

Imperial
Suebs -
Chinese
ecclesiastical
Yenching

Peiping,
7 Hou Chao Chia-lou,
August 5,

1934

Dear Ray Christabell

It was 20 years ago yesterday when the world was started on its orgy of battle that has caused many of the troubles of the present. It seems a long time ago. The death of Von Hindenburg this week brings back many memories of those four years of war. What do you think is going to happen in Germany now, with Hitler's rise to power? The papers sound sceptical. But there isn't much use in talking about world events, when when you will get this letter three weeks from now. So many things may happen in that time.

This is Sunday morning, not clear, but promising a nice day. We had a very rainy Saturday, but went out in the afternoon, and found it pleasant except for the mud underfoot that our rickshaw men had to go through. Did I tell you that Helen and I now have our rickshaws by the week? So they get better pay than if they had to look for work on the streets. My man has rubbers, and a straw hat - quite a sign of prosperity. He also has clean covers on his rickshaw, and a well-painted rickshaw, and wears clean clothes. Our servants here see to it that we get good men when we want them by the week. It is cheaper when we go out a good deal as we have been doing since Helen came; we can send them on errands, with notes, etc. so they come in handy.

medley of transport

The means of transportation causes us endless interest. On one street you may see such diverse modes of transportation as: cart; rickshaw; automobile; tram; camel; men drawing water carts; donkeys with packs; wheelbarrows. It is a medley. I was reading in the paper that the Nanking government is taking definite steps to define the laws about treatment of animals, spurred on by the S.P.C. A. For instance the law now reads that no more than five people (including the driver) can be in one carriage; that donkeys and mules can be worked only ten hours, and can be laden with loads weighing not more than a specified amount; that animals must be fed and treated properly. These laws made us open our eyes, for they seem such an advance on what we have seen. The rub will come in the enforcement of these laws. Someone has said that China has the best laws there are but they are enforced most poorly. So we shall wait and see. On the streets here I have seen some fine big horses, kept I suppose, by the foreigners in the Legation. So perhaps there is a better day dawning for animals in this country. As we read about the new laws, we think it is even more important that such provisions are made for people; men must work under conditions as bad as animals do, at times.

Chun

I was so glad this week to have letters from Lillian and Gordon. Lillian gave me detailed news of the immediate neighborhood. I am sorry Grant McEwan has serious trouble with his eyes; it sounds as though it would be a painful thing to have. I think a trip to England will be very good for Eloise McEwan; perhaps she will be able to become more reconciled to the situation. The Mc Gills and Williams have their own troubles. Charles Mair, in spite of being cynical about womenkind, has succumbed at last. He has a nice wife.

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This last week we paid a day's visit to Yenching University, a Christian college affiliated with Yale; it has 800 students, is co-educational, and has buildings in Chinese architecture adapted for school use. Generally when foreign architects use this combination, they make the outside Chinese, and the interiors foreign (wooden floors, arrangement of rooms, height of ceilings etc.) Yenching was built by Mr. Murphy, our architect (and the one-time husband of our hostess, Mrs. Carter). Apparently he did not have such a free hand in getting his ideas worked out, as at Ginling; for instance the outside walls are almost white instead of some darker color (and the result is that the buildings are too dazzling; also he planned a central administration building as a centre for the whole plan, but this has never been built; so his plan was made askew. Anyway I liked them with their very colorful exteriors, and the wonderful natural beauty which surrounds them, acres and acres of gardens, and trees and lakes with a marble boat, a relic of the days when this spot belonged to a very wealthy Chinese family. One of the ladies who showed us about told us of their luck in getting the landscaping looked after. It seems there was an Irishman who has money and who was interested in trying his hand at landscaping in a new country. He was willing to come to China, if there were any place for him to work. So he happened to get into touch in America (I think) with the President, Br. Leighton Stewart, and approached him about the project. Of ^{course} the president was overjoyed to get him (I think he wanted merely expenses) and the Irish landscape gardener came out with his wife and children, stayed on the Yenching campus for three years and went to work. When he saw the possibilities he was quite elated, and if we can judge by the results, he must have enjoyed it. There is such a nice succession of rolling hills, level plain, ponds, and rocks that it is beautiful.

We went out by bus at ten, were almost driven silly with the noise of the bus horn which honked almost continually (it is eight miles out); then our friend Miss Burt met us and took us through one of the residential sections of the college; this was quite like a park with a building here and there, and ponds and ponds of lotus, rose and white, and in bloom; we had lunch in what she terms her "mud hut", a very simple Chinese house with garden front and back. After lunch we rested, went on a walk through the tiny village which adjoins her (we had bought a look of Yeking Street signs, and we were keen on identifying some of them; when we didn't know the meaning of the sign hanging outside we sometimes took a look inside to see what the main article of sale was); then we came to the "Cathedral", a nicely proportioned church built by Chinese and supported by them; it was their own plan, and showed their idea of what a Christian church should be. It had stone paved floors, lovely wooden seats, an episcopalian altar front with good carving, and the whole place beautifully neat. We met the pastor and were immediately impressed with his power. He told us in good English of some of their problems, and translated for us the gold Chinese characters around the front. He spoke with some pride of the surplus of \$200 they had left after finishing their church; it has just been dedicated. He told of the "miracle" connected with the Chinese screens which formed the back wall of the church room. The carpenter gave a figure for which he could make the required screens; it was much more than they could afford, so the carpenter said he would go with the pastor to ransack the second-hand stores in Peiping to see what could be found. They found just the right size of screens