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Chen, Ruth C.
Ch'eng Cheng-yi

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CHEELOO UNIVERSITY
Chengtu, China

Office of the Dean of Women

December 8, 1945

Mrs. Plumer Mills and the Women's Committee
150 Fifth Avenue
New York City

Dear Mrs. Mills:

You must have been waiting patiently or impatiently for this long-neglected letter from the Dean of Women of Cheeloo University. I am sorry that I am to blame for this undue delay. First, I was very late in coming on account of illness and then when I did come, I was so slow in getting acquainted with the ins and outs of things here that I did not feel myself competent to give you a fair picture of our life.

May I begin with the registration of the women students which has reached a total of 196 this year, a little over 2/5 of the complete enrollment. Of this number, 40% are in the Arts College, 27% are in the Medical College and the rest are science students. They come from fifteen different provinces with Szechuan taking the first place, as regards numbers, with 55. Shantung comes second with 28, Hopei third with 26, while the rest are distributed more or less evenly among the other twelve provinces. There are more Non-Christians than Christians, the latter being rather less than a third of the 196. However, they represent more than ten different denominations, with the A.B.C.F.M. in the lead with 29, the Presbyterian next with 25, and other denominations such as Methodist, Church of Christ in China, the L.M.S., Lutheran, Baptist, C.I.M., Friends, Christ Church, and Brethren are fairly evenly represented. Most of these Christian girls participate in the University Christian Fellowship sponsored by the students themselves, with faculty members as advisers. This Fellowship holds a regular devotional every week and the women students take an active part in it. In fact, the chairman of the Fellowship is one of our girls. About three weeks ago a spiritual Retreat was held by the Fellowship and there were over 100 students present, amongst whom more than a third were girls. Some of the non-professed Christians went also. At present a Christmas celebration is under way, in spite of the fact that the term examinations will be much earlier than other years.

While we rejoice for the things the Christian students are doing, we cannot but feel the tremendous need of a person of strong Christian character who can devote herself entirely to the care of character-building and spiritual welfare of the women students in this institution. It more than pays to have such a person on the staff.

Next, let us come to the dormitory, whose physical plant is well known to you all, so I shall just confine myself to a few things which have occurred since I came. It must be owned that when I first came, I found the morale of the women's dormitory a little startling and somewhat disheartening, though I was perfectly aware of the fact that the students were passed on from one person to another a little too often between the end of last term and the beginning of this. With the numbers overflowing the dormitory, it was quite a problem to make things go smoothly and happily. No doubt you all know that the place should only accommodate 125, but there were over 140 on the list and most of them non-residents in this city. Finally the elder girls sacrificed their comfortable reading-room for the newcomers, and in turn the new students expressed their wish to go without the wooden lockers so as to let in two more boarders. In this newly-adapted room, 16 girls are accommodated, making a total of 142 boarders altogether. I know this is far from being ideal, but what else could one do when all these extra ones had already been admitted before I ever arrived.

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December 8, 1945

With the lack of a library of our own (though we are more than thankful for the free use of the one belonging to the West China Union University) and without our only reading room now, the girls are using the dining room for study in their spare time, especially in the evenings. A corner about one-sixth of the dining-room is screened off for a small reading room where newspapers and the like are placed.

Since I have a teaching load of 6 hours a week, I felt it necessary to have someone to help me in the office and in dealing with trifling matters concerning the students in the dormitory. I consider myself very fortunate to have secured the services of Miss Judy Wang, a graduate from the Sociology Department of our University. After graduation she worked in connection with the Y.W.C.A. in this city for three years. Being an old-timer herself, she is able to see things from the standpoint of both the faculty and the students, which forms a natural link between us. She is doing very nicely and is being looked upon as a big sister in a family. By our combined efforts we can hold conferences with students several times a week, either individually or in groups. I am glad to relate that such confidence hours are well spent, especially with the new students. In addition, I have had an "opinion box" made to receive suggestions and ideas for improvement in our daily life. This is found to be very helpful and effective. We find now that most of the students strive to become better and to have their institution more reputable in every way.

Soon after I came it was discovered that the servants were in the habit of gambling in the dark hours, which seemed to me quite a serious matter, so after investigation, we felt that their work was far too light to be healthy. When one of them threatened to leave for good we just let him go, and had the work rearranged soon after among those who were left. Now everyone seems quite happy with a busy day and well-earned rest at night. In order to make good use of the ex-servant's wages, I made arrangements to have it advanced to me to buy some charcoal and two charcoal braziers to be lighted on Wednesdays and Saturdays when the students have their baths. Thus we incidentally not only solved the problem of gambling among the servants but also did something worth while without further taxing the University budget.

About a fortnight ago Miss Hickson passed on to me a copy of Mrs. Mills' letter to Miss Curtis in which she mentioned the matter of scholarships. I am glad that you have that in mind, too, as there seems to be such a great need of financial help for the students that it is hard to say exactly how much is needed. Judging from the present situation, it would be safe to say that those who needed scholarships before V-J Day will still need them, as they are still cut off from their family support or other sources of financial aid.

