

Hwei Wen Girls' School,

Nanking, March 9, 1946

Dear Ruth:

I am enclosing a check for \$10 to pay on the medical books which I asked you to buy. She has now paid me another ten dollars. Just at that time this check came from Joy to be used for relief so that I will take advantage of that to exchange it. Otherwise I could not use it out here.

We have been having very rainy cold weather, the worst since I came. I thought it would surely be snowing today but it has not yet. It is a little warmer today so perhaps it will snow tomorrow.

I am giving a party tonight with Chinese food. My cook worked formerly for a Chinese woman who told me that she taught him to prepare quite good Chinese food. So I am trying him out tonight. He refuses to prepare it for me alone, says it is too expensive. I expect it is too much work. There are about six guests. I hope the food will be good. He really hasn't the equipment to prepare a good foreign meal and I thought I would try this out as an experiment and plan to do some entertaining.

I was invited out to dinner this noon, so really would just as soon not have the party tonight. The people are gradually coming back from Szechuan and on each new arrival, there is another party. I feel less well acquainted with the people coming back than with those who stayed here.

I thought I had managed to get out of working with the Cnra on the used clothing project, but it seems that it was just that the clothes had gotten lost, but now being found, we will proceed with them. A certain amount has been given to be distributed through the churches, about 500 bales. They have some students working on them and some regular Cnra but they want some foreigners to supervise the business and see that nothing vanishes. The Catholic sisters are going to help. One of them, the head one, said she had done similar work in South America, so I am hoping that she will get things organized.

The YWCA is renting an old house which belongs to us and in the process I have gotten acquainted with a couple of the secretaries, young Chinese women, and they are borrowing my house next Friday for a big tea party, about 40 guests, to discuss student relief. I think it looks pretty bad, but apparently they don't mind. It is very well adapted for big meetings.

On Monday of this week, we had a Field Committee meeting to discuss distribution of emergency repair funds. I prepared a budget and while we had 7,500,000 to spend, we found the total asked for was 13 million, so the job was to pare it down by half and still have enough to show. They finally managed to get it down to nine million and voted to use some other funds, in addition to that allotted. I prepared detailed reports of all the funds in my hands and suggested a budget for them to consider and the whole thing went along very nicely. When there is not enough money, it is certainly helpful to have the responsibility for spending it spread around a little. We are trying out having a committee mostly of laymen. We have a couple very good ones, who understand the problems and bring a different viewpoint.

I have been getting Christmas cards and letters written early in December this week. I got the first letter you wrote after I left this week, so you can see what ordinary mail takes. I am hoping that my books will come soon. I left my big dictionary in New York to be mailed so it should be along. Perhaps only first class mail is coming through. Marie Brethorst keeps getting the Christian Advocate so that shows some magazine mail is coming through. I wish mine would get started. That News-week is very poky about getting a subscription started. I get a Shanghai daily paper but somewhat irregularly.

A man taking census came to see me today and asked me beside the usual question as to age, nationality, such as what was my attitude on the war, my attitude or my opinion as to China. I wrote in English so they probably won't be able to read my writing. I said as to my opinion of China "China has a great future" promise of a great future."

You inquired in one of your letters about my nurse friend. She has been having rather of a time of it. Her husband from whom she was parted through the war acquired another wife and three children in her absence. She tried to divorce him but he refused to give her up. So she forgave him and all was happy for a while until the other wife appeared on the doorstep with the three children. She threatened to commit suicide and he told her to go ahead and so she swallowed a gold ring and had to be taken to the hospital at which the first wife was supt. of nurses. So Irene, my friend, had to take in the two children who came down with the measles while the mother was in the hospital. I've heard that the affair has been settled by giving the two older children who are girls to Irene, and leaving the youngest, a boy with his mother and paying the mother a million dollars. It seems that Irene had been more or less supporting this husband all through the years as he has never been able to earn a living. So the next time you get mad at your husband, think about poor Irene and see how much worse things could be. Now Irene has gone back to work, to pay off the million dollars, I suppose. She has no children of her own so is probably glad to have the kids.

I have really seen very little of her since I got here as she has been engrossed with her troubles. She kept a lot of my furniture for me while I was gone.

There is a bunch of children outside my gate who are requesting that I open a school for them. I would do so if I could find a teacher. It would be for a half day and would be a mass education school, that is just to teach them to read. I wonder how many there are in the immediate neighborhood who are not in school. They are very friendly to me, take hold my hand and walk a piece with me. In the afternoon, we have a school for older women, a similar school.

I am hoping to get a new typewriter ribbon soon so don't give up hope.

Hoping you are the same, lovingly, Jessie