

Japan Asks Her People In United States, to Be Better Americans

Mikado's Government Undertakes to Meet Anti-Alien Land Issue in New Way—Laborer Must Increase His Standard of Living.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Oct. 11.—According to officials of the Japanese embassy in this city, who have consented to talk to their newspaper acquaintances for publication, Japan has undertaken to meet the antialien land issue in a new way.

According to Hiroshi Saito, third secretary of the embassy, who is its connecting link with the American public, this issue, very acute on the Pacific Coast, is to be met by raising the standards of Japanese residents of California, who are being strongly advised to educate their children to become loyal American citizens and thereby prove that the Japanese can be just as desirable neighbors as any other class of foreigners.

In other words, the Japanese government seems to be understanding that the principle underlying the life work of Booker T. Washington must underlie their work with Japanese in this country. Just as the negro never could be lifted to higher levels by acts of Congress and fine spun theories about "equality before the law," but is being lifted by the educational and moral processes set in motion at Tuskegee, and imitated in various other places in the Southern states, so the Japanese in this country, it is at last being admitted by his home government, must become thoroughly Americanized if existing race prejudices are to disappear.

This course of action, outlined by Mr. Saito to his Washington newspaper callers, means that Japan is to acquiesce, at least for the present, in the contention of the United States that unrestricted immigration from Japan cannot continue under present conditions. Japan, however, wants to change those conditions by imbuing its people in this country with the true American spirit and with true American ideals. So long as the United States sincerely believes exclusion necessary, it is pointed out, it would be useless for the Japanese to force the issue, but the Japanese will try to convince the people of the United States by their behavior that exclusion is not necessary.

To Prove Worth.

Not only has Japan no thought of reviving the land issue at the close of the war and pressing the right of Japanese to emigrate to and own land in the United States, Mr. Saito points out, but the Japanese government realizes that the only way to get recognition of this right from the United States is to demonstrate that the Japanese people who seek it are worthy of it.

Mr. Saito made these statements in connection with a vigorous denial of the published report that the Japanese government, at the end of the war, purposed reviving the land issue, and that its new ambassador, soon to arrive here, had been especially charged to take up that question.

The embassy view here outlined is in strong contrast with the widely published reports of the past two weeks that it is the purpose of Japan to seek the breaking down of the exclusion policy at the next session of Congress. The conciliatory tone of this newest expression of official opinion will cause United States officials to watch with interest the development of public opinion in Japan.

"When diplomatic negotiations over this matter were suspended," said Mr. Saito, "Japan reserved the right to reopen them at some future time. True, the matter is not settled, but it can never be settled diplomatically until the cause is removed, because diplomacy is merely the expression of the will of the people of the two nations. The American people sincerely believe

that the Japanese laboring people are not desirable residents to associate with Americans, largely because of their standards of living. Perhaps they are right, but we are trying to educate the Japanese in the United States to higher standards and make the American people want them here. When we have done this there will be no issue. Then diplomacy will succeed, but until then it would be futile to revive the question; certainly Japan has no desire to revive it."

Satisfactory Bill.

The immigration bill as it passed the House during the last session of Congress is satisfactory to Japan in the form in which it has been reported to the Senate, the language of the exclusion section having been amended to meet the objections of the Japanese ambassador. When the bill comes up for passage in the Senate at the coming session an effort will be made to restore the old language by certain senators who believe the issue should be settled now; but it is assumed that the hands of the administration will be strengthened when it becomes generally known that Japan has undertaken to improve the standards of her people in this country, as a means of overcoming the objections of the United States to Japanese immigration.

Japanese consuls and diplomatic officials in this country, according to Mr. Saito, are systematically trying to educate their people, especially in California, where the issue is acute, to remain permanently in the United States, to adopt American customs, and in every sense to become Americans, to improve their standards of living and generally to become better neighbors. For the sake of amity between the two nations, he added, these people are urged by the Japanese government to rear their children as loyal American citizens, forsaking their former allegiance and faithfully supporting the land of their adoption.

Slow Process.

By this process, though it would be slow, they expect to convert the American public to the opinion that the Japanese are desirable immigrants, and when this is attained the prohibition laws will be repealed, Mr. Saito believes, leaving the Japanese on the same basis as the people of other nations. So long as the California antialien land laws are in force, he said, the Japanese would abide by them and wait for the coming of a better day.

"The United States and Japan must be friends," he adds. "Japan does not want trouble with the United States, and does not propose to have trouble with it."

"The recognition which we want cannot be obtained by fighting; it must come through a better understanding of each other. Meantime we must be patient. Of course, there are some agitators in Japan, as in this country, who would like to inflame the people and stir up trouble, but they are in the small minority. Our government is going about this business calmly and with deliberation, and will not be moved by sentiment. I am sure they will not reopen the issue with the United States until the circumstances change and a new phase is presented—in fact, until it ceases to be an issue."

"I do not speak ex cathedra, but I think I voice the views of my government and the sentiment of our people."

The foregoing is a brand new statement of the antialien land situation and it is attracting a good deal of attention among public men. It is believed that it will make certain the acceptance by the Senate of the exclusion section of the immigration bill as whipped into shape during the recent session and cause its acceptance by the House also.

—W. W. JERMANE.