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CORRESPONDENCE.

Correspondents have free access to these columns, but we distinctly disclaim any identity with their sentiments and opinion on the matters treated.

THE 'NICHU NICHU SHIMBUN' AND THE 'MALWA' CASE.

(To the Editor of the 'Japan Gazette'.)

Sir,—The above case, which more properly should have been styled the *Isoda* case, has been used by the Editor of the *Nichu Nichu Shimbun* as a peg upon which to hang a paragraph teeming with invectives against the cordially hated 'red-haired, blue-eyed aliens.' If the paragraph in question had appeared in one of the muddy little sheets whose especial delight and province it seems to be to invent and print smutty stories about foreigners, it would probably have passed unnoticed, but it appears in the leading Japanese Government paper and is written by the editor—who has just returned from a trip to America and Europe—so that it is fair to assume that the sentiments he expresses reflect those of his readers, a large proportion of whom belong to the higher official classes. Hence a little criticism of his effusions may tend to bring more straws to the surface to indicate the current. The Editor of the *Nichu Nichu Shimbun*—let us call him Mr. S—has at least brought back with him impressions which time and favorable circumstances may help him to digest. One of them is that railway and steamboat officials in America and Europe rival one another in showing attention to ladies, and I think I am safe in adding that Americans and Europeans generally do the same. This struck him as so unusual, and as a little foolish and undignified too perhaps, that he made a note of it, and the legend current in Japan and often told with many a guffaw, that in Europe and America the women rule things *de facto*, if not *de jure*, whilst the men stood by and humbly sibilated and said *hé-hé*, seemed to gain substance. Men in Japan made no such fools of themselves, the term 'lady' to the full extent of its meaning, with the rights it gives to the protection and consideration of men, being unknown in Japan as yet. What Japanese of some position would care to make himself ridiculous by admitting that women—creatures whom some fleeting fancy might endow with some passing interest—have rights, that men have the duty to treat them with respect. Some men, of course, would be so foolish and wanting in self respect as to associate themselves with such inferior creatures as women in marriage, but why talk about such an unpleasant fact, as Americans and Europeans do, who would actually inquire after the health and well-being of their friend's wives and children. No well bred Japanese would ever touch such a sore spot in his friend's private life. Or why should any one assist a woman in getting in or out of a railway carriage, and thus make them distrustful of their own means of locomotion; why should one not elbow a woman out of the way if one wanted to go through the gate first; why should one not stretch himself out on the seat in a railway carriage in the presence of ladies or women—have it as you will—and go to sleep; why should any one go out of their road, or offer to carry a parcel for them, or assist them in any way at all. Why, people would laugh and call the person showing such attentions 'a fool of a foreigner,' and perhaps impute impure intentions to him, and very correctly too from a Japanese point of view, for what else could a woman expect beyond being housed, fed and clothed, besides enjoying the inestimable bliss of being owned by a man. Progress is all very well, but if women—if women—why Japan would slide from off the back of the great turtle that has carried it so far, the Empire would totter. No, women must be kept in their place, and in a low place at that.

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That is the substratum under the pleasant  
little bit of surface cant indulged in by Mr. S.  
How then is it he does not read his own  
countrymen a lesson in the duties they owe to  
their women and ladies generally, for he can-  
not possibly be ignorant of the fact that a  
Japanese lady cannot even wear her hair  
or dress as she likes without being called vile  
names by any Japanese in the shape of a  
man who wishes to amuse himself and the  
public in that way. He cannot possibly be  
ignorant of the fact that no Japanese police-  
man would even for a moment think of acting  
upon the complaint of a Japanese lady in-  
sulted by her countrymen and arrest the  
cur who insulted her. As for any one else  
interfering on behalf of a woman, I am sure  
the idea has not even entered the mind of  
the editor of the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun*. The  
Japanese idea, in fact, seems to be that nothing  
short of an open criminal assault is an offence  
against a woman. If the Japanese in San Fran-  
cisco were to call the ladies they meet such  
fling names and make such obscene remarks  
in their hearing and addressed to them as  
they often do here, one half of the Japanese  
colony there would probably be in the tanks  
and the other half in the hospital the best  
part of their time. But they are there not  
twenty four hours before they know better.  
Let Mr. S. spend a day at the Shinbashi  
railway station and listen to the remarks he  
will hear there about the Japanese and foreign  
ladies who pass the ticket gates, let him see  
how the men elbow the women out of their  
way to get in first and then resume his tirades  
against foreigners. But, the idea of a Japane-  
ese editor going out of his office to ascertain  
facts, is too absurd to be entertained.

Now to the Isoda case. So far not even  
the attempt has been made to prove the  
charge against an officer of the *Malwa*.  
The plaintiffs, to all practical intents and  
purposes have disappeared, but the traveled  
editor of a leading Tokyo journal endorses  
all the vague and unsubstantiated rumours  
about in connection with this matter as solemn  
facts. He does so without hesitation, without  
reserve, all on hearsay, and why? The one  
whom he charges with a criminal offence is a  
foreigner, who has no redress whatever against  
him. But not enough he next includes the  
whole crew of the *Malwa* in his attack, and  
even this sacrifice to his wrath not being  
sufficient, he charges all foreigners, all red-  
haired, blue-eyed aliens with brutality against  
Japanese women, England especially and the  
world generally.

