

facing the future

Already four months within Army Centers, I feel old in this experience of evacuation. Since that fateful March morning when the destiny of 150,000 people were suddenly altered--we bravely set our hearts then to face whatever may come. We knew our lot would not be easy. There were a thousand fears that gripped the hearts of the mothers--always it had been our paramount interest to feel concerned for the families' comfort. This was a trial that would demand courage and fortitude as our pioneer women of America had launched forth so gloriously in the past--here was a challenge! The aged would need comfort and cheer. Their well earned peace was robbed from them. In this bewildering movement from place to place, many will become ill, many will die, many will never return to their beloved homes. Our ambitious young men had worked hard to establish themselves, and now silently, they endure untold disillusionment. Always a mother's role is to be a spiritual and moral guide--a refreshing hope to a discouraged, tired family. What of our children? What of our precious God-given charges. Each day, means that life is passing. Our characters are being molded. We are evacuating for the duration, but what of our children's training, and cultural background, education, spiritual guidance--could they be put away for the duration?

We are overwhelmed by the tremendous responsibility, and frightened as we are, we realize there is no room for tears. No time for confused hesitation. Right now every opportunity must be ingeniously utilized toward the good. Idleness and bitterness will deaden character and make our children worthless citizens. Because there lacks the precious element of useful work, whole-

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some freedom, the aspiration and enthusiasm for life that marks a healthy being is fading. Greatly handicapped under these circumstances we must still keep our people a hopeful, attitude. Attitudes are felt. Children sense it readily. If we nurse a hate or misunderstanding, we are imbedding it in our future generation. Before we condemn we must remember to blame ourselves in part for our miserable lot. Had we been more keenly aware of our responsibility in standing shoulder to shoulder with all Americans fighting to bring peace. Though in a sense, wrong has come our way, we must strive the harder to right the error and from vivid experience, lead the way upward so that never again would America stoop to lose sight of so precious an ideal that was so dearly won for our heritage.

These few months here at Fresno is only a prelude. The greater part of our adventure is yet to come. Compared with the heroic deeds in the battlefields and in the American homefront, our experience lacks the glory that our fellow Americans know. But silently, quietly, unfalteringly must our paths be paved upward. Our duty is to awaken within young hearts the meaning and purpose of life. It is up to us to guide their growth toward a broader outlook--that unflinchingly, though discriminated, their hearts must sing high so that a worthier, finer citizen may be won for our country. That in spite of all our humiliation and disastrous few years out of our life, we would not make this our failure, but make this experience a tremendous force towards building an enduring generation of finer Americans.

--Mary Tsukamoto
(Mrs. Alfred I. Tsukamoto)