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YAMAGA YASUTARŌ PAPERS

FOLDER NO.

1-1

PLEASE RETAIN
ORIGINAL ORDER

I.A.1

MY FOOTSTEPS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

1958

By Y. Yamaga,

In the summer of 1905 I came up Canada with a group of workers. The owner of 2000 acres presented was a willow house. I had brought from Japan to carry my personal effects. By Y. Yamaga, that I had learned to speak did not work at all because of my pronunciation. I had to carry a willow house and pencil and covered Japanese Lantern Parade, whose paper writings by Mr. Jiro Inoue, who at Picture Brides, strawberry growing was as profitable that a fellow could see Japanese Language School, ten years, I came to Nancy, B. C. Ten thousand Sunday School, as almost beyond imagination for an immigrant in those days Kindergarten, only a handful of Japanese settlers in the whole Fraser Valley P. T. A. Movement, Japanese who came in to the Fraser Valley was Mr. Kankichi Social Solidarity, he lived in Pitt Meadows till 1908. Then Mr. Tatsuji Kato Employment, in Nancy as a farm laborer in 1905 and grew strawberries by Co-operative movement, he found in the Maple Ridge cemetery). Mr. Jiro Inoue, who is really responsible for pioneering strawberry industry among the Japanese, bought 20 acres of land and built his permanent home in 1906. This industry as conducted by Japanese grew to a 1 1/2 million dollar industry in the Fraser Valley by 1935.

We had to work hard for our wages in the spindle bolt camp or general farm work in summer time to save money. We returned home in the winter months to clear our own land. (I had bought 10 acres of bushland in Nancy). We could not afford to buy lumber to build our houses so we helped each other by felling large cedar trees and turning it into three foot lengths to make cedar shakes for the walls and roof of a shack. We cut out long and straight poles for studs and rafters, thick shakes were laid on the ground for the floor. Bed and furniture were also made by hand; an apple box for a chair etc. We used straw for our mattresses, which perhaps originated the slang expression

MY FOOTSTEPS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

In the summer of 1908 I came to Canada with a dream of becoming the owner of 5000 acres of golden field of the Canadian Prairies. All I possessed was a willow basket (yanagikori) which I had brought from Japan to carry my personal effects. The English that I had learned in Japan did not work at all because of my pronunciation. I had to carry a note book and pencil and converse by writing. Lured by Japanese paper writeups by Mr. Jiro Inouye, who stated that the strawberry growing was so profitable that a fellow could save then thousand dollars in ten years, I came to Haney, B. C. Ten thousand dollars was an amount beyond imagination for an immigrant in those days. There were only a handful of Japanese settlers in the whole Fraser Valley then. The first Japanese who came in to the Fraser Valley was Mr. Mankichi Iyemoto in 1903, who lived in Pitt Meadow till 1942. Then Mr. Tatsuji Matsushita, settled in Haney as a farm laborer in 1905 and grew strawberries on leased land (his grave can be found in the Maple Ridge cemetery). Mr. Jiro Inouye, who is really responsible for pioneering strawberry industry among the Japanese, bought 20 acres of land and built his permanent home in 1906. This industry as conducted by Japanese grew to a $1\frac{1}{2}$ million dollar industry in the Fraser Valley by 1933.

We had to work hard for our wages in the shingle bolt camp or general farm work in summer time to save money. We returned home in the winter months to clear our own land. (I had bought 10 acres of bushland in Haney). We could not afford to buy lumber to build our houses so we helped each other by felling large cedar trees and bucking it into three feet lengths to make cedar shakes for the walls and roof of a shack. We cut out long and straight poles for studs and rafts, thick shakes were laid on the ground for the floor. Bed and furniture were also made by hand; an apple box for a chair etc. We used straw for our mattress, which perhaps originated the slang expression

- 2 -

"hit the hay" as one retires for the night.

This house building and well digging became a social event among ourselves just as "barn raising" was among the early settlers in eastern Canada. We did not know how to dance but a great deal of eating and drinking went on. This custom remained until good many years later among friends and relatives. Sometimes we put up a layer of building papers inside or made a double wall with paper in between to keep out the draft and frost. But you can imagine how cold it was in winter, thick ice in the water bucket and icicles formed on top of our blanket from our breath through the blanket. After 10 or 15 years of such pioneering life, we were able to build a frame house with sawn lumber.

