

WHAT A STUDY OF BROWN RACE SHOWS

Plain Warning From Edward
Rosenberg's Investigation of
the Conditions That Exist
in the Land of the Mikado.

EDWARD ROSENBERG, who, as special commissioner of the American Federation of Labor, made an extended tour of the Orient to investigate the labor situation there, believes that California is liable to become a dumping ground for cheap, unassimilable Asiatic labor. He declares that the conditions in Japan are such that the free entry of its people into the United States means not only the stopping of the progress of the working classes in the invaded centers, but their practical extinction. He found the masses of the people working for a few cents a day, enduring excessively long hours of labor and subsisting upon the poorest of foods.

The abolition of feudalism, while it has worked wonders for a few of the aristocracy, has done nothing for the commonalty, who are to-day poorer than ever before. The future promises to see the flood of immigration greatly increased, as conditions in the Orient are changing only for the worse, so far as the wage earners are concerned.

From Rosenberg's investigations it appears that in Japan men are driven and horses led—a purely Oriental state of affairs which gives the lie to half of the fine stories of the island empire which are being repeated by unthinking hero worshipers, who would have us believe that the Japanese have accomplished in fifty years what it took the Anglo-Saxon many centuries to achieve.

HARDSHIPS OF COMMON PEOPLE

The commissioner found that the wealthy classes were adopting the customs of the European races, but that the common people were in no position to emulate them, being forced to live upon rice, barley and vegetables at a cost of 2 cents a meal. Nevertheless the rich Jap, at his fifty-cent table d'hôte dinner, considers himself a full-fledged leader of civilization.

"Since 1870, the year feudalism was formally abolished in Japan," says Rosenberg, "there has been a great advance on military, industrial and educational lines. With that advance,

however, the improvement in the conditions of the working people, has not kept pace. Modern methods of industry and machine production have so far brought no benefits to the toilers. From the fields and the little shops, where, even if they worked long hours, there were no driving taskmasters, the toilers are being sucked into the great modern factories where the machines automatically do the driving. In these factories the hours of labor are long and the pay pitifully small. As Japan has a population of about 45,000,000 on its area of 148,724 square miles, only 11 per cent of which is arable land, the rapid introduction of machine labor and consequent displacement of hand labor is causing considerable hardship."

EAGER TO COME TO AMERICA.

From this cause arises the eagerness of the Japanese coolie to come to America. The extraordinary awakening of the nation from a military standpoint has not been accompanied with a proportionate amelioration of the lot of the common people. Industrial necessity is pinching the rank and file of the Japanese nation, notwithstanding the honors being conferred upon their flag. Rosenberg believes there is before the population of the Sunrise kingdom a period of great and prolonged suffering. During this time the pressure of the tide of immigration upon American shores may be expected to become correspondingly heavy.

"On my way from Osaka to Tokio," he continues, "I had a lengthy conversation with T. Nakahashi, the president of the Osaka Shosen Kaisha, a steamship company capitalized at \$2,250,000 and owning seventy-six steamers. He was emphatic in his statements that the organization of labor on Western lines is impossible at present. He said: 'Any attempt to do so would fail, the population of the country being so dense that the places of strikers could be quickly filled.'

"My observations in Japan incline me to the belief that there is considerable truth in the opinion that there is ahead for the working people of Japan an era of great and long suffering, just as in the last decade of the eighteenth century the English workers suffered great hardships when machine production was revolutionizing English industry and the workers lacked the organization of labor necessary to successfully demand a fair share in the nation's industrial advance.

FEUDAL SPIRIT STILL EXISTS.

"The spirit of feudalism—blind obedience to the lords and rulers—is still strong in Japan in spite of its formal abolition thirty-five years ago. That obedience for centuries has been strengthened by the religious systems of Japan—Buddhism, with its teaching of calm trust in fate, and Shintolism, which stands for loyalty to the sovereign. What little effort is being made toward the improvement of the condition of the Japanese workers at present is on political lines. A few members of the House of Representatives, men belonging to the learned professions, have been elected

upon their promise to advocate in the Imperial Diet reforms in the interest of the workers.

"What a delusion such efforts are the history of the industrial conditions of Germany and France for the last fifty years proves. Japan will have to learn the lesson that only through the organization of labor on trades union lines can any important economic reforms be gained by the workers.

"These observations are timely and of special interest to the American workers, for with the increase of machine production in Japan—which for many years to come will itself bring increased suffering among the Japanese workers—there will be a stronger and stronger desire to emigrate, and the United States will be the dumping ground of this cheap and non-assimilative Asiatic labor unless exclusion is resorted to.

