

American Chastity Bewilders Japanese.

THE demand for the exclusion of the Japanese coolie from admission as an immigrant to the United States is deep-seated in racial antagonism that is deaf to argument. The instinct of race preservation is one of the most powerful factors in history, for the reason that it has been the unwritten law of progress and evolution every since the time when loosely knit tribes and clans made their first feeble halting steps in the direction of civilization. And it is this instinctive clash of races that has given the modern world the desperately difficult problems of the negro, the Jew, and the emigrating hordes from the Orient.

Particularly is this true in the case of the antagonism between the American laborer and the Japanese and Chinese coolies. The instinctive ethnic antagonism is embittered by the clash of economic standards and methods and by the radical difference of moral, religious and social duties. It creates that gulf of misunderstanding so frequently referred to by writers and investigators of Oriental civilization.

The standard of living of a Japanese coolie is so low that to find an Anglo Saxon parallel one must go back to the days of villanage and slavery under Alfred and Canute, in the early days of English history. Until quite recently two large classes of laborers, the eta and hinin, were considered below the level of respectability, and the laws declared them unclean, forbidding intermarriage with any higher class. The rest of the peasants and artisans were sharply divided from the samurai, or fighting men, and hedged about with restrictions, most which have only been recently removed.

The Curse of Caste.

The curse of caste has had the same result in Japan as in India and Egypt. The division of the military and peasant classes occurring in the eighth century, and the passing years have

emphasized the sharp differences of caste. To the soldier class have fallen skill in arms, horsemanship, opportunities to rise to high places of honor, lives free from the sordid care in regard to the daily rice, and in which noble ideas of duty and loyalty can arise and bear fruit. To the peasant tilling the little rice field, year after year, have come the heavy burdens of taxation, the grinding toil for a mere pittance of food for himself and his family, the patient bearing of all things imposed by his superiors, with little hope of gain for himself, whatever change the fortunes of war brings to those above him in social station. Under this system of hopeless labor the peasant has remained ignorant and dull-witted, ambitious, and submissive, satisfied with just enough to keep the spark of life flickering for the allotted span. And it mainly from this class and the riff-raff of the cities that the coolie immigration to the United States is recruited, according to the authority of reputable investigators.

The peasant's life of daily drudgery and its degrading effects are vividly described by W. W. Knox, in his "Imperial Japan." The average size of a peasant's farm is one and a fourth acre, and four-tenths of the profit of this pocket handkerchief ranch, must be paid in rent, which means that the peasant's family must be supported on six-tenths of the products of an acre and a fourth. Knox says that the average income from a farm of this size, as the result of a year's work is about \$20, out of which must be paid all of the expenses. The arduous toil, the debasing drudgery in which practically the whole family must partake in order to make both ends meet, gives a gross income of less than \$2 a month.

Cannot Afford Rice.

So abject is the poverty of the peasant that he cannot afford to eat the rice which is his principal crop. He is

forced to sell it and buy cheaper food such as rye and millet. Only on the occasions of rare festivals can he and his family indulge in the luxury of rice, which to the Anglo-Saxon laborer is synonymous with poverty. The houses of the peasants, his clothing, everything, furniture, etc., are of necessity of the same low standard, and with such an environment, under such conditions of existence, it is no wonder that the debased standards should be reflected in the moral life of the peasant. It is the effect of monotonous toil and scanty remuneration.

Knox states that the mortality of the peasant class is of a very low standard. The rate of infantile is very high, and many of the daughters sold into lives of infamy. Women are made a drudge of the fields like horses and mules in America, and the men have none of the respect for them that Occidental civilization demands. The men themselves, out of the poverty of the poverty of their lives have no time to cultivate high ideals for themselves. But it is probably this very lack of high ideals and ambitions that makes the submissive peasant content in his poverty and toil and keeps happy in his ignorance.

But it is the position of the women in the civilization of Japan that brings the sharpest clash with Occidental ideals. According to Knox and a host of other writers, the two great evils of Japan are commercial dishonesty and the degraded position of Japanese women. A girl is viewed as the property of her father, and with her he can do as she pleases. When she marries, which is scarcely or never for love, as understood in America, the property right passes to her husband. Until recently, at least, she had no property rights in herself, and could be killed for permitting the attentions of other men without her husband's consent. Marriage, however, put no bar upon the husband's pleasures and if he adds a concubine to his family, the wife must be pleased and politely submissive. The wife becomes but little better than a servant, and is always under the tender mercies of her mother-in-law.

Trial Marriages Allowed.

The only act required to make a marriage legal is the withdrawal of the bride's name from the list of her father's family, and the registry am-

ong those of her husband's family. But the marriage is by no means of a necessity permanent. The husband's right of divorce is only slightly limited, and it is not unusual for a man to send two or three wives back to their fathers before he meets a woman who suits him. And the wife is also permitted a similar freedom in trial matrimony, but in all cases the children must remain with the husband's family.

