TO OUR AMERICAN SONS AND DAUGHTERS

:—by C. S. Miyazaki

After an absence of fifteen years, I recently returned to Japan for a short visit. It was a revelation indeed to observe the significant transformations that have taken place there and are taking place now. But it was an even greater revelation to note in what lines changes had not taken place. Unaltered remain the fundamental characteristics of the Japanese, a heritage of the race, glorified and exemplified by the heroes of the past enshrined for reverence and emulation on the part of the citizens of today. In fact, these sterling qualities have become more firmly rooted in the race in spite of the manifold vicissitudes that beset this mutable world.

On the other hand, my personal reactions to the inevitable superficialities that seem to play so important a role in the common life and daily routine of all peoples often made me pause to wonder whether I had really returned to my native land. There never was doubt in my mind or spirit that I was of the Japanese race. I repeated it to myself with pride and reassurance. However, from time to time on numerous occasions, I was often troubled with a queer prickling sensation (for example, when my legs became numb after squatting on the mat for even a comparatively short duration) —a prickling sensation that pins-and-needled to my brain with the tormenting question : "Which was now my native land, America or Japan ?" My body accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of Western civilization replied, "America," but my soul still retaining the ineradicable spirit of our race strongly protested, "Japan."

However, it is not my intention to recount here my experiences in Japan, nor is it my desire to discourse here on the Japan of today, as seen through the eyes of one who had voluntarily led the life of an exile for almost two score years. Had I the keen perception of the artist to seek out the beauty of Japan, and the gifts of a poet to influse this cold print with the warmth of that beauty ; had I the witty pen of the humorist to smile and at times cachinnate at my amusing and oftentime Rabelaisian experiences ; then would I dare to attempt to spin a gossamer of words to delight the gentle reader and to vie with the charming portraits of the handsome and beautiful second generation included in this volume.

However, to continue with this verbose article, in keeping perhaps with the second generation conception of our generation, I am well aware that this is not the appropriate place to include an account of my impressions of Japan, but I have mentioned my trip because, while observing conditions there, somehow I came to appreciate and comprehend better the position of our children and their generation in America. Away from home, family and community, I seemed to have been able to view our particular group with the proper perspective. Hitherto vague notions lurking in obscure nooks of this scatter-brains of mine seem to have crystallized and come to the foreground. Inchoate thoughts seem to have