SIGNIFICANT STATISTICS.

"The following statistics merit serious consideration: The Hawaiian census of 1896 gave 24,000 Japanese in those islands. The United States census of 1900 shows that this number had risen to 61,000, an increase of 37,111 in four years. It can be safely stated that the present number of Japanese in the islands is in excess of 70,000.

"What the Japanese have done in lowering wages in California, Washington, Oregon, Montana and Idaho is well known to the working people of these states. How the Japanese in the Hawaiian Islands have invaded all callings and trades, driving the native Hawaiians into destitution and the Caucasian workmen out of the islands, a future article will demonstrate.

"Wages paid in Japan are as follows: In the Temma weaving mills at Osaka, the country's industrial and commercial center, where 100 men, 380 women and 120 children are employed, men receive from 11 to 30 cents, women from 7 to 20 cents, boys from 6 to 9 cents and girls from 3½ to 6 cents for a working day of eleven hours. The engineer is paid \$15 a month, his assistant 23 cents a day, and the firemen from 17, to 20 cents. The mill was built fifteen years ago. There is one attendant for each 100 spindles and one weaver for every two looms.

"The Osaka Cotton Mills Company, employing 3500 people, pays about the same. Wages are reckoned by the day and not by the piece.

"At the Osaka paper mill, employing 200 men and 150 women and children, the chief engineer receives \$50 a month and his assistant \$23. Men receive from 17 to 50 cents and women 10 cents and children 7 cents for an eleven-hour day.

WAGES IN BUILDING TRADES.

"Longshoremen are paid 20 cents and sailors from 15 to 25 cents a day, while mechanics in the building trades are paid from 35 to 50 cents for ten hours.

"At the works of the Kisha Seizo Goshi Kaisha, a manufactory of locomotives, cars and structural iron, from 500 to 700 men are employed. Iron molders receive from 25 to 30 cents a day of ten hours; machinists, blacksmiths and boiler-makers, from 30 to 50 cents, and woodworkers on railroad

and electric cars, from 32 to 60 cents. At the Osaka shipbuilding works the same wages prevail.

"At Tokio, whose population is 1,333,256, wages in the building trades are the same as at Osaka. At the shipbuilding works a few of the best mechanics in each department receive as high as 75 and 90 cents a day. Good journeymen receive 40 and 50 cents. The superintendent, a Japanese who has spent several years in English shipbuilding yards, stated that Japanese boiler-makers on small rivets equaled the output of English boiler-makers, but on large ones they reach only 80 per cent in proficiency. At these works 900 men are employed. There is no organization among these workers to deal with hours and wages.

"At the close of 1901 Japan had 3854 miles of railroad. Of these the Government owned 949 and private companies 2905 miles. Engineers on Government roads receive from 30 to 20 cents a day and firemen average 25 cents for ten hours. Conductors are paid from \$5 to \$10 a month, but do not collect or stamp tickets, that being done at the station gates. Brake-men receive from \$5 to \$7 a month, and telegraphers from \$5 to \$10. Unskilled railroad laborers are paid from 15 to 20 cents per diem. Private companies pay from 10 to 35 per cent less.

"Agricultural laborers receive 17 cents a day.

NO SUNDAY IN JAPAN.

"There is no Sunday in Japan. Factory workers, however, are given a day off every ten or fourteen days. There is no uniformity as to the rest days among the factories. The cost of living is cheap and the standard low for cheaply paid labor. The wealthy classes, however, are rapidly adopting Western food and cooking, which is utterly beyond the reach of the workers. For instance, at the Osaka Hotel a good lunch of several courses, prepared in European style, costs 1 yen; that is, 50 cents. The worker's meals cost from 2 to 5 cents. Rice, barley, vegetables and fish form the staple articles of diet for the toilers.

"In the cities of Japan the jinriksha is the main vehicle of passenger transportation, and Japanese may be seen trotting in the shafts for hours at a time. Draft horses, with the exception of a few used at Yokohama in American drays, are not driven, but led by men who walk ahead. I was asked at Tokio by one of the liberal members of the House of Representatives to give my opinion on the present status of Japanese labor. I answered: 'In Japan men are driven and horses led. Before you can lay just claim to be classed among the advanced nations of the world your workers must rise above the state of draft animals.'

"The conditions of labor in China and Japan at present are such that, to permit their peoples to enter freely any part of the United States, means the stopping of progress; means retrogression and ultimate extinction for the people now living in such parts. It is best for the people of China and Japan not to have a small fraction of their population go to other countries and stop the progress of such countries. It is best for China and Japan to copy and not to hinder the progress of the Caucasian race."