

209 Poh Hsia Lu, Nanking, China
May 6, 1938.

Dear

The days just roll by and it is time that I began another letter to you especially since we have had such good letters from Father, Mother, Aunt Clara, and Emma within the last two weeks. Father's letters, #75 and #76, got here in very quick time, the letter having been written during Holy Week. Judging from its contents you have also had some fairly recent letters from us as well. We were very happy to know that G.F. had called you up and that you not only had an opportunity to hear him speak but to meet with him personally. I am glad that you saw someone who had seen Grisse and me so recently and could therefore report that we are really both well. Meanwhile you will also have received our letters telling of my visit in Shanghai with Grisse. Alas the days sped by only too quickly and my visit is like a beautiful dream that has left many very happy memories.

Conditions here are improving and you will be glad to know that the troops now stationed here seem to be under much better control and discipline than previous contingents. This, of course, tends to create greater confidence among the civilians and they are more ready to go about their ordinary tasks. We had a very pleasant J. lieutenant for lunch at our house today. He graduated from Waseda University in Japan and then spent one year in the army, after which he went to America for five years of further study. He seemed very pleasant and very happy to be invited to a foreign meal, - the first he had had since he left America last August. Fortunately he spoke English quite fluently so that we did not have to resort to our usual device of trying to make ourselves understood by writing Chinese characters.

Last Sunday we had a grand service in St. Paul's Church which I am sure you would all have liked to attend. It was a service for the admission of Catechumens of whom there were 38, the largest number we have had at any time, I think. Most of them have been refugeeing at the University of Nanking where they have been under instruction by members of our staff. The majority were girls of high school age and standard; the rest were young men, all of them well educated. Our great difficulty was to get them to the church for the service. We could have used a room at the University, but we felt that they should make their profession of Christ in a church rather than in an ordinary room since it would mean so much more to them in the future to be definitely associated with a church. The distance between the University and St. Paul's Church is a good two miles. With the lack of normal transportation facilities we were compelled to call on the hospital ambulance and our own Ford which brought the people to the church in two trips. We had a congregation of around 100 persons. We began the service with 'welcome happy morning Age to Age shall say' and then went directly to the service for the admission of Catechumens which we had in printed form. It begins with several versicles indicating the nature of the step those desiring to be admitted as Catechumens are taking, and then asks whether they are willing to announce their intention of preparing for Baptism in the presence of God and of His congregation. After their reply, which was very hearty, we all knelt to sing the Veni Creator Spiritus which has been beautifully translated into Chinese by Ep. Norris of North China and is set to the Melody from Vesperale Romanum (Mechlin). We then proceeded to the questioning of the Catechumens and finally to the prayers on their behalf that they may have the strength to fulfill their promises. At the close they sang a hymn which they had especially prepared: 'I will be true, for there are those that love me.' This was

written by Howard Walter, a Princeton graduate and, until the time of his death, a missionary in India. I met him at Princeton once while I was an undergraduate there and talked with him about the possibility of going to India as a missionary. I was then still too far from graduation to take any definite step in that direction.

The Catechumens then went back to their seats and John Magee proceeded with the Communion service. I heard that they were all very much impressed and want to come to our church every Sunday. That does not seem feasible at present in view of the lack of transportation facilities. Under present circumstances it does not yet seem wise for the girls to walk or ride on the street alone or in groups, and especially since St. Paul's is located in a military area at present. We are considering an arrangement for having regular Evening Prayer on Sundays in the Twines Chapel at the University. We are also planning to open a new religious center in the district where we lived in the Safety Zone. For a long time we have felt the need of a center nearer the University of Nanking and Sialing College, since both St. Paul's and the church in Shiskwan are several miles distant from those two educational institutions and we are therefore unable to exercise much religious influence over the students there. We think we have found a place that will be suitable for getting such a center started, and I shall hope to write you more about it later.

The weather has really been most unusually warm for this time of year. We had an electric fan running last night when we entertained three of the nurses from the University Hospital for dinner. During the night quite a heavy storm arose which has cooled the atmosphere somewhat. It is still raining as I write. The garden is very lovely with roses in full bloom, and the lawns fresh and green. We have been getting good lettuce from our patch and this morning I ate the first mess of strawberries that the garden has yielded. If only the hearts of men kept as beautiful and fresh as nature in springtime what a different world this would be.

We are always interested to hear of all your activities and are glad that you are keeping well. It does not seem likely that we shall be coming home this summer. It begins to appear a little more likely that John Magee will go on furlough and that the Rev. Mr. Luo, of St. Paul's, will go to America this summer for a year of study. We hope that you have not been counting too much on our coming this summer. Mr. Green has been able to reach Yangchow and is now living in his house on the school compound once more, the J. soldiers having evacuated the place just before his arrival. That means that he is giving up his plans for furlough which were to have become effective this month. He too writes of splendid opportunities for evangelistic work.

With all good wishes to each and all of you, and with much love,
I am,

Very affectionately,