How Little Japs Become Little Americans

"I DON'T want my children to forget that they are Japanese," said a Japanese merchant who does a large business in New York and other American cities, "but, at the same time, I want them to become little Americans, too. I want them to have all the advantages of an American training. I want them to get all the benefits of the land to which I belong and the land in which they live."

This is the common feeling of all the Japanese who live in this country with regard to the bringing up of their children. The Chinese in America, thoroughly imbued with the dogged conservatism of their race, bring their children up as they would be brought up in China, and seclude them as far as possible from their American environment.

Not so the Japanese. They do not retain their native costumes and customs, as their Chinese cousins do. They adapt themselves to their surroundings and show the greatest anxiety to make little Americans out of their children.

Many of the Japanese families in American cities are wealthy, their heads being prominent merchants, professional men, diplomats or consuls. They live in handsome suburban homes or sumptuous city apartments, with surroundings, service, food and dress as typically American as though the land of kimonas, chrysanthemums and cherry blossoms were not.

Take the case of the Japanese consul general in New York, Mr. Uchida, who lives on that fashionable thoroughfare, Central Park West. His little girl and boy are being brought up in a thoroughly American way.

The girl, little Moto, a charming peach blossom maiden, is now on her first visit to her grandfather's house in Japan. She is to remain there for two years in order to learn all about her own country, and then she will return to America to be "finished" like any other future debutante.

The boy, 5-year-old Isao—whose name sounds, in his own soft speech, exactly like that of Jacob's hairy brother in the scriptures—is one of the brightest of the pupils at a fashionable New York kindergarten. His small neighbor, Dishikio Nagasaki, the son of a rich banker on Wall street, drinks with him from the same fountain of knowledge. In manners, games and general outlook on life these two little Japs appear to be exactly like any healthy, lively American boy.

Their Japanese nurses, who wear the picturesque dress of their native land and teach them the fairy tales and games of ancient Nippon, are the only distinctive Oriental features in the home life of these children. In other respects it is like that of any well bred, well dressed, well loved American child. And so it is with scores of other Japanese youngsters in this broad land.

"I should estimate," said the editor of a Japanese newspaper published in New York, "that there are at least 500 Japanese in New York—perhaps more. Most of them are men in good positions—merchants and the like—and many of them are bringing up their families here.

"Whenever they can afford to do so they send their children to Japan for several years, to be partly educated there and to learn all about their own country. But they take care that they shall be educated also in this country and have a thorough American training.

AN AMERICAN SUBJECT OF THE MIKADO

A FAIR MAID OF NIPPON.

"They want them to be both Japanese and American. Sometimes the Japanese training comes first, sometimes the American. Many children born here do not see their native land until they are grown up and have 'come out' in American society. But, though they may never have seen Japan, you may be quite sure that they have been carefully taught to love their country and reverence their mikado.

A CHEERY LITTLE AMERICAN JAP.

"They are just as patriotic as if they had lived all their lives in Tokio or Kobe instead of in Washington or in New York. I know of one Japanese youngster, now going to school here, who used to get into daily fights with his playmates because he insisted that Admiral Ito was a greater man that Admiral Dewey, and the battle of the Yalu a more glorious victory than the fight in Manila bay."

In San Francisco there are considerably over 5,000 Japanese, most of whom are of the coolie class or occupy menial positions. The proportion of wealthy Japanese in that city is not nearly so large as it is in New York. Many of the Japs in the Pacific metropolis marry white women and give up all idea of returning to their native land. They take out their naturalization papers, become thoroughly Americanized and bring up their children exactly as Americans would do. These denationalized Japs do not, as a rule, mix with their own countrymen, and they do not like their children to learn anything about Japan, not even the fairy tales or the games.

At least 3,000 Japanese work in American families in San Francisco as domestic servants and a large proportion of them are mere children. Boys come over from Japan at the age of 10, 12 or 14 to get an American education. They are alone, without friends, almost penniless, and they would seem to run a good chance of starving in a strange land. But they always manage to get along all right and to secure the education for which they crossed the seas.