Money was scarce and our labor was cheap in those days. Oftentimes we could not afford to buy stumping powder so we dug around the stumps of many feet in diameter with a mattock and shovel. In the hole dug underneath we would build a fire and burn it day after day. Some stump roots would take two weeks to burn. We planted strawberries as we cleared the land.

We settlers were all husky young men and seldom saw the opposite sex of our own race. We all felt the loneliness and the emptiness of this life. Some found their way out of this by drinking, some by gambling. I do not remember the exact year when our pioneer, Mr. Tatsuji Matsushita (born in Kumamoto-ken) died. It was approximately around 1910. I cannot forget what happened the day of his death. When we called at his home, we found Choju, the 20 year old son of Mr. Matsushita sitting sadly and silently by his father's death bed. A fellow named Abe knowing where Mr. Matsushita stored his "sake", which he had been in the habit of enjoying every day, brought couple of bottles from the pantry and said: "Well, poor old friend is gone. He wouldn't mind if I finish up these bottles". Abe began helping himself cup after cup. Riki-san, another friend, who was a faithful Buddhist

- 3 -

had brought some incense sticks and candle to light on the altar in front of the body. He solemnly read from long Buddhist prayer books (shoshinge) for the wake service for our pioneer as we, a handful of friends sorrowfully gathered together to mourn. After the service was over, Riki-san and others joined with Abe drinking and talking about the past by-gone days. Abe's voice grew louder as time went on and he began calling Riki-san abusive names. Finally Riki-san couldn't bear it any longer and began stripping off his coat. We tried to stop them but in vain; and the affair wound up in a typical Western style. Next day we asked the Haney Methodist Minister to conduct the funeral and we buried our friend in the Maple Ridge cemetery, the first grave among over one hundred seventy Japanese graves in that cemetery by 1942. According to Buddhist tradition we gathered again after 49 days from death, and held a memorial service in Nichiren-shu, with the priest chanting from a prayer book, accompanied by the beating of a drum. The wake service was conducted in Shinshu, the funeral in the Christian way, and the memorial service in Nichirenschu. I have often wondered whether the spirit of our beloved pioneer was bewildered as to which way to choose.

JAPANESE LANTERN PARADE

My happy memory goes back to the event of November 1918, when the declaration of the world peace brought a great joy to us all. When the World War I broke out, we Japanese as a member of the allied force, lent our aid to the local war efforts. Japanese women, though few in number, headed by Mrs. Inouye, participated in the local Red Cross works and the men folks helped the Y. M. C. A. fund collection and other patriotic functions. All B. C. people showed to us their deep appreciation to Japan for the Japanese cruisers guarding the coast from the menace of the German cruiser Emden in the Pacific waters during the war. Anti-oriental feelings disappeared for the time being.

- 4 -

For the armistice day celebration, we cut green cedar boughs and built a great big triumphant arch on which was put a picture of the Goddess of Peace with a torch. This picture was made up of many different natural colours of the grain seed and was pasted on a large frame. The Municipality held a big feast in the agricultural hall open to everyone. Approximately 2000 people attended that day. After the dinner the Japanese staged a lively lantern parade on the Trunk Road. Led by Mr. Kanzaki, (now living in Haney), and Mr. Tsuchiya (deceased), the two tallest amongst the Japanese, each carrying 15 foot poles on which were hung large paper lanterns, two long columns of three hundred red paper lanterns with lighted candles waved up and down in the dark night. The parade, starting from the corner of Dewdney Trunk and Lillooet Roads marched one mile on to the Municipal Hall in Haney, with all types of noisemakers that one can imagine; beating coal oil cans, frying pans, pots and pans, cowbells and toy trumpets. Mixing with these uproaring noises we sang at the top of our voices Russo-Japanese war songs which were the only songs we knew. When the parade reached the Municipal Hall, the Reeve T. Lilly and his councillors welcomed us and we disbanded with three Banzais. My blood becomes warm when I recall these happy occasions and I cannot help but compare them with the bitter experience we had to go through during World War II as enemy aliens.