My Christmas and New Year greetings to you all, and may the Price of Peace reign throughout the whole world.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth C. Chen

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SECRETARIES

TRANSFER

April 8th 1924

Dear Mr. Scott:

Very sorry at last moment I am unable to attend meeting of Joint Board today. Wishing you a very successful gathering.

I have had a long talk with Mr. MacRae about several matters regarding the work in the University - especially regarding its call to me. You could get from him my personal position at present if you care to know.

I am leaving for China this summer so when electing new members for the board kindly elect ^{get} new name in my place.

Assuring you of my deep interest in the work of this very promising institution which is doing a splendid service to my country for which we are exceedingly grateful.

Yours sincerely
C. Y. Ching.

As I am passing this way, I am dropping this note in haste.

Dr. George Scott.

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SECRETARIES

April 15, 1924.

TRANSFER

Dr. C. Y. Cheng
600 West 122nd Street
New York City

Dear Dr. Cheng,

We all greatly regret that you were unable to be present at the meeting of the Shantung University Board last week. My Secretary during the meeting brought your letter to me and I read it in full to the Board, which accepted your excuses with regret. You have probably ere this received a copy of the Minutes of the meeting and have noted various actions of the Board. The particular matter concerning which I wish to write to you especially is in regard to the Vice-Presidency of the University, the action appearing on page 4 of the Minutes.

You need not be told how cordial and sincere is the invitation extended to you by all members and friends of Shantung Christian University to the Vice-Presidency of that great and growing institution. The Board knows that you have been giving the matter earnest thought and prayer and is convinced that you are quite ready to follow the leadership of God for the future course. On the other hand, you are fully aware of the wonderful opportunity for large and increasing usefulness through the Vice-Presidency of an important Christian University which is furnishing leadership for such a large and stalwart portion of both the Christian Church and also of the Chinese nation. The eleven or twelve denominational Boards of Great Britain, Canada and the United States are cooperating more and more closely with the growing Chinese Church. This is the largest number of Mission Boards I believe uniting in any institution in China, and they are very desirous that Shantung Christian University will link in more and more closely with the Chinese constituency and Chinese life. In the development of such closer relationships you would without doubt have the largest part to play. The functions of the Vice-Presidency would, I believe, be largely of your own making and would actually be adapted to the various types of activity in which you could render the widest service for the Kingdom of God in China. I would expect that you would have large opportunity for extensive service in influential ways in centers other than Tsinan-fu. You, however, can picture these possibilities much better than can I; I merely wish to assure you that you would have unusual freedom in determining the activities of your office.

If by any chance you have wondered why the North American Joint Board has not pressed upon you its previous hearty votes of concurrence in this invitation to you, may I state that we have considered that the matter was in the hands of the Field Board of Managers and of the British Joint Board with which you have had such close relationships and I have rather

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April 15, 1924.

understood that those two Boards quite naturally desired to conduct the negotiations with you. I trust that in writing this present letter to you I am not overstepping the bounds of courtesy and propriety, but I wish you to have a formal record of the thought of our North American group and of its extremely cordial vote that you may feel led to accept this important office.

With warmest personal regards and with earnest prayer for the fullest success of your undertakings for Christ, I am

Sincerely yours

George T. Scott.
Secretary, North American Joint Board.

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C. Y. Cheng

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Union Theological Seminary,
600 West 122nd. Street,
New York City.

April 17. 1924

re. Vice Presidency 17/4/1924.

TRANSFER

[Dear Dr. Scott:

Your kind letter of the 15th. instant has been duly received for which I thank you very much. I have received a copy of the minutes of the recent meeting of the Shantung University Board and have noted the part relating to the Vice-Presidency of the University. I am very thankful for the favorable consideration of this proposition by the Board and for the kind expressions contained in your letter concerning this matter. I am convinced that the move to secure more Chinese cooperation in the work of this great Institution is a right one, the point I am not at all sure about is the suggesting of my name for this important position. Whoever finally takes up the work I am happy to think that the authorities of this seat of learning are thinking in terms of Christian Church in China. This may mark the beginning of a new direction of the development of the Christian movement in the East which will have far reaching effect.

I feel myself highly honoured by this call from the University and by the endorsement of the Boards of both Britain and America. If it is the will of God that I should serve Him in this capacity upon my return to my country the one thing I feel bold enough to say is that I will serve with single-hearted devotion. Through my connection with the work on the Field Board for the past few years I have learned to realize more and more the strategic position it holds and the capacity for larger development it shows. But, as I have indicated before, I am unable as yet to give a definite answer to this invitation until my return to China this summer. Whether or no I shall be privileged to become one of the servants of this Institution, it has my interest, my sympathy and my love.

Once again permit me to thank you for the very kind and encouraging letter you have favored me.

With Easter greetings.

Yours sincerely,

C. Y. Cheng

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