was a girl. So I said to her grandfather
"Your wife is a Japanese, why doesn't she teach
her the Japanese?"

Then he said, it takes time to teach the Japanese.
When we get together and talk in Japanese she
cannot understand anything. If she says
something then I don't understand her, anything
in detail. So my friend says there is not
much fun to be with his grandchildren.

K. What percentage of the families in Stonington
send the children to the school?

M. Almost half, I would say, send them
to the school.

I think they better send the children to the
School, especially the families with grandparents.
People would say probably that the English
is the language here so another language is
not necessary.

However if one knows the Japanese if he looks
at a book he can understand what is written
there, for example.

Children are bright so they can learn easily.
and once they learn, what they soak into
their heads.
have learned

Once they are grown up, they cannot learn any more, they forget.

K. How old did your grandchildren start to learn the Japanese

M. Eight.