PICTURE BRIDE

We saved money by working hard without a holiday all year round. Our talks always wound up with who might be the first one to be the groom of a picture bride. (As a traditional custom of Japan, parents selected a girl and made them meet each other once, which is called Miai-Kekkon). Therefore the picture bride is nothing but an extension of Miai-wedding. This was so convenient and economical that even today, half a century later, Chinese people in Canada are practicing the same custom.

- 5 -

I do not remember any unhappy result of the picture bride custom except a comical one. I knew a man in Hammond named Mr. N. who mail-ordered a girl from his parents in Japan. He had had a photograph taken with an artificial moustache, giving him an appearance of a high diplomat. When she arrived at Victoria, upon comparing him with the photograph, she strongly denied that he was her husband, until the Japanese consul certified that he was truly Mr. N. They raised a big family; however, each time they had a quarrel, she surely brought up the moustache incident.

Since these brides came from a farming family in Japan where women's labour is common, some of the pioneer wives often went to the camp in the woods with their husbands to tackle man-sized jobs. The couple would fell a large cedar tree of 5 to 6 feet in diameter. The wife would saw it while her husband would split it with a wedge and a 9 pound hammer to make shingle bolts.

The distinctive feature of labour on the Japanese berry farm is the woman's share in it. The picture bride worked with pick and shovel with her husband when they cleared the bush land to plant strawberries. Then hoeing and cultivating the berry patches beside her house chores. She would get up very early in the morning and go to bed at eleven at night. Upon arising in the morning, she fed the chickens and horse; then prepared breakfast; washed the dishes; after which she followed the family to the field where she may drive a horse with her husband, behind a plow or cultivator. She would come in shortly before dinner, prepare supper, and clean up, then return to the field. During the berry picking season, she picked the berries or packed them from dawn to dusk, taking very little time for the household chores. After the busy season was over some of them would work in the fruit cannery or hired out as a domestic worker.

- 6 -

The pioneers never dreamed of such a thing as "holiday with pay". They worked hard all year around, and the children also were trained to work as soon as they were able. The best amusement they enjoyed was a community concert held in the winter time consisting of an amateur play, folk songs, dancing lasting all night. This SHIBAI or concert was held all over the Fraser Valley as the only amusement for the pioneer days since there were no picture shows out in the country in those days.

As a natural result of increasing picture brides, Japanese population multiplied fast. Because of language handicaps and shyness, the women would not mingle with the hakujin people. When a visitor knocked at the door when she was alone, she would peep out through the curtain and keep silent if the visitor happened to be English. This situation improved as she learned some English or became acquainted with her neighbors. I opened a night school to teach English, or to study together with newcomers and picture brides. This was early in 1913 and it was free of charge and kept up every winter until the Government night school opened in 1927 in Haney.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL

As the children grew older and attended the public schools, they began to talk English and learned Canadian manners. Like a hen hatched out duck eggs, little ducklings goes out to the pond without fear, thus leaving poor mother quacking on the shore. It was quite natural that the parents who did not understand English could not understand and communicate with their loved ones when they grew up. So the Japanese Language School was started as early as 1914, when Mrs. Seiji Yano taught three children privately in her home. When the Haney Japanese Fruit Rancher's Association was organized, they opened a language class under Mr. Goichi Nakayama, 1923, (now the Anglican Minister) succeeded by Mrs. Chikae Kubodera, 1924; then Mrs. Etsu Yoshino, and Mrs. Fuki Sakiyama, 1932. Then Mr. J. C. Ariga, from 1934 to 1942.

