

# American Renaissance

There is not a truth existing which I fear or would wish unknown to the whole world.

— Thomas Jefferson

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## In Praise of Homogeneity

### The Japanese know how to run a country.

by Jared Taylor

I have just returned from several weeks in Japan, and am again struck by the forceful example that country offers of the advantages of homogeneity. As the years go by, Japan's steady record of successes stands in ever-greater contrast to America's failures, and to its inability to think seriously about the kind of country it is becoming. Japan is not without problems, of course, and some are disconcerting by our standards. But the Japanese have a much better chance than we do of surviving into the next century as a coherent, prosperous nation with a culture and civilization it can unmistakably call its own.

Japan is one of the most homogeneous countries on earth. Ethnic Japanese make up 98.5 percent of the population, followed by Koreans and Chinese at 0.5 and 0.4 percent. The largest non-Japanese populations are, therefore, from closely related races and are visually indistinguishable from the majority. Wherever you go in Japan, you are likely to see Japanese and only Japanese.

Japan is at the same time a sound refutation of the view that homogeneity means dull uniformity. (This is the implication, of course, of the common assertion that immigrants have livened up the United States, saving it, presumably, from the suffocating sameness of whiteness). Japan has as much variety—cultural, esthetic, culinary—as anyone could want. Whether it is clothing styles, amateur orchestras, motorcycle clubs, art exhibits, restaurants or museums, visitors are struck by the rich variety of Japanese life. There are endless ways to be Japanese. Thus, traditional Japanese instruments like the *koto* and *shamisen*



A weekend crowd in Osaka. How many are non-Japanese? How many are fat?

have never been more popular, but Japan also produces internationally-known classical musicians. In addition to its own sports like sumo or judo, Japan has mastered baseball to the point that it sends Japanese stars to the major leagues.

American orthodoxy about immigration and diversity suggests that a country could not have opera without a

**Japan has opera without Italians, jazz without blacks, heavy metal without Brits, and “Western” science without Westerners.**

colony of Italians, or golf and Scotch whiskey without Scots. Japan proves that a country can open itself to what it considers the best foreign influences while shutting out foreign people. Japan therefore has first-rate opera without Italians,

jazz without blacks, heavy metal without Brits and some of the best “Western” science and technology without Westerners. What Japan does *not* have is “honor killings,” voodoo, MS-13, bilingualism or racial tension, and it will *never* have these things if it keeps to its current no-immigration policy.

We are told over and over that immigration is an inevitable consequence of world travel, of a shrinking globe, and that without big doses of foreigners a country cannot be truly international or participate in the global economy. Again, Japan proves this is nonsense. It is a full participant in everything from the G8 Conference of industrialized nations to Rotary International. It is a considerably more successful participant than the United States in the global economy, exporting 9.7 percent of its GDP versus 7.8 percent for us, and registering a trade surplus of \$168 billion in 2006 as opposed to our staggering deficit of \$836 billion. Anyone who told the Japanese

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## Letters from Readers

Sir — Thank you for the in-depth coverage of the Knoxville Horror (see July issue). My local newspaper never mentioned it, nor did the local radio “news” station. I don’t use computers, so I would have never heard about it if it were not for AR. I do recall seeing stories about James Byrd, the black man killed by whites several years ago in Texas, and the homosexual murdered in Wyoming. Apparently it is news when blacks and homosexuals are killed, but not whites.

Len Foy, Rangeley, Maine

Sir — I can’t say I enjoyed reading your story on the murders of Channon Christian and Christopher Newsom, but I am glad you published it. I cannot imagine the terror those two young people experienced during the last hours of their lives. If there is any justice, the blacks who killed them will be executed.

Why do the Knoxville police insist that this brutal crime was not “racially motivated”? Three black men raped a white man, and they expect us to believe there is nothing racial about that? Would they have raped a black man?

Jackie Vincent, Dalton, Ga.

Sir — Fortunately, the media can no longer bury stories like the murders of Channon Christian and Christopher Newsom. I didn’t learn about the Wichita Massacre (see August 2002 issue) until I read about it on the AR website in 2006, nearly five years after the fact. I’ve been reading about Knoxville online for months. More and more white people are getting fed up with the way the main-

stream media tailor the news, and are turning to alternative sources. That can only help our cause.

Tim Holtzman, Milwaukee, Wisc.

