ITEMS MORE OR LESS INTERESTING

JAPANESE IN CALIFORNIA ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURE

The part played by Japanese labor in California is analyzed in a recent report of the Labor Commissioner of that state. The report does not suggest solutiens of the problem; it merely presents actual conditions.

The investigation of Japanese in agriculture covered visits to 4,102 farms scattered over 36 counties and growing almost every crop common to the state of California. Of this total number of farms visited 1,733 were operated by Japanese farmers as owners, cash lessees and share lessees. The remaining 2,369 farms were operated by white farmers, being equally distributed between those employing white help exclusively, and those employing mixed races, including Japanese.

These 4,102 farms contained 697,236 acres and produced crops valued approximately at $28,000,000 annually. On these farms there were employed during the past year an aggregate of 80,982 persons of all races, 9,452 of whom were women, the length of employment varying from a few days to a year.

On the 2,369 farms operated by white farmers, employing a total of 63,168 persons, 53.4 per cent of the labor employed was white, 36.4 percent, Japanese and 10.2 per cent various other races, including Chinese, Mexicans, Hindus and Indians.

On the 1,733 farms operated by Japanese farmers, employing 17,784 persons, 96 per cent of the labor employed was Japanese, while 872 or 4 per cent was equally divided between male and female white; in other wosds, on the basis of number employed, the Japanese furnished practically 50 per cent, or one half of the labor necessary to grow and harvest the crop, valted at $28,000,000, produced on the farms visited in this investigation.

The farms on which Japanese were not employed were as a rule much smaller than those on which they were employed, the former averaging 159 acres, the latter 357, demonstrating the necessity of a class of temporary laborers on large acreage.

Another important fact developed by the investigation was the relation between the character of the crop grown and the employment of Japanese. On the farms where whites were employed exclusively no berries or nursery products were grown and very little vegetables outside of beans.

The average wage paid by white farmers to white help was $1.38 a day with board and $1.80 a day without board, and to the Japanese $1.49 a day with board and $1.54 without board.

This however, cannot be taken as the average earnings of the Japanese, for 49.2 per cent of the entire number employed were working by contract or piece work, under which conditions the errnings of the Japanese are much larger than those of the whites.

The average wages paid to Japanese farm labor by Japanese farmers was $1.57 a day with board and $1.55 a day without board, showing that the Japanese were better paid by their own countrymen than by the white farmer. This for two reasons: First, that he is in greater demand by his own countrymen, and second, that only 12.5 per cent of the total number employed by Japanese farmers were working by contract or piece work.

The records of the county assessors show 199 farms, containing 10,791 acres, owned by Japanese in the state of California. These farms were assessed at $330,401 on land and $46,927 on improvements, making a total of $397,298, and were mortgaged to the extent of $173,584. The records show also 185 holdings of town property, assessed at $174,694, of which $70,600 was on the land and $85,394, on improvements. These holdings were mortgaged to the extent of $20,395.

A very small percentage of the leases sre recorded, only 319 leases, covering 20,294 acres being found on the books of the county recorders. The actual lease holdings of the Japanese in the state of California amounted to 55,000 acres on cash leases and 60,000 on share leases. There were also recorded 110 leases on town property. The farms held under cash lease by Japanese average 40 acres, the largest number being 5 to 20 acres.

That part of the investigation relating to the Japanese in business and activities other than agriculture is practically complete; 2,548 establishments were visited throughout the state; 1,934 were owned by individuals, 550 by partnerships and 64 by corporations; 19.4 per cent have been in these less than one year, 24.2 per cent for one year, 17.2 per cent for two years and 15.9 per cent for three years, making a total 75.5 per cent of the total established since 1907. Only 58 establishments, or 2.3 per cent of the total, have been in existence for ten years or more.

The capital involved in most instances was very small, 68.7 per cent of the total having a capital of less than $1,000. The total aggregate capital invested amounted to more than $4,000,000. The total annual transactions of these Japanese establishments amounted to $16,114,407, of which $5,938,012, or 36.8 per cent was with white people. The ruling number of hours worked per day was ten and over and the prevailing wages paid from $25 to $35 with board and $40 to $50 per month without board.

The Japanese population of the state of California, based upon the records of the United States immigration bureau, the records of the steamship companies entering the port of San Francisco and the records of this office, was estimated 41,628 on Jan. 1, 1910. About 10 per cent of this total were females. This investigation shows the distribution of the adult male Japanese population to be as follows:

Sixty-five per cent were engaged in agricultural pursuits; 15 per cent were employed chiefly by white employers and engaged principally in domestic or personal service, 15 per cent were either Japanese employers or their employees, engaged principally in supplying the wants of the Japanese population throughout the state; 5 per cent were engaged in miscelaneous pursuits, such as officials, professionals, students, etc.