The object was to teach the Japanese language to the Niseis to enable them to communicate with their parents freely in the mother language, not to teach loyalty to the throne of Japan. The Japanese text book compiled in Japan was not suitable to the Japanese born in Canada, The Japanese in California found themselves in the same predicament and compiled a suitable text book for their language schools. This California Japanese text book, having been approved by the Education Department of the State of California did not conflict with Canadian educational ideals. The Haney Language School used the California book. I argued the point at the convention of B. C. Japanese Language School Federation repeatedly, but no one took much interest. The rest of the fifty language schools in B. C. were using Japanese national text books.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

By 1918 the number of Japanese farmers increased to 35 around Haney and Hammond, as well as in other parts of the Fraser Valley such as Mission, Surrey etc. By 1924, the Japanese in Maple Ridge municipality increased to 150 families, and kept on increasing every year. The anti-Oriental movements, started in 1907, known as "Powell Street Riot" spread all over the B. C. coast led by the anti-Oriental society. The majority of the Japanese could not speak English and did not understand the Canadian way of living. "Assimilation" was the chief topic among Japanese leaders in those days. The language barrier was fundamental in preventing mingling with the occidental neighbors. However this problem could not be solved over night. I began to believe that an assimilation to the foreign land must begin with the understanding of the religion of the land. With the kind help of my christian friend, Mr. William Hall, who operated a store in Haney then, and his sister Miss May, we started a Sunday School (non-denominational) with a motto "the melting pot of racial problems in Christ". Mr. Hall gathered the white children and I went around Japanese families, and we opened a Sunday school with 15 children of both races

- 8 -

in the historical old school house built in 1860 which was bought by the Japanese club for our community centre. A portable organ was donated and Miss Hall served as organist and teacher, Mr. Hall as superintendent and I as janitor and treasurer as well as a pupil. The number of children doubled by the end of the year 1914. We had a really Merry Christmas celebration with Japanese and white parents together.

In 1918 the enrollment of children reached nearly one hundred. Mr. A. C. Hampton and his two sisters succeeded Mr. Hall, when he and his family had to move away. People called it the Corner Mission Sunday School. I served as secretary-treasurer, janitor and teacher. I was so interested that I never missed a Sunday even in the busiest strawberry picking seasons through which I abundantly benefitted myself in gaining the knowledge of the Bible and English as well.

In 1932, Haney Japanese Fruit Ranchers' Association built a new community hall 30' x 60', two storied with kitchen and board rooms in the lower floor. During the season of thanksgiving festivity in 1932 the Corner Mission Sunday School held a Chicken Salad Dinner social in the new hall inviting prominent people of the village. The Japanese mothers prepared chicken salad for two hundred people under the chief cook of the late Mr. Y. Kohy and the white mothers brought pastry and beverage. The program of singing and recitals and music brought us together to the top of happiness and peace so that there could not be seen a speck of racial hatred among the audience. This Dinner social was so successful that the chicken supper of the Corner Mission became an annual event in Haney for many years to come.

KINDERGARTEN

Anti-oriental movement in the British Columbia Coast reached its peak when the state of California passed anti-oriental land law which prohibited Japanese land ownership and lease right, in 1924. The following year this

- 9 -

disease spread all over B. C. like a wild fire. The Marpole school district decided on a separate education of Japanese children; Henry Hudson school in Vancouver also taking the same step. The Maple Ridge School Board which had more Japanese children than any other one district was no exception. The reason for the segregation was that Japanese children did not understand English and as a result took up too much of the teacher's attention, which was detrimental to white children. The language barrier was the apparent cause of the segregation. This segregation movement in Marpole and Henry Hudson Schools were checked by the strenuous efforts of the Vice-Consul Mr. Sato with the help of the Rev. Mr. Gale of the Anglican church, and Dr. Osterhout, the Methodist Superintendent of Oriental Missions, through discussions with the School Board who agreed on the condition that the Japanese children would be given English training before public school age.

