



A CALIFORNIA BERRY FARM, OWNED AND WORKED BY JAPANESE.

the ownership of land by persons ineligible to citizenship is barred by the Alien Land Law, which is now being tested out in the courts. of the Supreme Court now puts the Japanese in the ineligible category by ruling they are not of the "white" or Caucasian race.

## JAPANESE BARRED FROM CITIZENSHIP

**N**OVEMBER 13 was an unlucky day for the Nipponese who like the climate, opportunities, and other good things to be found in the United States, for on that date the United States Supreme Court decided that Japanese can not be naturalized in the United States and can not become citizens of this country. The reason, set forth in two opinions handed down by Justice Sutherland, is that Japanese people are not of the "white" or Caucasian race, and therefore are not entitled to citizenship. The new ruling, it is said, will affect not only Japanese aliens in this country, but also all Japanese who by reason of Army or Navy service with American forces during the World War were granted citizenship papers. "This is indeed a staggering blow," admits the Japanese editor of the Salt Lake City *Rocky Mountain Times*, one of the score or more Nipponese papers published in this country which were asked by THE DIGEST to send in their opinion of the Supreme Court ruling by telegraph.

In the Supreme Court opinion, Mr. Justice Sutherland was careful to point out, "there is not implied any suggestion of individual unworthiness or racial inferiority. These considerations are in no manner involved." Continued the Justice in this, his first opinion delivered from the Supreme bench:

"In all of the naturalization acts from 1790 to 1906, the privilege of naturalization was confined to white persons (with the addition in 1870 of those of African nativity and descent), altho the exact wording of the various statutes was not always the same. The Federal and State courts, in an almost unbroken line, have held that the words 'white person' were meant to indicate only a person of what is popularly known as the Caucasian race. With the conclusion reached in these several decisions we see no reason to differ.

"It is urged that we should give to this phrase ('free white persons') the meaning which it had in the minds of its original framers in 1790, and that it was employed by them for the sole purpose of excluding the black or African race and the Indians then inhabiting this country. It may be true that these two races were alone thought of as being excluded, but to say that they were the only ones within the intent of the statute would be to ignore the affirmative form of the legislation. The provision is not that negroes and Indians shall be excluded, but it is, in effect, that only free white persons shall be included. The intention was to confer the privilege of citizenship upon that class of persons whom the fathers knew as white, and to deny it to all who could not be so classified."

In the opinion of the Buffalo *Express*, the law which the Su-



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preme Court has interpreted as barring Japanese "is unjust and the principle which it embodies is unsound." "Either Japanese immigration should be definitely prohibited, and naturalization along with it, or permission to settle here should be accompanied by the right to become a citizen," believes the *Norfolk Virginian Pilot*, for, says the *Syracuse Herald*:

"While the decision of the Supreme Court is unquestionably sound as an affirmation of the intent of Congress, we can not close our eyes to the fact that Japan has substantial ground for resenting the discrimination thus emphasized."

While the Japanese press in the United States can not be said to be of one opinion regarding the Supreme Court ruling, there is no hint of resentment such as *The Herald* suggests. In fact, the Japanese *Los Angeles Daily News* says it is "glad that the question which has been annoying the Japanese for eight years has been solved, tho against us." Japan, this paper reminds us, "extends the naturalization privilege to all the nations on the equal basis, and therefore it is nothing but proper to say that the same privilege ought to be allowed to the Japanese in this country, if they swear loyalty to this country." Continues this Japanese daily translating its editorial into our language:

"We have a long history and brilliant civilization that comes second to none. We have an ideal and ambition to contribute to the world the Oriental Civilization, without which the world is one-sided. It is to this country that we regret. America stands for the melting-pot of the world. How can we come to better understanding without being given the equal opportunity and fair treatment? If America wish true and sincere friendship, she ought to amend the present naturalization law."

This is likewise the plea of the Japanese *Great Northern Daily News*, of Seattle, which reminds us that President Roosevelt once proposed in a message to Congress that Japanese be naturalized. Still another Seattle paper, the Japanese *North American Times*, which translates its editorial in reply to our telegram, and expresses the opinion that "if you quote it in your paper, that would be quite a piece of luck for us," says:

"It would (it seems to us) be natural and right to decide that the Japanese, who are not pure Mongolians and who are one of civilized nations, can naturalize in the country."