Sir — I guess it’s a good thing that there were some whites who protested what happened in Knoxville, but it is unfortunate that Alex Linder got involved. Mr. Linder is a notorious anti-Semite whose web site preaches “Death to the Jewz!” He doesn’t represent me, and I suspect his presence, and that of his followers, offended a great many whites. The media already describe anyone claiming to speak for whites as a “hater.” People like Alex Linder would appear to support that point of view.

Anthony Redding, Philadelphia

Sir — Once again, I learn something new in AR, this time courtesy of Thomas Jackson’s article on Arthur de Gobineau (see “Who Was the Father of Racism?” in the July issue). I had never heard of Gobineau, but he appears to have made a very serious attempt to understand the nature and significance of race, given the limitations of knowledge at the time. It is ironic that now, despite the enormous amount of scientific information available on the subject, most Americans would rather *not* understand the nature and significance of race. This is clear testimony to the mental cowardice of our times.

Christopher Weyler, Destin, Fla.

Sir — I was pleased to see your essay on Arthur de Gobineau, who does not get enough credit in race-realist circles. I have heard him dismissed for two rea-

sons, both of which you covered, at least in part: (1) His passivity. At least in his writing, he seemed to believe nothing could be done about race-mixing and subsequent decay. However, simply by calling attention to the importance of race and the durability of racial traits, he made it less likely that whites would remain passive. (2) His emphasis on race mixing. There are passages in Gobineau that seem to suggest racial mixture can be good. However, that is only in the very early stages of a civilization’s establishment, and we are clearly beyond that stage. Gobineau thought miscegenation was inevitable but this does not mean he encouraged it.

Name Withheld, New York, N.Y.

Sir — I went to see the movie *300* on the strength of Mr. Sims’ review in the July issue. Although perhaps not transported by it as he was, I fully agree that it is inspiring to see white men heroically defending their race, culture, and tribe against invaders. I found myself longing for the unity of purpose shown by those Spartans fighting for Greece. Our people and way of life are just as much under threat as theirs were, and yet our people are dumb, like sheep led to slaughter. It would be better to fight and be crushed than slowly be bled to death—and if we would only fight we would easily win. Only because we have been mentally defeated can we be physically defeated.

Sarah Wentworth, Richmond, Va.

Sir — As an Alabaman, I am embarrassed that my state government issued such a craven apology for slavery (see July issue). You reproduced some choice bits, but they don’t fully convey the extent of the groveling. I almost wish you had printed the entire, 1,500-word apology, but I understand your space is limited. And perhaps you wanted to spare your readers the spectacle of a once proud member of the Confederacy debasing itself.

You write that the Alabama legislature deliberately worded the apology to avoid creating an obligation to pay reparations. However, by bringing up “the broken promise of ‘40 acres and a mule’ to former slaves” it seems to me the legislature took a considerable risk.

Bill Porter, Hunstville, Ala.





## American Renaissance

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they would improve their trade balance or understand the world better if they would only let in a million Puerto Ricans or Haitians would be politely escorted to the nut hatch. Japanese believe they are entirely capable of handling their affairs themselves.

It is important to realize, however, that the fruits of homogeneity are profoundly different for the Japanese than they would be for, say, the Yoruba or the Cherokee, who could probably have been left homogeneous for centuries without emerging from the state in which Europeans found them (see next article). International testing has repeatedly shown that Japanese have a very high average IQ—three to five points above the European average—and any society they build will reflect this. But if homogeneity brings out a group's most characteristic traits, what characterizes the Japanese?

Japanese behave in many ways as they and other North Asians do in the United States. Japan has, for example, one of the lowest rates of violent crime in the world. The murder rate is approximately one tenth that of the United States (about 0.5 murders per 100,000) and the robbery rate is on the order of one 150th (about one per 100,000). Japanese, both in Japan and in the United States, have lower rates of violent crime even when compared only to white Americans, and although it is not easy to get accurate statistics, vio-

lent crime rates for Japanese are essentially the same whether they live in Japan, where there is very tight gun control, or in the US, where guns are plentiful.

(Interestingly, of all the foreign groups living in Japan, Africans are the most crime prone, with rates considerably above the native Japanese rate. Europeans and Americans commit the least crime, with rates below native Japanese rates. Africans and whites resident in Japan are much better behaved than



**Earthquakes but no looting.**

the averages for their groups back in their native countries, because Japan is careful about whom it lets in, even temporarily. This keeps crime rates for resident or transient whites—but not for blacks—lower even than the very low native Japanese rate. Even the tiny number of carefully selected blacks living in Japan are still the most crime-prone group in the country.)