In order to nip the segregation idea in the bud, in Maple Ridge we had to take action immediately to start a kindergarten. I suggested to the Executive of the Nokai (Japanese Farmers' Association) to open a kindergarten but we were financially unable to pay for a teacher. I approached the Women's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church in Vancouver through Miss E. DeWolfe, a returned missionary from Japan to supply a teacher and supervise the kindergarten. This was granted. However we had to furnish the room somehow. I bought enough lumber to make two little tables, a sand box, and two dozen tiny chairs and did it myself. These were all painted red. Miss DeWolfe supplied all teaching materials and play things. The Haney Japanese Kindergarten thus opened in ^{Jan} September 1927 with 14 preschool children under the tender care of Mrs. J. Fuller, a local housewife, who had teaching experience. Mrs. Fuller was paid by the Women's Missionary Society but we could not do without a janitor. I asked mothers of the children to take turns in heating the room and cleaning it after school. They were all willing to help out, but after a week's operation of the Kindergarten, the janitors

ceased to show up all of a sudden. It was found that someone created and spread a gossip that Yamaga was paid \$45.00 a month by the church, including the janitor work. This was why the mothers declined to work free. But this trouble was straightened up when Dr. S. S. Osterhout the Superintendent of the Oriental Mission explained to Nokai that the church is not paying anything to Yamaga because preschool education is Nokai's work. The church is only helping this good cause by which we restored free janitor duties again. All preschool children were trained before public school age and the School Board was very happy about it. Later Japanese Nokai realized the value of the Kindergarten and built a special room and supplied a janitor. This was carried on until 1942.

P. T. A. MOVEMENT

In the early days the Japanese school children in the public school were unable to understand English because nobody spoke English at home. At least until the first child learned in school and talked to his younger brothers or sisters. Naturally the teachers must have experienced much difficulty with those children. Also the parents knew very little about the Canadian way of living. Consequently many problems occurred about clothing, school lunch, and public manners etc. It seemed the unavoidable psychological effect on the child's mind to create an inferiority complex. I felt ashamed to realize it, and discussed the matter with my good friend Mrs. F. Watson. She suggested organizing a Parent Teachers' Association. But how could we carry on the meeting with mothers who spoke no word of English? However, I made up my mind to take up the double burden of interpreter and leader in P. T. A. work. Again I visited around Japanese homes urging the necessity of P. T. A. just as Mrs. Watson went around white homes and organized the Alexander Robinson Parent and Teachers' Association.

YAMAGA YASUTARO PAPERS

In the fall of 1924 with 26 members, half Japanese and half Occidentals, we met for the first time with a common objective: to bring up good Canadian Citizens. In that year the Japanese children composed about one quarter of the whole school, increasing rapidly to 60% in a few years. In the monthly meetings of the P. T. A. I interpreted back and forth in bilingual what was being discussed in the meetings. I was very proud of these Japanese mothers. Although they spoke very little English they contributed more than their share toward the P. T. A. work. They gave generously and worked side by side with white ladies with whom they became friendly and learned many things through their eyes.

Another unforgettable gain achieved by the P. T. A. movement was the complete disappearance of the Japanese children's inferiority complex when they saw their mothers work with their friends' mothers equally in the school matters. This psychological gain was a tremendous benefit for the Canadian society as a whole. With this encouraging result, I urged Japanese parents of the other schools, such as Haney central and Hammond schools where large percentage of pupils were Japanese, to join the P. T. A. of their schools. On the P. T. A. meeting days of those three schools I went around to pick up mothers in my model T. Ford to take them to the meetings and interpreted for many years with hopes that the Nisei mothers would soon take the burden off my shoulders.

The principals brought their troubles to me for settlement. I do not remember how many cases of trouble I handled. One case I can never forget. An 11 year old Japanese boy brought a bottle of his father's precious moonshine (doburoku) to school and the janitor found half a dozen children dead drunk in the school basement after school.

Mr. Harrison, the secretary of the School Board, who was my intimate friend, phoned one day telling me that Mr. S. T. (a Japanese farmer) was holding his two children from school and putting them to work in the strawberry fields. The Board was considering sending a summons for negligence.

YAMAGATA YASUHIRO PAPERS

I found that Mr. S. T. did not know about compulsory education. He had thought he could do anything with his own children. It took me considerable time to convince him and settle with the School Board without further trouble.

