

[To Miss Jeannette Cox, Trenton, N.C. From V. Cox, Peking]

Union Language School

Jan. 6, 1918

Epiphany

Dear Jeannette:

Sand, sand, everywhere. Everything is gritty and savors of the stifling odor. I can hardly bear to poke my head out the door it is so bad. In three months we will have rain, and I'll be more than glad for the relief.

I have had a perfectly lovely Christmas. The Anglican Mission had the three of us out with them Xmas Eve and Christmas Day, so we got to all the services. It was so impressive to see so many communicants receive at the services, - all with such earnest faces. The boys, too, sang splendidly, - I mean the boys' school, - there is no choir.

The ladies met and sang carols and furnished a little music for the girls on Xmas Eve, - to which I contributed a little. But the mission is suffering so considerably from the war, - there was no tree and no green anywhere, nor any gifts. The same was true of their own home. Our Christmas dinner was no different from other meals, only several friends had sent in candy ^{as gifts} and they had it on the table. They also live in a Chinese house with only paper as thin as this on the side next to the court, - so it was frightfully hard to heat and cold. I could have wept I was so cold at the dinner table. I kept on my arctics, but my feet were cold all the time in spite of it. It was a comfort to get back to our brick house.

We gave our Chinese teachers a tea just before Christmas, so yesterday they entertained us. They are most perfect actors, - the Chinese as a whole, - but especially this class of people. Some of them were dressed as girls and carried out their parts most beautifully.

Before the play began, some of the teachers gave us some samples of Chinese music, - which were most interesting. I wonder if you could get hold of some of the Chinese selections I

constantly see about in the musical America? I would like to have some in my hand for examination. Ferrai seems to be especially interested in Chinese music, could you get me some of his compositions? Instrumental or vocal, I would like to see what they are.

If I just get enough Chinese, some day I'm going to do some investigating about the music out here. It's wonderfully fascinating.

We are to have lectures every Friday from now, on either at the English or the American Legation in the minister's homes. Last Friday, Mr. Reinsch, the American minister, - spoke to us on Chinese art in the English minister's home. In his address he spoke of the richness & rareness of chords found in the Chinese music. He said the Confucian temples in Peking kept the true Chinese music, and advised us to go hear it. So I'm going my first opportunity. Sir John Jordan's home is Chinese, - as all the English Legation houses are, - and most attractive but comfortable. After the lecture, we had tea with him and met all the nice English people present. He is a dear old man, and wonderfully interested in China. Next week, we go to the palatial home of our American minister and hear an Englishman speak on the Western countries of China. These intercourses with those who know China so well, ~~and~~ going to be a great help to those of us who are new out here. It is wonderful to be in Peking just for that reason.

Yesterday, Miss Johnson and I spent the day, - or at least until 1:30 P. M. in the English Chapel, - meditating and trying to draw closer to the God who has brought us out here. Just in quiet prayer and meditation on Him, - it was a great help. Try it some-time. We just told the people we were going to be out for the day, - and disappeared. It is best to have a book of meditations to read if we are not accustomed to making them, - so as to keep our thoughts from ~~reading~~ wandering. ^{The altar} and the Life by Brett is a good book or Anima Christi by some author, - or some commentary on St. John. There are many to be had. Bishop Brent has written numbers of such books, all of which are worth while.

Your last letter spoke of plans to go home for Thanksgiving. I'm sure you had a lovely time with the children.

It certainly is lovely of Lois to send me the "Ladies' Home Jⁿ" and as I don't remember her last name I'll enclose a note of thanks to her in this. I'm also sure I'll enjoy the "House-keeping" equally as well. It will come in very handy when I have to do my share of house-keeping in Hankow. It's awfully nice to have so much nice reading matter come all at once. The "Musical Americas" continue to come. I hope Mother has sent you money to pay for half the subscription any way, - it makes it pretty heavy for you to do that and pay postage to China also. She spoke of my having a subscription of my own, but it would be so much cheaper for me to pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of yours and postage to China, - I think it's silly to waste that much money. I get them almost as early under this arrangement. They have to be late any way, you know.

I shall be here until the middle of June any way. The middle of May, all my mail should be sent to Hankow, - say about the 10th.

Sister, you and Olivera and Mother will certainly have to share my letters, - I haven't time to keep up a steady correspondence with all three of you, - to say nothing of postage. I have written all 3 of you today & said practically the same thing and 30 cents gone. It's a grand waste of money, - so there's no need of fussing about it, - I can't do it. I try to write Mother at least once a week, and she should pass those around to you two.

It will have to be done. All of you can write to me, because I am just one in this Eastern country, - but when many others demand letters from me, "in interest of the work, - I can't duplicate news to the home folks."

With much love,

Sister.