

# Ocean Baby Carriers Are Latest Part of New Japanese System

CHILDREN AT 6 SENT  
BACK TO FATHERLAND

Scheme Works Out Much Like  
Parcel-Post Minus Stamps;  
and Youngster Is Educated  
With His Grandparents.

THEY haven't time to rear babies in this workaday, money-grubbing America, these sturdy Japanese vegetable raisers, market-tenders and porters, so they solve the problem by sending the little folks back to Japan for the honorable and ancient grandfather and grandmother to care for during the childhood years from 6 to 14. Therefore the new and thoroughly modern profession of the "Baby Carrier" has sprung up on the Pacific, and nearly every Nippon Yusen Kaisha and Osaka Shoshen Kaisha liner from Pacific Coast ports to Japan carries its quota of American-born Japanese children.

The head of the Baby Carrier syndicate on the Western Coast of the United States is Masumi Yoshimi of San Francisco. His employees are, first, Asati Karuchi, a venerable Japanese, and secondly the Japanese stewardesses and cabin boys of the N. Y. P. and O. S. K. liners. Karuchi is or was a Kobe physician, but with true Japanese adaptability, he discarded pills, powders and infusions, for the more lucrative task of operating a human parcel post.

For such is the work of the Baby Carrier syndicate. Little Mister or Miss Nipponese loses his or her popularity about the time that the average youngster is beginning to prove most satisfactory about the American home. So the youngster is provided with a wardrobe of simple garments. Matsumi or his agents ship his American money, the child's fare is paid, and eventually delivery is made to the grandparents from some central station in Japan. In other words, all of the parcel post conditions are complied with except stamping and going through the canceling machine.

## Outgrowth of New Conditions.

The new industry grows out of the new world conditions with which the Japanese are confronted. Ten years ago the song nearest approaching the dignity of a national anthem was "Everybody Works But Father." Today, down in hidden and mysterious Japtown, it is "Everybody Works But Baby." Mother has a fine opportunity to aid in increasing the family exchequer by doing laundress, janitress or other duties about homes and office buildings. She is numerous in the markets, where she tends stand and cries her wares as capably as her husband in the adjacent division.

Father toils from early morning to late at night, and the elder children find outlets for their energy by doing the thousands little tasks in stores and offices in the Japanese quarter, and

## SOMETHING NEW DEVELOPED BY JAPANESE SKILL

JAPANESE are usually classed as a race of skillful imitators, but perhaps they have developed something entirely new in the profession of ocean baby-carrier.

These carriers, whose activities are described in this article, spend their lives at sea and have built up a lucrative profession.

The whole thing is worked out with typical Japanese thoroughness, and the percentage of losses in transit is reduced to a minimum.

aiding in small ways in local Japanese manufactories.

But search through Japtown as one will, and it is seldom that children between 6 and 14 years old can be found. The reason is plain. To quote the rustic on first seeing a dromedary, "They ain't no such animal," at least in Seattle. The only exception is provided by the children of families too poor to send them back to Japan and maintain them there, or those whose offspring are destined to receive an all-American education. These are sadly in the minority, however.

The first three years of the Japanese youngster's life are similar to those of any other youngster. The next three comprise a lonely scramble for amusement while father and mother toil in daylight hours. Then comes Japan and the grandfather and grandmother who talk Japanese with prodigious rapidity and who know no high-class language like "Beat It" and other kindred Americanisms.

## How Plan Works.

All arrangements are made soon after the youngster has passed his or her fifth birthday. The grandparents in Japan are notified to prepare for the arrival of the youngster, and then a letter goes scurrying down the coast to Masumi Yoshimi, asking him to prepare at his honorable convenience for the transport of young Togo Machira or some other foster-son of the Land of Cherry Blossoms to, say, an inland city eighty miles from Tokyo.

Father and mother then sit down to wait until the Yoshimi redtape is unrolled. One day comes a letter bidding them produce young Togo at the wharf in Seattle on a certain day and turn him over to a designated individual provided with a half-fare ticket to Japan.

On the appointed day the father or mother never bothers to comply with instructions. A Japanese traveling agent, or maybe one of the stewardesses appears, claims the child, and the parent gravely bids it good-bye. There are no tears, no fervent demands that the child must be kept out of draughts and that it have woolen garments provided on cold days. These things are accepted as a matter of course by the Japanese, and if they do not materialize—well, it's too bad, that's all.

The child once out of the way and en route to Japan and the tender care of grandparents and eight to ten years

PARENTS LEFT FREE  
TO MAKE MONEY HERE

Carriers Spend Their Lives on  
Steamships; Care for Offspring on Their Way to  
Relatives in Nippon.

of Japanese school life, the parents turn to the task of accumulating more of those great, round American dollars. In berry season mother may absent herself for four to six weeks to toil in the fields. Or she may go into the woods as cook for a logging outfit too penurious to pay regular cook's wages. Father may find some task to keep three or four more of his dally hours occupied. Meanwhile the hoard of money grows, and the few dollars sent to Japan to care for the absent child are scarcely missed.

On arrival in Japan, the transportation agent finds quarters for all his charges—sometimes fifteen in number—and engages assistants to care for them. Notifications are sent to the various relatives most interested, and, one by one, the children are sent to their destinations. Sometimes it is the guards on railways who watch out for them. Sometimes it is neighbors from the same district, for there is a great freemasonry in Japan where each helps the other in preparation for some return favor in the days to come.

So while parents are engaged in the mad money scramble in America, the young Japanese gravely goes to school, learns the language and customs of the lands of his fathers, and generally prepares himself for life's battles.

## Returns at 14.

Then one day comes the call for the return journey—usually when the child is 14 years old. The agent who has just arrived with a load of children from America, takes charge of a group of the young men and women returning, and reverses the operation.

Arrival here means more school days, for English has been picked up as a portion of the Japanese training. The size of the dollar-hoard of the parents dictates whether the American school days will be extensive or merely temporary, but the general desire of the Japanese parent is to give the child every opportunity for the greatest possible amount of education.

"The baby carriers spend their lives on the Pacific," said Mitchi Haruchi of Seattle, best informed on the question, "and make good wages, as the steamship companies provide them with food and quarters in return for their influence in bringing travel to their lines. Most of them are selected for their experience in handling children, but of the ten or twelve engaged in the work now, I do not believe there are more than three or four who are less than 60 years old."

EXPOSITION BRINGS  
LARGE CROWDS

BIG BIBLE PAGEANT  
TO BE PUT ON