Some time ago a foreign lady was slowly  
riding in her carriage when a Japanese deli-  
berately stepped up to her, spat in her face  
and ran away, without a hand being raised to  
stop him. What had the *Nichi Nichi Shim-  
bun* to say on that affair? Nothing, absolutely  
nothing. She was a foreigner, a red-haired,  
blue-eyed alien, and consequently it served  
her right. What business had she in Japan.  
If any foreigner had been near, and had  
attempted to arrest the cowardly cur who in-  
sulted her the consequence would have been  
that in about ten minutes he would have  
been surrounded by a howling mob and stoned.  
I, in turn, would ask: Is it prudent or  
politic that a Japanese editor having regard  
to the interests of Japan, should use his paper  
to feed the race-hatred which—let interested  
writers say what they will—does exist be-  
tween Japanese and foreigners, on the part  
of the former at least, I should say, for  
foreigners when attacked in this way cannot  
condescend to hate, a little mild contempt is  
all that can be afforded on such occasions.  
Are foreigners to believe in friendly senti-

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ments if one of the leading papers attacks them and at the instance of a man and a woman whose antecedents would tend to make any charge they might prefer against one of the hated foreigners appear very doubtful at least.

If there is any need for a warning, to precise prudence and caution in their conduct, such warning would certainly apply much more to irresponsible editors of the Japanese press, and not to foreigners who have money and business interests at stake. As it is the Japanese press is eager to take up and endorse any story trumped up by any vagabond or discharged servant as long as it is directed against a foreigner. Only a few days ago a Tokyo paper brought the news that a Mrs. . . . (name given), of Yokohama, had chased a Japanese prostitute with a revolver and shot her in the leg. There is another case for the *Jiji Shimpo* and the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun*.

Why does the editor of the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* rave about free intercourse of Japan with the world! Why a foreigner cannot have a walk in Ginza without being pestered by jinnikisha cobbies at every step, he can not stop to make a purchase without being immediately surrounded by a crowd of gaping idiots, he cannot go to the Shinjima theatre without being yelled at and becoming the object of more attention than is pleasant to him, he cannot escort a Japanese lady without having her insulted by word or gesture by most of those whom he meets! Is this what is generally understood by free intercourse! If so the editor of the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* is lamentably ignorant of the meaning of the term and of things that happen in his own street and under his eyes.

Free intercourse between Japan and the outer world only exists in that outer world, but not in Japan, and in Japan it will never exist, not under any conditions. As regards mixed residences, if it appears in sight in the near future to the editor of the *N. N. S.*, he must be more far-sighted than one can possible believe him to be, to judge by what he writes. No matter what he may think or hope, the time when the hated foreigner will bow to him or to a Japanese magistrate or policeman is as far as ever, and articles of the kind that he writes, if they are to be taken as representing the opinions of the public, will only tend to remove it still farther. *Very one of them* and everything of that kind is entered on the debit side of the Japan ledger abroad, and everything written by Japanese emissaries in the foreign press abroad is read with a very big *grannum salis* by those for whom it is intended. There are those both here and in the outer world who are ready and willing to furnish the necessary *grannum salis* whenever required, and the less that is cooked up to require it, the better for all concerned.

Since the above was written, the Isoda people have withdrawn their complaint, thus furnishing a practical illustration in my letter to this paper of the last inst. And the question may now be raised: what is the editor of the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* going to do about his charges. The key finally for much bitterness and vexation of spirit that so often vents itself in the Japanese press, may be found in the following extract from a letter by M. de Toqueville to Lord Hatherton, dealing with European settlers in the East.

'Une race inférieure par sa constitution ou son éducation peut bien supporter le gouvernement supérieur. Elle ne ressent que le bons effets de cette supériorité, et si le gouvernement est habile elle peut le préférer

Tokio, August 13th, 1888.  
QUIDAM.

Yours etc.,  
I am Sir,

There is another case for the *Jiji Shimpō* and the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun*.  
Why does the editor of the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* have about free intercourse of Japan with the world? Why a foreigner cannot have a walk in Ginza without being pestered by Japanese coolies at every step, he can not stop to make a purchase without being immediately surrounded by a crowd of gaping idiots, he cannot go to the Shintomiza theatre without being yelled at and becoming the object of more attention than is pleasant to him, he cannot escort a Japanese lady without having her insulted by word or gesture by most of those whom he meets! Is this what is generally understood by *free intercourse*? If so the editor of the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* is lamentably ignorant of the meaning of the term and of things that happen in his own street and under his eyes.  
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Since the above was written, the Isoda people have withdrawn their complaint, thus furnishing a practical illustration to the remarks I made upon this point in my letter to this paper of the 1st inst. And the question may now be raised: what is the editor of the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* going to do about his charges.  
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'Une race inférieure par sa constitution ou son éducation peut bien supporter le gouvernement supérieure. Elle ne ressent que le bons effets de cette supériorité, et si le gouvernement est habile elle peut le préférer à celui même de ses princes; mais le voisinage d'un particulier peuple plus civilisé, plus riche, plus influent, plus habile que lui, ne peut manquer d'être un objet d'haïne et d'envie à l'indigène d'une race inférieure. Le gouvernement étranger ne blesse que les sentiments nationaux qui sont faibles. Le colon étranger blesse ou semble de blesser de mille manières les intérêts particuliers qui sont chers à tous les hommes. On croit toujours qu'il abuse de sa supériorité, de ses lumières, de sa fortune et de son crédit pour faire des bonnes affaires et s'enrichir aux dépens de ses voisins, et de toutes ces petites haines particulières la haine nationale s'accroît insensiblement.'



*His Excellency*

*Count Okuma*

*His Imperial Japanese Majesty's  
Minister of State and Minister for  
Foreign Affairs.*

*Atami*

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Handwritten text on an envelope flap, including the characters "女" (female) and "子" (child), and a large character "子" (child) written vertically.