At the same time, Japanese police are good at solving the small number of violent crimes Japanese commit: 95 percent of murders and 75 percent of robberies, compared to 65 percent and 25 percent in the United States. Police do not have to worry about some groups refusing to cooperate with the police for fear of being called "snitches." Japan has crime syndicates called *yakuza*, but they mainly run gambling, prostitution, and protection rackets. *Yakuza* touch ordinary people's lives about as much as the *cosa nostra* touches ordinary Americans.

The net effect for Japanese society is that there is essentially no place at no time that is or feels unsafe. Even if a huge crowd of young people were let out of a rock concert late at night, passersby might think they were a little boisterous, but no one would feel afraid.

Japanese are therefore much less security-conscious than Americans. There are no neighborhoods in which drivers nervously lock their car doors. Even in big cities, no one has triple locks on his doors, and doorman-security buildings are more status symbol than necessity. There are flowerbeds in public places where they would be torn up in any American big city. In the US, restrooms

in subways were locked up decades ago because bums, loonies, and psychopaths lived in them. In Japan, public restrooms are plentiful and safe.

Japanese still trust each other the way small-town Americans used to trust each other. It rained one day during a recent stay in Osaka. When the bellhop at my hotel leant me an umbrella he didn't even ask for my room number; he took it for granted I would bring the umbrella back.

Perhaps one of the most striking examples of Japanese respect for the law and

for each other was the aftermath of the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995. This was a major quake that killed more than 6,400 people, and caused property damage worth about 2.5 percent of Japan's gross domestic product that year, making it one of the most costly natural disasters in history. The deaths were not scattered around the country but were concentrated in Kobe, a major port city with a population of 1.5 million. Not

only were there no reports of looting, there was a huge outpouring of private and corporate volunteerism, and even the *Yamaguchi-gumi yakuza* mobilized to help distribute food. There would have been very ugly scenes in any major American city if a disaster killed thousands, paralyzing the authorities.



Osaka manhole cover.

Still, what probably first strikes a visitor from America is the sense that Japan is simply more *advanced* than the US. There are many things that contribute to this impression, but some of the most important are that everything seems to work, everything is clean, everything is orderly, everything spruce and tidy. Even the international airports by which most people arrive in Japan are cleaner and



more efficient than Kennedy, Dulles, or San Francisco. The personnel are quietly competent, luggage shows up quickly, and there are helpful signs in several languages to guide you through customs.

But it is outside the air terminal that the impression of Japanese superiority gains force. The taxis are sparklingly clean, driven by courteous, well-dressed Japanese—unlike the battered hulks driven by loutish immigrants that turn up at most American airports. Buses that serve the airports are spotless, and leave on time, practically to the second. As the traveler continues on his way, this im-

pression of efficiency, cleanliness, and competence only grows.

It is almost impossible to find loose garbage in Japan, graffiti, broken sidewalks or tumble-down buildings. There are practically no vacant, overgrown lots, and hardly anything that could be called a slum. By American standards, it is as if the entire country were manicured, with every square foot tidied and cared for. It is almost impossible to find a beat-up old car. Japanese keep cars clean, and have dents repaired after minor accidents. In probably no other country are roads more carefully and meticulously marked with turning lanes and crossings, or equipped with so many guardrails and pedestrian over- and underpasses.

There are no potholes in Japan. For some years on trips there—even into the countryside—I have looked hard for potholes, and there is none to be found. On the island of Shikoku, the smallest of the four main islands, I recently asked a man in the construction business about potholes. He told me crews keep the roads patched up or resurfaced, and if a crack in the pavement gets any wider than about half an inch, the local people call city hall to complain.

It is not as though white people are incapable of taking care of a country the way the Japanese do. Scandinavia and parts of Northern Europe are said to have the same meticulous sheen, but I have no first-hand experience.

Japanese are completely unprepared for some of the rougher aspects of American urban reality. One day last summer I was with a carload of Japanese on their way to the federal courthouse in Trenton, the capital of New Jersey. Trenton is so heavily black that the governor doesn't even live there. As we rolled through blasted neighborhoods the Japanese' eyes got bigger and bigger. It was a hot day, and Trentonians of both sexes were sitting on the curb, dressed and coiffed in their uniquely colorful way, expressing themselves energetically. The Japanese were shaking their heads. "There is nothing like this in Japan," one said in a low voice. If this was diversity, they weren't interested.

