

Nanking, February 17, 1938.

Dear

I am availing myself of the opportunity to send mail to Shanghai tomorrow to let you know that John and I are both well and that conditions in the city are gradually showing some improvement. In pursuance of orders from the military a great many of the refugees in the centers conducted by the International Committee have returned to their homes in other parts of the city which have been declared safe by the military. This means that our job of investigating and distributing the necessary relief is greatly increased but I feel that, for a number of reasons, it is wiser for the people to leave the refugee centers and return to a more normal sort of life. Our Rehabilitation Committee is already hard at work making these investigations and helping in so far as it is able to do so. I am writing this in what used to be the Roberts' house and what is now ours. I moved most of my things down yesterday and expect to spend the night here provided John gets back from Ch'i Hsia Shan where he went yesterday afternoon. He expects to get back today. For nearly two weeks I have had servants living on our church and residence compounds here. They have not been molested so far, and I feel that it is right for me to come back here to live. With so many people returning to the nearby sections of the city a church ought to be functioning to minister to their spiritual needs. We seem to be the only ones who have a staff to undertake work of that kind, so I am planning to hold service in St. Paul's Church on Sunday. I have Paul long with me. He is the son of the Dean of the Central Theological School and is to be ordained as soon as he can get to Shanghai or the Bishop can get here. He has been associated with St. Paul's for some time as a lay worker and therefore knows something of the parish and the people.

It was good to get some letters yesterday which Clarissa had entrusted to some Japanese merchants, who had kindly carried letters to Clarissa from me. We thought that something had happened to them as they did not put in an appearance for a long time, but yesterday they finally came. Clarissa had included letters from Emma, Betty, Uncle Albert, Bertha and Elinor Gehring (Christmas card) and a letter from Elting Alexander. Your loving interest in our welfare is very touching and we thank you very much. It is good to know that you were all enjoying pretty good health at the time of writing and I hope the same is still true.

Spring is on its way and we are happy that it is. I noticed that some of the bachelor buttons(?) have already been brave enough to bloom on the compound here; and several hyacinth bulbs are pushing their new leaves through the ground too. Before long all of nature will have awakened again; the days are longer, the sunshine is stronger, and people's hearts are breathing lighter even though the war has not ended. In fact some of the severest fighting is going on at the moment to the north of us, upon the outcome of which much depends. In my next letter perhaps I shall be able to tell you something of how things are going with me—what we are able to do in the circumstances.

Clarissa will probably add something to this before it leaves Shanghai, so I will close for this time with much love to you all.