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Leda R. Lisle

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My Bit in Tri-State High -

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As the new teacher on the project for the term beginning in July 1944, I was assigned classes in that adolescent age-group - the eighth grade.

One class was normal and soon was supplying not only grade leadership, but also Junior High leadership. The other class, as I had been told, was an "off" class. Some of the discipline problem students had a grade two, three, ^{or} and four reading level. I made plans for remedial measures, arranged for home co-operation, and was, in cooperation with Mrs Harry Black, getting the program under way. Suddenly, the students, most in need of the program, were called from the room and assigned to the higher grade level, where, due to the deafness of the teacher, cheating on an immense scale followed.

The students involved would now have been better adjusted socially had the cause of their unsocial attitude been removed by giving them, under Mrs Black's direction, a foundation in reading.

That the Japanese recognized the social deficiency of these students was evidenced later in beatings.

Beginning in December of 1944 I had classes in World History. These classes would have been a credit to any school. One class was not thoroly American, and, when Pres Roosevelt, or America was mentioned favorably, that murmur, so familiar to orientals, would start thru the class. Two students of this group broke into Block Manager's Offices and removed checks from the U. S. mail.

In May 1945 I started with one class of beginning Shorthand, [using the Functional Method which soon weeds out those not serious-minded] and several

classes in World Geography. In these I tried to stress the economic field — also post-war transportation from the polar geography standpoint. It was in considering East India and South Pacific Islands that I asked the students to compare colonial policies of England and Holland — only to be informed in a loud, firm, convincing tone that Uncle Sam's policy was best!

Toward the end of the 1945 Summer Session I acquired an American Literature class, which proved a delight.

The last term was when students who had been having 40 minute classes for one-half day no found themselves subjected twice a day to a 60 minute stretch — same subject, same room, same teacher. Poor kids! Now they can stand anything. On this schedule I had one class in World History and one class

in American History.

As I try to write, I am interrupted by former students [now working] dropping in for a friendly, thoroughly American chat. These young people can never be Japanese. American school attendance should have been compulsory. Yet, I do not fear for America and her ideals when I recall that on the train bearing the Japanese to the port of embarkation, students, who had not been in American school at Tul Lake, came to see me, bid me goodbye and wish me well.

I asked three problem students if I should give up my Christmas with my own boy — my family to just go to Portland on the train with them. — would they ever, in the years to come, appreciate it; would they ever think of it?

The chokey answer was that they were going a long ways to a strange & a foreign country and they did want someone to see them off.

What more fitting? The teachers, who had represented America, went with them to the docks [and our chief, Mr. Harkness, may be on the reception committee in Japan]!

The teachers of America are doing [and have done] a better job than they think. Students, after two and one-half years of Japanese schools (since segregation) and influence have not shed American influence, even though they did take the boat for Japan. They are looking forward to Life in America.

Leda R. Lisle
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