

Your letter postmarked May 1, received May 18.

Hwei Wen School, Nanking, May 18.

Dear Ruth:

I am glad to know that my family is standing by me so nobly in my efforts to clothe China. As to the old lady, she is not entirely deaf in one ear, but it takes some shouting to make her hear. I think her health is fairly good otherwise. I've never known her to be sick. She is about sixty-eight or maybe seventy. I've heard that there are two kinds of ear aids, one that depends on bone conduction and the other the depends on the structure of the ear someway. In the former they put the thing behind the ear onto the bone. I knew an old man in Berkeley who had one and it was very convenient as when he wasn't interested in the conversation he could turn off the battery and concentrate on his work.

^{depth} I am in the throes of writing a sermon and periodically I fall into the ~~throes~~ of despair. I am going to lead the woman's meeting (or so I hope) on May 30th at Wesley Church and then on June 8th, I am going to a country station and will give them an opportunity to see what they can make out of my Chinese. My idea is that of John the Baptist, that he was sent ahead to prepare the way, but we are all of us forerunners in a way too, each doing his part to prepare the way. The difficulty is to make it practical or at least within the knowledge of the average listener, which means not to assume too much. I asked Tracey what would be his message to a completely illiterate non-Christian audience and he confessed that he had none. He is a graduate of Yale Divinity school and is rather above the average intellectually. We have some interesting discussions. He said that he had as a part of his theological training to spend a week on the Bowery in N. Y and at the end of the week he was almost ready to give up the ministry because he could find no common ground with the men hemet there. I think it is a judgment on one to be non-plussed by such an audience. Someway a student audience is not so hard, nor a group of Christians, such as missionaries or fellow Chinese workers, but my talents are wasted on this group I feel. I suppose I already have so many judgments against me for failures that one more or less won't make a lot of difference.

^{In} My first attempt, I ~~was~~ used as a starting point the discouragement and disillusionment in the world today and the way out of it. Then I decided that probably such an idea would mean nothing to that group, that they are so engrossed with their own problems of existence that they live in a world to themselves. Really the only religion one can preach to such people is that of escape, of offering them something to enable them to rise above the difficulties of everyday life. Or as the communists say, an opiate.

Since I have to tell you about my speeches, I will relieve your mind about the one at the retreat. It went off very well, everybody laughed at the proper places and I got a lot of compliments. I remembered the advice that someone gave that if you are scared the best thing is to admit it at once and at least get the sympathy of your audience. Somehow admitting it serves to dispel one's fear. I said I can see that this is a very happy occasion, everyone is very happy, the only sad face here is mine. Then they laughed. Just why that is funny I don't know. The committee gave a lot of thought to choosing suitable material for the program, and when they finished they discovered they had neglected to choose a chairman but unfortunately the only person left was one who had no voice so they had not invited her to sing, she could not read, so they could not ask her to read the scriptur and she had no speaking ability, so they could not ask her to give a speech. So they said, never mind, we will make her chairman.

As to the old lady, if she could hear, she could live a fairly normal life probably for years. She borrowed twenty thousand dollars from me and has gone to Shanghai to have a good time. She is still not to the stage where one has to help her up and down stairs. She is quite able to walk across the town if necessary. She had a hard time of it through the war and looks thin and much older, but I think she is all right otherwise.

I hope Clara is getting better and is able to do enough to enjoy life. Don't worry about me for I am really having the time of my life in spite of difficulties. My own theory is that it is the hard things that make life worth living. It is those who stand in the sidelines looking on who are pessimistic and unhappy. Even though this situation is in every way the hardest I've ever been up against, I face life with a great deal of assurance which surprises even me at time.

Marie is moving out of this house soon but I still will not be alone as Tracey and his family will be here with me. There is another house which will be available soon, but it is not the house he hopes to move into eventually. So he prefers to stay here. In a way it is an advantage as it will keep the cost of living down, but the more people in a house the more wearing it is. I will turn the house over to Martha his wife when she comes and live with them. I know her only slightly and wonder what she will think about the arrangement. I may move over into the other house myself when I get the matter of the school settled. We have to appoint a principal and if the new principal wants me to live here to give her some backing, I will have to do so. Otherwise the other house would be more convenient for me. Or if any other missionary should be appointed to the school, then I will pull out. The school is a full time job and I can't take it over. I've enjoyed Tracey a great deal. We have very frank and open discussions such as you and I have, about politics, about religion, about the world in general.

Marie and I get along all right together too. She might be described as a kind hearted egotist. My worst objection to her is that she bores me by talking about herself. She is unwilling to discuss any problem except as it concerns herself and it is interesting how she can always divert it in such a direction. We missionaries are often like sisters, in spite of our differences of ideas there is something that binds us together. I still hope to arrange matters to live alone eventually.

We will be glad to get the ~~picture~~ picture cards. Several folks asked me for some while I was here. Someway during the war years things got used up. Also folks had to move around a lot and lost things. I have four or five Christmas cards still stuck up on the wall and everyone who saw them asked for some.

It is not too urgent about the hearing aid. I wouldn't spend a lot of money on it getting a new one which might not be any use. I was just looking for a ~~w~~ needle in a haystack so to speak. I sent that letter to a lot of people. I know another one who is deaf, a college graduate who is ill in the hospital with a tubercular knee. If I got an extra one, I could give it to her.

At the retreat there was a little preacher's son about six years old attending. I felt sorry for him to sit there all day long with nothing to do so I gave him one of the jig saw puzzles which Jerry and Joan used to play with. He didn't seem to care so much for the puzzle but the pieces are sometimes cut in the shape of animals and I noticed that he often brought some of them with him to meeting. Some of the adults seemed to enjoy putting the puzzles together.

Well I must close and go to bed. I spend the day on Sunday at Wesley Church, as I stay there for dinner with the Bible women. I don't spend enough time with them they think, so while I am down there I may as well stay all day. At two o'clock I have another English Bible Class and at three o'clock there is a young people's meeting. That lasts indefinitely. At five o'clock in the north city there is a English service now conducted by the chaplain and some of the new young missionaries such as Tracey. There are four young men who were in the school there at Berkeley together which makes it nice for them.

I must close and go to bed. I've had a bad time of it for a few nights because of a sharp pain in my left shoulder at night. I suppose it is an arthritic pain, but perhaps it is indigestion. Marie insists I can't have indigestion in my shoulder but she doesn't know how versatile I am.

which I have not get attended!
True Jesus