

ADULT JAPANESE CROWD OUT CHILDREN

Coolie Immigrants Exercise a Baneful Influence and Generally Demoralize the Educational System of the City.

THE status of women in Japan and the light in which women are regarded by the ordinary Japanese immigrant, suggests another aspect of the Asiatic question which has already aroused some amount of attention, but for which, it is needless to say, the obvious remedy has not yet been forthcoming. We refer to the education of the Japanese in the public schools of the State. There can be no question that the facility with which American education can be obtained is to a great extent responsible for the invasion that we deplore, and if these facilities were somewhat curtailed—that is to say, if the schools were reserved for the purposes for which they were intended—there would be a resulting and wholesome discouragement to Japanese immigration.

Now the reasons that have induced the American Nation to inaugurate the most perfect educational system in the world are clear and definite. They arise from the intelligent perception that education is essential to good citizenship, and it is in order that American citizenship may gravitate upward toward ever higher and higher levels that the public schools have been nursed into the position they now occupy. But these schools were not intended to train citizens for other nations; they were not intended for the education of aliens, whose steadfast intention it is to remain aliens, nor were they established for the purpose of imparting the mysteries of the English language to those whose only use for that language is commercial competition.



This Picture, Showing Women Building Sewers in Tokio, Depicts the Industrial Conditions in Japan, Which the Unrestricted Immigration of the Little Brown Men Will Eventually Bring to the Fields of California.

Trouble for Teachers.

The duties of the teacher are necessarily arduous and harassing even under the most favorable conditions. They demand a high order of intelligence, as well as the moral qualities of patience, self-sacrifice and conscientiousness. Probably it rarely occurs to the average citizen that these duties, already sufficiently exacting, are enormously enhanced by the necessity for dealing with pupils who are ignorant of the language.

We are well aware that Eastern schools have the same difficulties to contend against and that the children of polyglot Europe are to be found wherever the high tidal waves of European immigration have reached. But between those children and the Japanese pupils there is an enormous difference. The labor of teaching English to German, Scandinavian and Italian children is labor spent in the manufacture of good citizens. That is to say, it is labor expended for the precise purpose for which that labor was ordained. But by the education of the Japanese that labor is expended for purposes entirely outside the scope and the intention of American educational activities. It is energy misdirected and money diverted. Not only does the Nation reap no harvest of benefits whatever, but such education constitutes a positive sowing of tares of which also there will be a harvest, but not of the kind we shall be inclined to welcome.

Keeps Americans Out.

This is, however, by no means a complete statement of the evil inflicted. The Japanese pupil is not only mentally nourished on food that does not belong to him and to which he has no right, but he is depriving American children of the advantages designed for their benefit. In the first place the efficiency of the class is much weakened by the presence of pupils who do not speak English, and in the second place American children are actually excluded from the schools of which the accommodation is insufficient for so large an influx to Asiatics.

Precise statistics do not seem to be available, but a careful estimate made some six months ago showed the presence of over 1000 Japanese pupils in the schools of San Francisco alone. Without doubt this number has now been considerably increased, while the total for the whole State would certainly be formidable. The amount of labor thus thrown upon the shoulders of the teachers can be imagined only by those who know the anxieties of the profession and the added difficulties caused by pupils who are unfamiliar with the language.

That the teachers have not complained speaks volumes for their patience and good will, but this should in no way be allowed to weigh as a factor in the situation, nor should it

be allowed to postpone an act of justice to which these teachers are entitled. However little the statutes may have contemplated such an invasion, the fact remains that public money was not intended for such uses as this, that the teachers are not paid to train citizens for other nations, and that American children have educational rights that are now threatened and that it has become the duty of the State to enforce and to protect.

Jap Pupils are Adults

There is, however, still another aspect, perhaps the most serious of all. We have refrained from speaking of the Japanese pupils in the public schools as children, and for the very good and sufficient reason that a large number of these pupils are not children, but adults.

Now, it may be at all times questioned whether it is wise to educate children in company with adults, and many educational authorities strongly deprecate the practice. America does not, of course, exclude adults from the benefits of her schools, and it may be that in the case of white adults the resulting benefits are greater than the resulting injuries, and that the balance is therefore upon the right side.

But the question is entirely changed by the fact that these adults are Asiatic. Under such circumstances there can be no question which way the balance lies and that a very grave danger may result from the daily contact of young girls with adult men of Asiatic birth and training. If we once more repeat that we make no reflection whatever upon Asiatics as such, it is because we would be above the suspicion of prejudice. It is sufficient to say that an Asiatic is—an Asiatic, and therefore with Asiatic views, tendencies and laxities that the white man views with concern and apprehension.

The white man does not wish his children to be inoculated with Asiatic views upon the subject of women; he does not wish his daughter to associate with adult Asiatics, who believe that the status of women is intended

by Providence to be a low one, or with apanese men who believe that a marriage may be contracted by an exchange of photographs. It may be said that school life contains no opportunities for such inoculation, but upon that point our views are somewhat definite, as must be the views of all who remember their own school days.

Influence Bad in Schools

There is such a thing as mental and moral atmosphere, although it may not yet have been weighed and analyzed by the chemist, and the mental and moral atmosphere of the adult Asiatic is sometimes not such as we wish to pervade our schoolrooms. It must, moreover, be remembered that the average Japanese pupil does not belong to the Samurai caste, but rather to the coolie, and while American ideals have no room for caste as such, the caste that implies a habit of thought and of morals is very worthy of consideration.

Thanks to the presence of the Asiatic our children are already packed into the schools like herrings in a barrel, and this state of things should cease. If the Japanese should appeal for education upon the ground of philanthropy, that would be a phase of the question that would doubtless receive attention in the right quarter. It is hard to understand upon what other ground it can rightfully be claimed.

The public is, of course, entitled to look to the School Board for a rectification of this evil. Far be it from us to seek to interpret the motives of the Board or to estimate its inertia in presence of a condition that threatens the physical health of our children from overcrowding and their moral health from undesirable contact. The public itself is, however, the final court of appeal, and the public itself is responsible for all preventable evils, in so far as it has failed to express and to enforce its will. However passive the American workman may be where only his own interests are concerned, that passivity ought not to be extended to the interests of his children, nor can he afford to relax the vigilance that is the price of his well being.