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"Letter of the Week", Saturday Evening Post August 15, 1942

Claire D. Sprague

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Letter of the Week

DEAR EDITOR: I am a teacher at French Camp School in San Joaquin County, California. I thought you might be interested in some of the things I have been hearing from former Japanese pupils of mine, who have been evacuated to various Assembly Centers throughout the state.

These places are run on a summer-camp basis. They live in barracks and eat in a giant mess hall. Canteens are in operation. Coupon books are used to make purchases.

Each person has an individual bed—somewhat of a novelty to the children of the large Japanese families. The beds and bedding get an enthusiastic response from the Japanese boys, who write repeatedly that they are sleeping on Army cots with Army blankets, *just like the American soldiers!*

However, the biggest hit of the camps is the shower. One little girl sheepishly reported that she spent most of the first afternoon under it, and left no hot water for the rest of the camp. A few had difficulty getting accustomed



to shower baths, but all are impressed. Oriental-style family bathing in a large tub had been the vogue for these farm families.

As for my American pupils, I think they deserve the highest praise for their tolerance, under war conditions, of their Japanese classmates. Today they are spending all their spare time in the fields, doing their best to help salvage this year's crops. And oddly enough, they have been using a small part of their earnings to send candy, gum, and so forth to their Japanese classmates at Assembly Centers.

Yes! All this could only happen in America!

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