That day, I learned there is no good Japanese expression for "abandoned building." There are words for "rundown building" or "untenanted building," but Japanese just don't leave a building empty and boarded up. Land is too valuable for that and, besides, it would be an

eyesore.

As befits a truly developed country, Japan has what must be the most beautiful manhole covers in the world. Many cities have a famous local scene forged into them. Osaka's covers depict Osaka Castle, and the nearby town of Minoh, which is famous for its waterfall and autumn foliage, shows the falls as seen through maple leaves. Perhaps most astonishing, many manhole covers are painted pretty colors. The colors eventually scuff off, leaving bare metal, but someone must come around every so often and freshen up the paint job. Every manhole cover pictured on this page is colored.



Manhole cover in Takamatsu City on rural Shikoku Island.

Japan abounds in little efficiencies. Perhaps because so few people would ever break into them, everything from train tickets to beer to hot noodles to umbrellas to fish bait is sold in automatic vending machines. Most machines take credit cards, and make change for bills.

One efficiency Americans would do



Ohji Zoo in Kobe.

well to copy is small automobiles. There is an entire class of small vehicles zipping around Japan with engines of only 0.66 liters, the maximum displacement to enjoy the most favorable tax treat-



ment. The smallest car engine in the United States is 1.5 liters, and the smallest truck engine is 2.3 liters. "Light" vehicles, as they are called, get almost 60 miles to the gallon, and come in a huge variety of four-seater sedans, two-seater sport models, and whole lines of minivans and pickups. They are an enormously cost-effective way to make small deliveries or get around town, but have power enough to reach highway speeds. The occasional American-style SUV, camper van, or pickup truck one occasionally sees looks like an irradiated monster.

Japan probably has the densest, most efficient network of railroads and subways of any country in the world, and a place like the United States that has committed itself to roads has no chance of matching it. But just as striking are the extensive underground shopping areas in major cities. Even on sunny days, the streets of downtown Kobe and Osaka can seem oddly quiet, and when it rains they are almost empty. Beneath the streets is an ocean of humanity surging past miles of commercial outlets, skipping traffic lights and avoiding the rain.

## People

Behind all this efficiency, of course, is the Japanese people, who by keeping out alien populations, have maintained



The author with a pickup truck that gets 55 miles per gallon.

complete control over their society. To the Western eye, they are physically homogeneous, with the same black hair, dark eyes, and olive skin. But there is a different and more pleasant homogeneity that goes beyond racial traits. Almost no Japanese are overweight, for ex-

ample, and the occasional fatty is nothing like the waddling colossi one finds among the American lower classes of all races.

Japanese also dress much better than Americans. There is a stylishness about them that seems to recoil from the baggy-shorts-and-T-shirt regimen common in America. If you see someone dressed like a bum, it is probably an American.

Even in uniform, American police officers or TSA baggage screeners may be fat or sloppy-looking. Blacks and Hispanics, especially, often show a slouching kind of contempt for their jobs. Japanese bustling about in their trim uniforms almost never give this impression.

Physical beauty is subjective, but many Westerners think that even if Japanese women never achieve the breathtaking beauty of European models or movie stars, they have a high average level of attractiveness. Staying slim and dressing stylishly have a lot to do with it.

At the same time, Japanese have a spirit of service and attentiveness that is rare in Americans. As in any country, levels of service vary with the price and elegance of the establishment, but Japanese almost never treat each other with the obvious indifference common in America. Japanese waiters or sales personnel *hurry* to help you, welcome you with smiles, and apologize for any inconvenience. Americans are surprised to find there is no tipping in Japan. Japanese rush to serve you because that is their job. In a way, they have no choice; Japanese consumers expect first-rate service, and will not patronize a store or restaurant that doesn't give it.

I recently fell into a conversation with a Japanese who works as a flight attendant on trans-Pacific flights for United Airlines. I told her it might not be polite to say so, but that service is always much

better on the All Nippon Airways flights that are sometimes offered as United codeshares. Of course it is, she said. What would you expect? Japanese are always thinking of how to please the



The Daihatsu 'Copen:' turbo-charged .665 liter engine, 63 horsepower at 6,000 rpm, 43 miles per gallon, top speed, 106 mph, \$13,000. Not for sale in the United States.

customer while Americans watch the clock and do the minimum.