After two or three years of the P. T. A. movements these troubles automatically ceased to happen. On the other hand, Japanese children were never selected for honorary position in school functions, such as May Queen, or Maid of Honor, or for the May Pole dance, no matter how cute, pretty and popular she might be among the pupils. Obviously it was a case of racial discrimination which made my heart ache. I watched for an opportune time to integrate it. Japanese children usually stood high in their class because they studied hard just as their Pa and Ma toiled hard on the farm. Usually the May Queen had been elected from seven schools in turn and the Maid of Honor, flower girls and page boy from the rest of the schools. In the spring of 1927 a preparatory meeting was called. The president, Mrs. Williams and I represented our P. T. A. as usual. Mrs. Poole the head of the School Board took the chair of the meeting. Nearly twenty representatives, mostly women, were present. Among them was Mrs. Dougan, the editor of the local papers, who made a motion that the smallest girl from the McLean High School be invited as a Maid of Honor. This was passed unanimously. At the next meeting a letter from the High School principal was read stating that Miss Yayeko Fujishige is the smallest and cutest of the whole school. Shouts of disapproval and resentment were voiced noisily. For and against of this matter took over an hour. I kept silent listening to the most foolish arguments until a resolution was moved and seconded that the High School be asked to select a Maid of Honor by students' vote in the democratic way. The chair lady was compelled to take a vote on it. The chair lady hesitated because the supporters of this resolution were overwhelming. Her eyes shone when she saw me quietly take the floor and speak

YAMAGATA YASUTARO PAPERS

out slowly: "Madam Chairman" (everybody stared at me with despising look) "This girl in question is a British Subject by birth; nobody can deny that because the Canadian Constitution so states clearly. Besides, the Canadian educational ideals distinctly forbids racial discrimination. Moreover, our P. T. A. constitutions particularly mentioned "no distinction color or creed" I am afraid you are setting an incurable and worst example to your own school children directly against our P. T. A. constitution and Canadian educational ideals. Thank you". As soon as I sat down, the chair lady pounded her desk and declared; "we need no more arguments. I ask the mover and seconder to withdraw this resolution or I will resign right now; also leave the school board. I am ashamed to be giving this matter such a long discussion". This dramatic scene ended in happy conclusion that the May Day committee accepted Yayeko as formal representative from McLean High. (She is living in Toronto now) This broke the ice and from that year on Japanese children were elected on the honorary sheet excepting the Queen sheet, all over the Fraser Valley, as Mr. Dougan published in detail.

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

As I was an executive member of the Haney Agriculture Association and the Board of Trade, I learned many things which was happening in the municipality that we Japanese should have taken part.

The world wide depression, which started right after the World War I, was the worst in the fall of 1934. At the monthly meeting of the Board of Trade of Maple Ridge in November a resolution was unanimously adopted, that a sum of seven hundred dollars be raised to provide Christmas hampers for the distressed families in the municipality. For this object, dance party, card party, bingo, turkey shoot and other games were organized by members of the Board of Trade.

This campaign collected \$900.00, and a \$6.00 hamper was prepared for 150 families including some of the Japanese families. To take part in this

YAMAGUCHI YASUTARO PAPERS

charitable movement, I asked the Nokai executives to take part in the fund raising. In those early days Japanese got together under the NOKAI and paid very little attention to the village community. They donated a small amount to the hamper fund; their excuse was that the Nokai treasury did not have very much money. They isolated themselves from the village society and took no interest of the other. I always had to argue and fight for Japanese participation with the local events, since we Japanese were a large portion of the municipal body. For an example; the school population showed that nearly 40% were Japanese children, costing the municipality \$60.00 per capita a year. Average family sends two children to school; that costs the public \$120.00 a year, and what we paid in the form of school tax as a trifle. I kept on arguing about our responsibility to the society as a whole.

They began to realize my point of argument, and started to co-operate. During 1937 a drought famine swept northern Saskatchewan; we Japanese were approached by the Reeve and Ministers of the Churches for donation of vegetables. The Nokai presidents of Haney, Hammond and Whonnock led Japanese Committees and collected 36 tons of potatoes and carrots besides \$354.00 in cash among the community people, white and Japanese alike. Collected with trucks and loaded in cars at the Maple Ridge Co-op warehouse by Japanese labor, it was greatly appreciated by the sponsor. The local paper gave a big writeup about what the Japanese had done for this occasion.