They take situations as servants without wages. They merely stipulate for their food and clothes and leave of absence during the day to attend school. In the morning and the evening they work hard and faithfully to make up for lost time. Faithfulness is the quality in which they outshine all other servants available on the Pacific coast. They always advertise that "a faithful Japanese boy" needs a situation, and it is no idle boast.

"You might think," said an American woman who had kept house in San Francisco for many years, "that it would be an awkward arrangement in any household to have the servant absent during the morning and the greater part of the afternoon; but it is not. I have employed many of these Japanese boys, some of them only 11 or 12 years old, and have never had any trouble with them. I would not engage any other servant.

"The boy is up at 5 in the morning, working like a little hero to get everything in order before he goes to school. He sweeps and dusts the rooms, cleans the boots, washes all the dirty dishes, gets breakfast ready and does twenty other things before 8 o'clock.

"By the time he gets his books together and starts for school, you may look all around the house and not find a single thing left undone. All your needs and wishes during the day have been anticipated. Even afternoon tea has been got ready, all except the boiling of the water and the making of the tea.

"As soon as school is dismissed he hurries home. He does not stop to play with the American boys, for he knows he will be wanted, and he likes to get his work done early, so that he can spend a good part of the evening in study.

"It is pleasant to have these boys about the house. Their manners are refined, they always study to please, they are strictly honest and truthful, and they do things without being told. Every housekeeper knows how rare that is in a servant.

"It is wonderful how hard they work to get an American education and learn American ways. Naturally, many of them grow up to be successful and prominent men, either in San Francisco or in Japan.

"The other day I met a Japanese gentleman at the house of a friend, when I was paying a social call. I was told that he was one of the leading doctors in Nagasaki, and had come over on a visit. We had an interesting conversation. His face seemed familiar, and presently I asked him whether we had met before.

"'Is it possible that you don't remember me?' he replied. 'I was a boy in your house for two years and left you only nine years ago.'

"In his manners and conversation he was exactly like an educated and accomplished American gentleman."

Many of these little Japs, when they grow up, marry in San Francisco, either with their countrywomen or with white women, attain good positions and live in America all their lives. They do not always stay on the Pacific coast. Many of them establish business in the other large cities and prosper exceedingly. If you talk to a rich Japanese merchant in any part of the country you will be quite likely to find that he started his American career as a servant boy in 'Frisco.

A man who spent an evening at the house of a wealthy Japanese in Philadelphia came away enthusiastic in praise of his host's children.

"They were the nicest little shavers you ever met," he said. "Just like American children in many ways, but with a grave politeness and gentle manners that American children do not always possess. They were a queer mixture. In one breath the boy informed me that he was going to Harvard when he grew up; in the next he proudly told me stories of the great deeds of his samurai ancestors. The girl played Mendelssohn's 'Spring Song' like a real musician, and then dressed herself in a kimona and told Japanese fairy tales.

"During the evening they played a Japanese game very much like ping-pong. I charged them with having copied it from us. 'Not at all!' they said. 'This game has been played in Japan for a thousand years. Ping-pong must have been copied from it.'"

BASSETT STAINES.

New York Ice-Bound

(Continued from Page Nine.)

tugboat always went around a floe when it could.

Excepting the tug boatmen and their victims, very few of the people who live around the New World's busiest harbor realize just what a cold spell, like the one that prevailed all through the east last month, really means to the port. Old Atlantic coast sailors have a story to tell of a New Bedford steam whaler that made a long Arctic trip without accident and then came to New York, where it was nipped in the ice off Staten Island.

But it is February—provided January has been cold—that the harbor is iced up worst—vessels nipped in the ice, ferryboats retarded, towing and transfer business seriously interrupted, narrow escapes of man and beast caught on ice floes and swept bayward by the tides. It is February that brings down an avalanche of white floes from the upper Hudson and jams the narrow port between Jersey City and lower Manhattan, and fills the bay. The tide whirls the loose ice into heaps, ripping and grinding the floes together and thus forming bergs big enough to support a dozen men.

An accident which happened last year up beyond Nyack, in New York state, will give an idea of how the ice comes down the Hudson, crunching and grinding into New York's harbor.