*The Rocky Mountain Times*, of Salt Lake City, another Japanese publication, also regrets the Supreme Court decision, for—

"We are compelled by that very decision to remain a separate and distinct community and race amidst American society, unable to cooperate efficiently with others. However, we must bear in mind the fact that the verdict handed down by Justice Sutherland did not shut the gate of citizenship by way of cultural qualifications. Herein lies our hope."

We find however, lined up behind the Supreme Court, and therefore arrayed against the naturalization of Japanese, dozens of America's representative newspapers. The case against the "little brown men" is thus put by the *St. Louis Star*: "The law which prevents the naturalization of Japanese is plainly intended to exclude the Japanese because they are racially unassimilable and their presence



they are racially unassimilable and their presence creates economic difficulties." And "neither the Tokyo Government nor intelligent Japanese opinion can find anything to resent in the Supreme Court ruling," thinks the *Chicago Daily News*. In fact, adds the *Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch*, "the Japanese Government could hardly have been unprepared for such a decision," and these opinions are echoed by the *Pittsburgh Sun*, *Cleveland News*, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, *Detroit News*, *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, *Philadelphia Bulletin*, and *Newark News*. Says the Newark paper:

"Japan has no cause to feel aggrieved over this decision. The United States has a right, as has Japan, to decide for herself the qualifications for citizenship. On international questions affecting both nations, we have admitted Japan's greatness and her right to be consulted. On internal affairs we hold, and hold properly, that no one has the right to interfere with our decisions."

"An American can not become a naturalized subject of the Emperor of Japan," points out the *Wichita Eagle*, and the *Kansas City Journal* further informs us that—

"Even if the United States did consent to naturalize Japanese, its action would not be recognized by the Japanese Government, which insists rigidly that every Japanese, no matter where his parents were born, and no matter what country might have





conferred citizenship upon him, is a Japanese citizen and must perform his duties as such."

When such hostile comment is found through the East, the Central West, and the South, we may expect still more scathing editorials from the Pacific Coast, where the Japanese are held to be a problem. First of all, Coast editors hail the Supreme Court opinion because it has "cleared a clouded situation," as the *Oakland Tribune* puts it. "The decision protects California against an alien and unassimilable race with which the white race has no quarrel," maintains the *Sacramento Bee*. But in *The Bee's* opinion—

"California will not be safely protected until an amendment to the Federal Constitution is adopted which would confine citizenship by right of birth in this country to those whose parents were themselves eligible to citizenship."

"Meanwhile," notes the *San Francisco Bulletin*, "it is something gained in the fight against the Japanese invasion to have gained the point that those who come here can not own land." "Much as we may admire the intelligence and enterprise of the Nipponese, we must admit that they are of a different race, and during the entire history of the world it has been demonstrated that efforts to amalgamate races have resulted unfavorably," says the *New York Commercial*. Besides, there is the economic aspect, as set forth in an article in the *Spokane Press*. The Japanese, we are told by the *Spokane Press*, works longer hours and lives more simply than the white man, and also presses his wife and children into service in the fields, so that it is impossible for the white man to compete with him.

That the anti-Japanese feeling which blazes forth occasionally in Pacific Coast States "has crossed the Rockies and is reflected as far east as Kansas and Oklahoma and as far south as Texas" is the contention of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*. In *The Ledger's* opinion—

"This feeling is founded in great part in a dread of the competition of the brown and yellow man in trade and industry. It is, however, much deeper than that. It is an instinct toward racial self-defense and a determination that so far as possible America must be maintained as a 'white man's country.' Other white peoples exposed to Asiatic immigration feel the same way about it, as witness British Columbia, the Union of South Africa and the Commonwealth of Australia."





"AMERICANS CAN NOT COMPETE WITH JAPANESE,"

say fruit-growers and ranchers of California and Washington, because the Japanese live very simply, work longer hours, and are helped by women and children.