Japan has one of the highest standards of living of any country. Figures for life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy, etc., are some of the most impressive in the world. Income distribution is usually cited as the most equitable of any industrialized country, with most Japanese describing themselves as middle class. While the average Japanese chief executive of a publicly-traded company gets about \$400,000 a year, the average German gets about \$800,000, and the average American CEO gets one to four million. Japanese stockholders would not allow salaries at that level.

Japan is certainly not a paradise. Wealth and modernity seem to have the same socially corrosive effect on the Japanese as on other people. Although they are still at small fractions of American rates, crime, divorce, and illegitimacy are up. Japan does not produce the "Child Drowns in Mother's Vomit"-type of headline that sometimes bubbles up from the American underclass, but it has begun to have the occasional rape/murder/mutilation that would have been unheard-of 30 or 40 years ago.

Japan also has its own peculiar problems probably found nowhere else. Japanese have long had what seem to Westerners a juvenile attitudes towards sex. Many men, for example, like to grope women on crowded trains and subways. The problem is so bad that on some notorious lines there are separate cars for women at rush hour.

The Internet has spawned disturbing trends. Some unknown number of men who live with their parents have stopped coming out of their rooms. They watch

television and read, but mostly they stare at the computer screen. Worried parents can't get them to look for a job, or even come out for meals. They leave trays of food by the door, and see their sons only when they come out to use the bathroom.

The Internet has also added a gruesome touch to Japan's high suicide rates. Japanese men kill themselves at a rate



Vending machine for fishing bait.

of about 36 per 100,000 compared to the US rate of about 17 (more than 70 per 100,000 Russian and Lithuanian men kill themselves each year). Japanese men and women (women in all countries kill themselves less often than men) have started meeting each other on the Internet to arrange group suicide. Japanese, who generally prefer to do things in groups, seem to like company even as they die. A Japanese news story from 2004 reported 26 such Internet-arranged group suicides in just a two-month period.

At the same time, some of Japan's advantages do not reflect anything special about the Japanese but stem from the mere fact of homogeneity. At the most obvious level, all Japanese speak the same language and therefore understand each other. They expect anyone living in Japan to learn Japanese. They would not dream of "bilingual" education or sending interpreters to PTA meetings or offering tests for drivers licenses in foreign languages.

Racial homogeneity means Japan has none of the oppressive machinery America has instituted to cope with "diversity." It has no civil rights commis-

sions, equal employment offices, or diversity consultants. Japanese never yelp about discrimination when something goes wrong, and never sue employers for "racism." There is no racial tension, race riots, or hate laws. No one gets in trouble because the board of directors is all Japanese or because all the faces on television are Japanese. Nobody complains about "profiling" when the police pat down the most likely trouble-makers. No one is ever fired because he said something "insensitive" or told a forbidden joke or used a forbidden slur. Elections are about politics, not about whether Hispanics or blacks are taking over. Voting districts can have logical geographic boundaries, because no one worries about whether black or Hispanic votes are being diluted. There are no ethnic or national minorities that meddle with Japan's foreign policy. Any number of hugely vexing and intractable problems are simply absent from Japan.

Because of their similarity in outlook and background, Japanese tend to have similar expectations of others. Traditionally, when Japanese companies did business with each other, lawyers didn't get involved. Businessmen sat down together and wrote out the terms under which they would do business. Often, at the end of a contract, where Americans would specify which courts would have jurisdiction in case of a dispute, Japanese would write that if there were a disagreement, the parties would meet, and resolve it. This worked because Japanese have a broadly similar sense of what is right, and of how to handle unexpected problems. Japanese companies with extensive dealings overseas have adopted some of the legalisms typical of American business, but Japanese life is still governed far more by custom, manners, and common expectations than by law.

Homogeneity in Japan also squeezes out most of the tremendous variation in schools that is now common in America. Japan has nothing like the typical American big-city public school, with its unmotivated mob of blacks and Hispanics, its dreary record of violence and fail-

ure, its futile round of new gimmicks that are supposed to teach the unteachable. Japan has well-regarded private schools at all grade levels, and elite universities that get the best students, but the spread of abilities in Japanese institutions is usually not broad enough to justify either gifted programs or "special" education. Virtually all Japanese are literate and do math. If the cash register breaks down, they can make quick and accurate change, unlike the people at Burger King who would be stumped if you paid for a 17-cent item with a quarter.

One result is that many mid-level technical jobs that would require a college degree in the US are filled with high school graduates. There are demanding national standards for a high school diploma, and just about everyone manages to meet them.