Two boys went out on the solid ice one morning and fished through a hole. This was in February, and for some days the weather had been mild. The boys were so absorbed in their sport that they failed to pay proper heed to strange noises about them. Suddenly they were thrown down, flat on their backs. They jumped to their feet, only to be tumbled over again. Thus they were obliged to lie for some few minutes, when the disturbance ceased. The previous silence had given place to the gurgle and swish of water.

Not understanding what had happened, the boys looked for a certain tree as a landmark, with the intention of starting for home. To their surprise they found the hill and river banks were moving. Still, they walked on, until they came to the edge of the ice, where the water began.

The young adventurers now realized what had happened and frantically tried to attract attention ashore by shouting. Meanwhile, their course continued down river. To their alarm they felt renewed jolts and heard sharp reports and a grinding sensation underfoot. Big pieces of their floe were being broken off as it was pounded and rubbed against other floes.

The boys were swept out into midstream and the few people on either bank were too distant to see or hear them. Finally, the floe became so small that it rocked with their weight. Then it bumped into a larger one and they jumped to that. Thus they drifted down to Grant's Tomb, where a boatman heard their cries and came out to rescue them. They were saved, but there have been occasions where people have lost their lives in just this way.

It often happens that the ferryboats, especially those that run down the bay to Staten Island, are nipped in the ice. One Sunday evening several years ago the Staten Island boat was nearing its New York slip when a vast field of broken ice, loosened by the tide, swung down the river and the ferryboat found itself struggling in the middle of it.

The engines battled bravely, but the ice-field was jammed up against the rows of piers and thickened by the pressure. Pretty soon the paddle wheels were completely clogged and the ferryboat stuck fast. Over 100 passengers were on board and they clamored to be put ashore. That, of course, was an impossibility, as no craft would come out to the rescue, and the ice was not solid enough to walk over, so the passengers had to stay by the boat. The jam got worse and at last the pilot had to announce that they were in for an all-night stay. Then the passengers called for food, but ferryboats do not carry provisions, so the passengers had to make the best of it until morning, when a big tugboat came along and butted an opening in the slip, which allowed the boat to dock. Such incidents have happened almost every year.

But one of the queerest accidents—and a rather unusual one—that ever occurred in New York harbor while it was ice-bound, happened to the ocean liner Germanic four years ago. It might have proved serious had not its crew known their business.

It had been sleeting, and the rigging of the big steamer, as it lay moored beside its pier, became thickly coated with ice. There was no harm in that, but it was bad that its hold was empty.

Early in the morning its crew were spilled out of their bunks by a sudden lurch. All hands rushed on deck and found the ship listing dangerously over to port. The officers understood the trouble in a moment. Everybody set to work and rigged up ropes from the masts to the dock, which prevented further danger of capsizing, but not before water had poured into some open portholes and filled the ship's hold up to the stokeroom gratings. Finally, the vessel righted, when suddenly it listed over to the starboard until its masts rested on the roof of the dock house, which probably saved it from capsizing altogether. Then all hands went aloft with hatchets, cutlasses, hammers, or other steel or iron implements that could be found, and began clipping off the tons of capped ice. At first only a few of the crew could go aloft, as their weight increased the danger, but as they knocked off their own weight in ice others came up, and finally enough ice was broken off to cause the Germanic to right itself permanently.

ALFRED MILNER.

An Unfortunate Remark

If a certain prominent New York physician ever writes his autobiography the following incident will undoubtedly be omitted:

Not long ago the physician in question was called to a boarding house to attend a man very ill with pneumonia. The man died. The keeper of the boarding house, a woman, was very much distressed, the man having been the first boarder to die under her roof.

"It's so unfortunate that he should have died," said she, with self-interested sympathy. "I do hate to have a funeral here."

"It won't be necessary," said the doctor, consolingly. "The funeral can be at the undertaker's."

"But I don't even know of an undertaker," said the unnerved woman.

"I do," said the doctor. "Just around the corner is a good one, to whom I send all my patients."

"All?" gasped the landlady, and the doctor wondered why she turned pale.—New York Times.