EMPLOYMENT

Besides all these anti-oriental movement, I want our rising generations to know that their forefathers worked under quite different circumstances from the present day. We Japanese never had been given any Government jobs in B. C. coast. Japanese were banned on many jobs. In common industry, we had to be willing to take the dirtiest and most hazardous jobs. It was common practice on the part of employers to set two different wage rates for the same job.

Many employers took advantage of the situation. There was a fruit cannery in Haney where nearly one hundred Japanese women were employed. They worked by piecework. The rate per dozen was cheaper than the other canneries. The girls worked so hard that an average girl earned \$4.00 a day which was a man's wage in those days. The employer thought that he was paying too much and cut the rate so that girls make about \$3.00 a day. The girls wanted \$4.00 a day and worked harder than ever like crazy and averaged \$4.00. The employer cut the rate again but the girls' endurance hit the bottom and they all voted for a sitdown strike. The girls came to me asking for help. I lost no time calling the Labor Department who sent an inspector immediately and settled that the employer will pay the original price. The girls went back to work.

I had helped the strike leaders as an interpreter and I began to take particular interest in the labor problems which prompted me to study labor. It also motivated me to translate the Dr. Myer's (an American labor scholar) "Do You Know Labor" which was published in Japan in 1948 and has sold 5000 copies.

In concluding I shall mention how I earned my daily bread and butter. I bought 10 acres of bushland in Haney, B. C. and settled in 1912 to start farming. We enjoyed good prices the first few years as there were not enough berries on the market. However, during World War I the strawberry price climbed up to 21¢ per pound and all the berry growers made a fortune which lured people to strawberry farming from all over the coast. This increased acreage rapidly and berry tonnage year after year so that in 1926 Governmental survey showed 1969 tons of strawberry and 2366 tons of raspberry produced in B. C. and there were 450 Japanese farmers owning 1600 acres of land in the lower mainland (1928 survey). Needless to say the local markets

could not begin to consume this large tonnage. As a result unavoidable cut throat competition started among growers, shippers, retailers, as well as wholesalers of berries, in which we growers were always victimized.

Competition is the mother of destruction in this particular case. In an effort to relieve this situation, several attempts were being made by the Government to organize the growers in 1925 but failed. The Japanese berry farming originated in Haney as early as 1905. We were the largest berry farming community in the Fraser Valley and suffered the most when markets fell into chaotic condition. I studied agricultural co-operation in Danish, American and Canadian (later I compiled my study and published in Japan a book "Co-operative Marketing of Agricultural Products in Canada and U. S. A." 1937). After many years of bitter experiences with merchant-grower co-operation, we finally organized "Maple Ridge Co-operative Exchange" which was genuine growers' own co-op in 1927. I was privileged to be the Managing-Director for 15 years.

On the other hand, anti-oriental Society did not forget to take advantage of the situation of the berry market. They advocated that the Japanese growers ship produce indiscriminately on consignment all over the prairie markets thus glutting the market one after another. Unfortunately it was true since the Japanese growers knew nothing about what was happening on the market. This was a very serious matter as it concerned the pocketbook of all the berry growers as a whole. The English growers on Vancouver Island who were well organized blamed the Japanese on the mainland for breaking the markets and began planning to check the expansion of Japanese farmers in B. C. by means of legislature, similar to that of the State of California, prohibiting Japanese land ownership and lease right which was life and death to the Japanese in B. C. Something had to be done in a hurry and the only way was to organize all Japanese growers on the mainland; ship berries through the

same agent employed by the Vancouver Island growers so as to eliminate cut throat competition. I requested the Market Commissioner, Mr. J. A. Grant, to lecture about what was happening on the prairie markets. Mr. Grant and Mr. R. G. L. Clarke the Chief Federal Fruit Inspector spent many a day with me to attend Japanese meetings throughout the Fraser Valley. I interpreted and urged them to come under control. I spent all the winter months organizing not only North Fraser but South side also. We organized local co-op first and then federation of the locals to ship all produce through one channel so that one agent can control whole shipments on the local and prairie markets. This took 10 years time and a lot of patience and energy. However this co-operative effort saved strawberry industry from ruin and saved the Japanese from losing Land ownership and Lease right in B. C. politically.