The American idea of chastity is unknown, particularly among the lower classes. The ideal of obedience and submission takes its place. Instead of being considered a disgrace, as among Western nations, the girl or wife who sells herself to relieve the financial or other difficulties of father, brother or husband, is considered a heroine, a theme which is idealized in several Japanese dramas.

The problem of the Geisha and her fascination, is a deep one for Japan. The wives of many of the social leaders of Japan have come from this class of girls, and the fact of a previously gay buttery life, leaves no stain on the reputation of the wife. Much has been written upon this institution which resembleth *Pro bn bmbmb* which resembles the heriva of the ancient Greeks and occupies a similar position of quasi-distinction in the society. It has been the theme of Western poets and visiting writers, and a glamour of beauty has been thrown around the geishas which has veiled the significance of the institution in its degradation of women. While the geishas are fascinating little beauties, elaborately trained in all the arts of pleasing entertainment, they are both frail and fair, and in their system of education, manners takes a far precedence over morals.

Shocked by American Women.

The Japanese idea of modesty is in striking contrast to the prevailing notion in the United States, and yet upon analytic review, it frequently shows more common sense and real delicacy of feeling than the American article. It is the Japanese belief that exposure of body is immodest only when it occurs for the purpose of attracting the attention of the other sex. The tight-fitting gowns of American women, the décolleté creations that set off an expanse of gleaming shoulders, inexpressibly shock the modesty of the

Japanese. But the commingling in king baths in the open courts of blush. Men and women guiltless of sartorial protection, pay their devotion to cleanliness in an utter and absolute unconsciousness of impropriety that amazes the unsophisticated American. Amusing tales are told of American missionaries who while taking baths in the open courts of inns, as is the custom, have been horrified by the invasion of women who failed to grasp the Occidental ideas of modesty. The embarrassment reaches a climax, when a little housemaid, in obedience to established traditions of hospitality, insists upon aiding the blushing and protesting bathers to dry himself with little toy towels. Modesty, however, is much a question of longitude and custom. The South Sea Island girl, whose only clothing is a tiny string about her waist, feels the keenest shame when discovered without its protection.

The standard of Japanese beauty differs materially from the old Greek standard which has persisted in Western civilization. Alice M. Macon, in her "Japanese Women," says the ideal female face must be long and narrow, the forehead high and narrow in the middle, but widening and lowering at the sides, conforming to the outlines of their beloved Fuji, the mountain that Japanese art loves to picture. The hair should be straight and glossy black, and absolutely smooth. Japanese ladies who have the misfortune to have any wave or ripple in the hair, as many of them do, are as at much pains to straighten it in the dress dressing as American ladies are to simulate a natural curl when nature has denied them that charm. The eyes should be long and narrow, slanting upward at the outer corners; and the eyebrows should be delicate lines, high above the eye itself. The distinctly aquiline nose should be low at the bridge, the curve beginning much lower down than upon the Caucasian face; and the eye socket should not be outlined at all, either by the brow, the cheek, or by the nose.

Small Mouth and Red Lips.

It is this flatness of face about the eyes that gives the mild expression to all young people of Mongolian type that is so noticeable a trait always in their physiognomy. The mouth of an aristocratic Japanese lady must be

small, and the lips full and red. The neck, which is a conspicuous feature always when the Japanese dress is worn, should be long and slender and gracefully curved. The complexion should be light—a clear ivory white, with little color in their cheeks. The blooming country style of beauty is not admired, and everything even to the color in the cheeks, must be sacrificed to gain the delicacy that is the sine qua non of the Japanese beauty. The figure should be slender, the waist long but not especially small, and the hips narrow, to secure the best effect with the Japanese dress. The head and shoulders should be carried slightly forward, and the body should also be bent forward slightly at the waist, to secure the most womanly and aristocratic bearing. In walking the step should be short and quick, with the toes turned in, and the foot lifted so slightly that either clog or sandal will scuff at every step. This is necessary for modesty with the narrow Japanese dress.

Contrast with this the fair, curling hair, the round blue eyes, the rosy cheeks, the erect slim waisted, large hipped figures of many foreign beauties. The rapid, long, clean stepping walk, and the air of almost masculine strength, which belongs especially to English and American women. And one can see how the Japanese find little that they recognize as beauty among them. Blue eyes set into deep sockets and with the bridge of the nose rising a barrier between them, impart a fierce grotesqueness to the face that the untraveled Japanese seldom admires. The very babies will scream with a horror at the first sight of a blue-eyed, light haired foreigner, and it only after considerable familiarity with such persons that they can be induced to show anything but the wildest fright in their presence.

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