

Shanghai (Szechuen Rd.)

Sept. 23, 1937.

Dearest:-

This is to get the first mail since I've been able at all to see what's up, and even now you will find my letter indefinite and unsatisfactory because the situation is like that. Arrival was tedious and uneventful, though observation interesting, of course. Have lost a good deal of sleep through direct war noise, some of which was very close at hand; but actual risk has been insignificant. Wired you first night "Alright", and Wilson later sent his wife a vague message about possible return. Wire to my old institution brought reply 19th. to come according to information sought here about communications, "regular" work beginning 4th. So I arranged to go 21st. by as nearly as possible the familiar route, now tedious and difficult in many respects. On the 20th. a long-distance call to Lossing's office here said that I should on no account go, and that he would bring further instructions next day. He has not yet appeared, much to the concern of some. Today a reverse call is put in. If nothing appears by evening, I will again wire independently -- which I have so far hesitated to do lest it be misinterpreted on the assumption that I have or will have had L's messages.

Now as to you. I believe you will have had Hayes' communications, which Wilson described to me as opening the door for the teachers but leaving the responsibility upon them rather than upon him. I saw H. on the 19th., when he said they would quietly begin to do a little for a few children already here and expected from Mokanshan, and counted on steady development from that barring unlikely relapse of outer conditions. Now the M. crowd are due, and some Episcopalians and others from Tsingtao have been pushed out from there by consular anxiety, and are uneasily shifting hitherward. So there will be an opening next week of a sort. At the same time, the main official and public set is against women and children returning. Hanson, who is acting as secretary for his mission, and is following a rather sensible stick-to-it policy along with a number of other administrators, has told absent women of his group that return to S. at present was inviting a forced trip to Manila in the near future. There is a considerable minority that feels differently. Much depends on your own feelings. There are one or more injuries from anti-aircraft fire almost every day, and in many locations the daily sound of artillery with occasional bombing. These have in general declined, and the earlier panics are over. But there is still anxiety as to what may happen on the Pootung side with stray damage in the main city, and less acute concern for Nantao and the western districts in possible future conflict. The numbers and plight of refugees are very hard on sensitive people. Again there is improvement so far as obtrusive distress is concerned, but the present is pitiful indeed. So far as my information goes, satisfactory housing for bourgeois of almost any type is not critically scarce; even otherwise. I will support you heartily in return, delay, or remaining on your side of the water. This is not a happy place, and cannot be so for long to come, but I do not know how to balance this form of distress against others at a greater distance. I have a slight inclination toward your coming, though I recognize the possibilities of regret, and feel that it would <sup>be</sup> very unwise for you to come unless <sup>you</sup> think and sense a real balance of pull in this direction. There are many forms of useful service if you are not needed in teaching; but you can also find some where you are.

By the way, no check on a Chinese bank should be written unless

and until you know it is under acceptable conditions -- which now cover so few cases as to make them of little use. I am taking some precautions on our local currency accounts, since a change in value seems to me sure aside from a miraculous settlement. But the restrictions prevent any complete exchange transactions, and one must be content with instalments.

A letter from Lewis <sup>written</sup> on the 16th. asked me to buy dyes for the wool, and seek any possible transportation. Post office has just now resumed some kind of parcel and printed matter service. On the 16th., and I judge to date also, our house was untouched. A caretaker watches a group, as all servants are gone. L. has been living with Lossing, but may combine in part with me or Riggs when the latter returns from a distant job. Brady is in Marx's house. The latter went to Wu<sup>2</sup>Han to facilitate evacuations, perhaps going to Canton himself if it seemed necessary. McCallums' in Kuling and booked for America, dates not known to me or Mrs. Burch here. Minnie and Catherine on the job, but Ginling work is scattered in ~~many~~ several cities in makeshift fashion, encouraging first- and second-year students to enter other schools as "guest" students from Ginling! Older ones supposed to group around major professor; but I fear that human geography and physical geography will not always correspond. This is not criticism, but expression of difficulties. Until yesterday's change, no hits west of the main road. Magee, Fitch, Elsie, Bauer, Hynds present, and I think Wilson and Anna Moffet. Claude and Plumer at Kuling supposably on call. My list not necessarily complete, but approaching it.

Lois going on furlough. Wilkinson and Young after first refusals have left for Wu<sup>2</sup>Han or farther. Burch in their town and hoping that he may later feel it worth the risk to get Mrs. B. through. But they were much shaken by the N. experience and its aftermaths: I don't mean in any bad way, but in realization of terrible destructive power. Hagman returning to Kuling after an unhappy visit; Nancy there also with shock but probably nothing more. Miss M. clashed with Marx, Burch, and H. by refusing to leave, and is nursing a doctor who received a critical injury, remaining in a small village in that region. I have no separate word for Lyrel, except that I promptly posted the letter to her station and delivered the note to Mrs. Burch, holding the one to Marx till I know where he is. Also no other word for Miss Shipman, for inquiries here have yielded little; and mails are so poor that I have held her letter in the daily expectation that I might beat them. It is probable that by this time she has more direct and satisfactory information than I on the matters that directly concern her.

Many interesting and useful conversations here. Request from Rees' organization for full or part time on their behalf, here and/or the old stand. The cable from America was from the junior P., and was intended to convey much more meaning than the version we received. There has been no American mail reaching Shanghai for six weeks until this one. If you refer simply to the newspaper, I'll know you mean Mr. Haward's publication, which I hope the improved mail services are carrying to you via Nagasaki. You doubtless got the long letter from Kobe, mainly about Morton's affairs; and one from the steamer.

I remembered that yesterday was Bobby's birthday, and spoke of it to others. Give him nine good smacks for me, and one extra!

Sawyer and Neprad have entertained me as much as I'd permit. Latta, Succock & Lawrence few have urged residence with them. Will try to despatch clothes here as first step. Use E. Succock, 64 Route Dufour, as intermediate address, if you ever have occasion. Miss. Home at Beangaris, 382 Joffre. Many others glad to shelter and help. Just have word Rosang went to Hankow, so I will wire him once.

With much love to you,  
Searle