At the time of this investigation 54.4 per cent of the male and 74 per cent of the female Japanese had only been in the United States for five years or less. Sixty-three and three-tenths per cent of the wives of the married males resided in Japan, while only 36.7 per cent resided in the United States. Of the wives residing in the United States 61.2 per cent had children and 33.8 per cent were without children.

Sixty-six and two tenths per cent of the rural Japanese population were agriculturalists before coming to the United States. There were 817 Japanese children attending the public schools in California in the year 1909.

Personally the Japanese is clean and has a high regard for appearance. He does not bathe the whole body as often as the Chinese, but his hands, feet and head receive daily attention upon the completion of his work.

The report as quoted in the Journal of the American Asiatic Association, points out that the Japanese practice economy on the basis of his earning power and does not permit his expenditure to increase in the same ratio as his earnings may increase. The Japanese earning from $1.25 to $1.50 a day will spend from 20 to 30 cents a day for subsistence, for those earning from $1.75 to $2.50 is 35 cents. The highest rate recorded by the whole inquiry was 60 cents a day.

It is shown that the Japanese rapidly substitute American food articles for the rice and fish of their native country. While rice is still the basis of his food the records of the dealers show that the demand for this staple by the Japanese has decreased approximately 50 per cent in the last seven or eight years. It is the opinion of the Japanese themselves that the adoption of American diet has increased their capacity for labor. Tea, however, remains the chief beverage and beer comes next. Japanese laborers, it is found, drink whisky and are able to drink more of it and with less apparent injurious effect than do white men in similar conditions of labor.—Exchange.

HERBERT E. SNOOK

Among those who are seeking one of the two superior court judgeships for King county is Herbert E. Snook, who for the past twenty years has practiced law in Seattle in particular and the state of Washington in general. He is one of the successfnl attorneys of the supreme and superior courts of the state and if nominated and elected by the voters to a position on the superior court bench of this county will make a useful member thereof. Few attorneys have been more successful in their supreme court cases than he and in his superior court work he takes a back seat to none.

WISE AND OTHERWISE

Sunday a week ago prayers were offered in every church in Greater New York for the recovery of Mayor Gaynor. These petitions represented the hope of pratically 5,000,000 people, and it seems they are being answered.

When it is learned that the Pasteur Institute in Paris has isolated the bacillus of a fever communicated to canary birds by an insect known as the codex and that a serum has been made to inocculate other canaries it appears that the time to despise not the day of small things is really with us.

It is rather a pity since the hobble skirts must come that they did not arrive before th summer season began for then we could have pulled off hobble skirt races at all of the picnics and barbecue thus relieving the "fat women's race" and the "tugs of war" which have already been working overtime.

The government of Prussia recently established system of steel tubes, boiler riveted into which coaches may be backed and exteriors and interiors rendered germless through a treatment of formalin. The sooner America adopt that or a similar system the better for the general health and personal bodily comfort of her passengers.

Lancaster, Pa., has a lively war on for and against Sunday phoning. The question is: Is it a sin to use the phone on Sunday? Such questions make the average Seattleite give pause to what those dear people in Lancaster, Pa., would say and think did they spend a few Sabbaths in the Queen City of the west.

It is estimated that the pursuit, capture and trial of Dr. Crippen will cost the taxpayers of London $25,000 which is more than was ever spent before in the pursuit of any criminal. The good effect of the expenditure will be forthcoming, however, as this case will be an example of the already well established certainity of the execution of the English laws.

The Kaiser is broad minded in regard to the women's education yet narrow in keeping with the prevailing idea which most men entertain. He believes in technical education for women and the invasion of the different business and professions by women. Women lawyers, women doctors, women dentist and women in many other branches of activity meet the Kaiser's approval but he is a resolute opponent of women in the political world.

A keen interest is awakening all over the country among college men in affairs aeronautic. A dozen clubs have already been formed and club meets loom up in the near distance. Doubtless the time is not far off when great annual intercollegiate airship races will elipse rowing and even throw a glamor over foot ball and baseball. These sports will be for those in the higher walks of life, however, but the poor and lowly will be permitted to read accounts of it of course, and then there's all of the beautiful poems about the aeroplane to which mere mortals will fall heir.

Some of the aristocratic ladies of Munich have formed a society whose object is the cultivation of big feet. The hardest part of the reform will be educating the people up to the idea of appreciating them. The society has several hundred members who have pledged themselves to appear everywhere in the biggest possible shoes and to bring up their children along the same lines. Now if the ladies in some other country would only start a small hat reform movement, there might yet be hope of thwarting the advances of even such absurdities as the hobble skirt.

"I made a discovery of queer coincidences lately." "What was it?" "In the poultry journal you menfion, it was a henpecked poet, egged on by need of cash, who wrote that lay about the setting sun."—Baltimore American.