

“Japanese Cheap Labor- It is Not Needed Here and Should Not Be Admitted.” San Francisco Chronicle article, March 2 1905.

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The question is whether Japanese immigration should be restricted now while the number of individuals concerned is comparatively small and while it can be arranged in a friendly way with the Japanese Government, or whether it shall be delayed until increasing numbers of Japanese in our midst shall be followed by the inevitable race conflicts, with the consequent friction with the Japanese Government. If Americans were invading Japan as the Japanese are invading America, and absorbing Japanese industries as Japanese will absorb American industries, nothing could prevent the Japanese from reverting to their ancient policy of exclusion. Since the lower standard of Japanese life relieves that country from any fear of competition on its own soil, it will be necessary for the United States to take the initiative in the negotiations.

Those in the country who will object to such proceedings are the sentimentalists, who may be ignored, the mercantile class, who may fear injury to their trade with Japan, and the much larger class who desire personal profit from servile labor. The Japanese laborer is at this time by no means, “servile,” because he does not need to be. He is bumptious, disagreeable and unreliable. That, however is only a question of time. When the competition of his increasing numbers makes servility imperative he will become all that the most arrogant employer could desire. The Japanese always adapts himself to his environment. In this State it is claimed that we need Japanese labor to harvest our fruit and cultivate our beet fields and seed farms. It is claimed that without this labor those industries could not now be pursued on any such scale as at present. We are inclined to think this true. We do not know where reliable white labor could now be procured to carry on these industries as they are now carried on. It is a pleasure to know that American laboring men are not inclined to hire themselves out in gangs under conditions which preclude the hope of steady employment in one place and the home life which is only possible with steady employment. We are glad that the American refuses to accept that lot. We protest against the intrusion of a race which is so degraded that it will accept it. There can be no prosperity for America, or any hope of the stability of American institutions and civilization, which is not founded on a wholesome family life of the masses of people. A floating population of unmarried workers and idlers endangers the stability of any country in which it exists. It is slavery without the alleviating features of the patriarchal system, which assured to every slave a permanent abiding place, regular occupation and insurance against sickness, poverty and old age. If, as Mr. Seward said, half a century ago, there was an irrepressible conflict between freedom and the slavery which then existed in our land, the conflict between life and vagabond life is just as irrepressible and far more terrible.

We desire California to grow just as fast as it is possible for it to grow on the basis of settled family life. We shall be glad to see it impossible to be filled up with a floating population, no

matter of what race. It will be a blessing to the State if the exclusion of Oriental labor shall compel the subdivision of our orchards, our beet fields and our seed farms. When we lose a healthy rural life we lose our last hope of preserving our civilization.