Interestingly, homogeneity does not produce in Japan one of the results it is credited with in Europe. Among white people, the more homogenous the country, the more willing people appear to be to support welfare. The theory—quite plausible—is that citizens are less resistant to paying more taxes if the handouts go to people like themselves. The welfare state went the farthest in the then-homogenous countries of Scandinavia and Northern Europe, suggesting that this may be the kind of society



Vending machine for umbrellas.

wealthy whites are inclined to build.

Japan, by European standards, has niggardly social services. This is not because Japanese are rugged individualists—they are very group oriented—but because the family has traditionally been the safety net. The extended family looked after old people, took in



drunks, reared orphans, and gave a hand to relatives down on their luck. It would shame the entire clan if a family member went on the dole. For this reason, despite its homogeneity and sense of service, Japan has almost no tradition of private or public charity.

As Japan grew rich and urban, it

ees, the child who was beaten up for lunch money, and endless stories of bad service. It sounds like the complaints I heard years ago from whites living in West Africa—the inevitable comparisons people from countries with high standards make when they live in a country with low standards.

Japanese are not blind to the fact that non-whites are a big part of the problem. They have not been brainwashed since childhood about racial equality, and know very well that not all groups are the same. Back in 1994, when *The Bell Curve* had just appeared, I was reading it during breaks while working with some Japanese clients. They had heard of the book, and asked me to tell them about it. I spent several minutes giving them the gist: that IQ is real, is heritable, and correlates strongly with social success—that there are substantial racial differences in average IQ, which are almost certainly partly genetic. When I was finished my three or four clients

looked at each other quizzically, and one asked, “Doesn’t everyone know that?”

I have never met a Japanese who is shocked at the idea of racial differences in IQ, or who thinks blacks and Hispanics are good for America. In an extended conversation about race and immigration, they may at first suggest that high-IQ Asian immigrants are good for the country, but quickly see why whites would want to keep the country white. They understand racial loyalty and the benefits of homogeneity, and often ask why everyone in America doesn’t think as I do.

Perhaps it is because so few Americans visit Japan. On my most recent trip, I went with clients who had never been to Japan before. They marveled at the safety, the cleanliness, the efficiency, the cheerful service. After two weeks, I asked them if they missed black people. They looked at each other sheepishly; no, they didn’t miss black people at all. How about Mexicans? No they didn’t miss them, either. I asked why they

thought anyone would ever claim “diversity” is America’s greatest strength. This completely stumped them.

It is because Japanese instinctively understand the dangers of diversity that there is essentially no immigration to Japan, despite an average lifetime fertility rate of 1.23 that is so low the Japanese population has begun to shrink. There are a few prominent people who talk as if waves of Pakistanis and Indonesians will solve the population problem, but most Japanese know better. Even if they haven’t seen for themselves what Third-World immigration has done to the United States, they know what it would do to Japan. They want Japan to stay Japanese, even if it means a shrinking population and high labor costs.

That is one reason Japan invests so heavily in mechanization and robotics; machines are cheaper than people. Japanese are already one of the oldest populations in the world, and will only get older. Who will run the retirement homes? Some already have special robots that lift people in and out of wheelchairs and baths. Japanese would rather pay for machinery than depend on foreigners. This is another reason for vending machines: they free people for other jobs.

This is not to say that there are no illegal immigrants. Men work on con-



Not nearly enough of these.

tended to atomize. Family ties weakened. There are now drunks and bums in some public parks, who build rather elaborate homes for themselves out of cardboard boxes. This sort of thing has prompted both more government services and more private charity. But even the layabouts and winos are unmistakably Japanese. If they ask for money they do so very politely, and if you peer into a cardboard house, the owner is likely to be absorbed in a copy of a literary magazine that he fished out of the trash.

For decades after the end of the Second World War, Japanese looked up to the United States as the superior power that had defeated them in the Pacific. They had an almost servile admiration for things American. Not anymore. Many Japanese realize that, in many respects, they have a better country than we do. They envy us our continent-sized country and our raw materials, but they no longer see us as a model for much of anything.

When Japanese who live in the United States get together, talk often turns to horror stories about life among the natives: the dealer that couldn’t fix the brand-new Chevrolet, the perpetually broken sidewalk in front of the office, the slovenly habits of American employ-



They will be drinking tea long after we have switched to tequila.

struction sites and women in the prostitution/entertainment business. Labor is too tight for even the Japanese to keep out everyone who wants to come, but the problem is nothing like that in the United States, and shows little sign of getting worse.

The Japanese government is also trying to persuade people to have more