

[To Mrs. B. T. Cox, Winterville  
N.C. From V. Cox, Peking]

Union Language School

Nov. 18, 1917.

Dearest Mother:

Well, I had letters from you J - & Q -- last week in the same mail. I bet it doesn't happen often.

Last week was extremely busy in view of the fact I tried to finish Lura Aiken's composition for press, and also played in the recital I wrote you about. The former is done for but one final copying, and the latter seemed quite a success. There were many people at the recital, and only 5 of us on the program, - so we were called back many times. I played everything I knew, and you can't imagine just how much the people enjoyed it, - which is a proof of how little music we have out here. After the recital I had quite a flattering request made me, and that was, - to play at a meeting of the "Friday Club" at the American Legation Jan. 3. The Friday Club is the society crowd of Peking and the American Legation the center for such. I suppose there will be wonderful fine evening gowns and dress suits in evidence, <sup>the other recital had much of it.</sup> I consented, and am practicing for it already. I wouldn't take anything for the little music I have out here.

The Language School is being inoculated for everything possible just now. I am taking the "pero typhoid" vaccine just now and feel pretty "brumb". There is just one more dose, thanks be.

Well, Thanksgiving is coming and we are to have a whole holiday. Mr. and Mrs. Pettus have invited me to have dinner with them that day, so I am sure of a nice American dinner, - but I wonder if there'll be turkey! I haven't seen any since I've been out here. The Americans and English are awfully nice to us here. The closeness of friendship is felt between everyone you meet just because he speaks the English language.

Miss Masters, Miss Peters and I have spent most of the day at the Anglican mission. We had lunch there. They look after us like children, and are just as sweet to us as can be. If they were only nearer! We attended a Chinese service at 12 and I understood a great deal of what ~~he~~ the minister said. It gives you such a happy feeling when you realise you really are progressing a little. The Chinese girls + teachers out there are working up a play for the benefit of the flood sufferers in Tientsin, and insist that I come out. Two of the Chinese teachers, also, - are coming to call on me Friday P. M. I just love the feeling that I am helping a little even though I am working at the language. My Chinese teacher, last week, asked me if I would go with him to his home town some-time, - which just shows how interested and eager they are for us to help them and to become their friends. You see, I have been in Peking only a month! But the door is open, all we have to do is to take advantage of the opportunities given us.

I have seen practically none of the idolatry worship yet, - what I have seen I have already written you. It is impossible for me to work with heathen families here because my mission is in Peking, & if so I can't speak the language. All that will come later. I am only helping those who are already Christians along educational lines, - which is next to the most important thing to give the Chinese. They must have education, or they make the Christian religion one of superstition and fears.

As soon as I get in the work I'll have many stories to tell I'm sure, - everybody does. Foot binding among the young children is almost extant, but you seldom see a girl or woman from 18 to any age above without having her feet bound ~~then~~, - or unbound just a few years and they are

So crippled they hardly walk. It is pathetic to see them hobble along on these stubs, - which is all they are. You see all the toes but the big one are bent back under the ball of the foot & the whole foot is bound this way. The length of some of the shoes is no longer than my middle finger. The pictures and stories you hear about the bound feet are every bit true, - there isn't one bit of exaggeration there, - but in other things there are.

Of course the poor women can't walk much, - that's the reason there are so many chairs and rickshaws to be seen. It's the most pathetic thing I've seen. The Christian schools require the feet to be unbound, except in the case of a middle aged woman who comes to the Bible School. Then, it would be so painful, - it is merciful to let the bandages stay on.

Funerals and weddings are the only real heathenish customs I have seen and I have written about them.

The reason paper is so dear is the fact that the Chinese write very little, & what they do is lined perpendicularly in such a way foreigners can't use it. You see there's has to suit character writing. The envelopes are the same way and nicely decorated in red. Silk is cheap in any form because it is native to China, - cotton is expensive because foreigners have just taught them how to raise it and they is little to be found. As far as the expense of toilet articles go, - the Chinese use none. Instead of soap an oil is used on the skin and hair, - there is no soap but what is imported. The same can be said about other expensive things. What the Chinese don't use has to be imported & is therefore expensive. You never see a Chinese woman with anything but fancy ornaments on her head, - so we have a hard time getting hats, - same can be said of shoes, etc.

We use Mex. money out here. That's the reason we pay 10 ¢ for a stamp. Mex. equals  $\frac{1}{2}$  of gold when we have good exchange. Just now gold & Mex. are about equal. Until we had 2 for 1 from the board, - it was just a gamble to know how much we might get from month to month. There was no way of telling, - the money system in China is so rotten. I'd rather work the roads than be a banker in China.

I can get you some perfectly beautiful spreads and doilies here. Now's the time if you want them. I wanted nine Mex. dollars yesterday to buy you one of the most beautiful lunch cloths with 12 square doilies to match I have ever seen. It was filled with embroidery and very fine drawn work, & all done on handsome linen. You can get these done in colors also, which are very fashionable just now. I can get all kinds of needle work done very cheaply.

I am sending this embroidered napkin holder for Father's Christmas present. Won't you press & give it to him? I got it just as it is for 75 ¢ Mex. or  $\frac{1}{2}$  of this for gold. You couldn't do it in America, I know.

It is very late, I must retire.

With much love,

Venetia.

Was Harvey drafted & has he gone to the front? Be sure to keep me in touch with those who go.