

Ginling, Dec. 5, 1949

Dear Lillian,

How wonderful to hear from you -- the first letter since early April! I am so sorry to know you are not feeling really well. Do you feel the doctor knows what he is about? Wu Mao-i said, "Well, her trip to China was a costly affair, wasn't it?" It must be a great relief to be free of office routine for a month or two. Do take a real holiday in between jobs. That will be very good for you. I'm so glad you're going to Meadow Lake for the two weddings - I should say, that you have gone, now that December is here. Of course, I shall want to know all the details there are. I'm glad Lorna is to be near home. I'd hate to think both girls were away at a distance. Does Lawrence do his own meals, or has he a house-keeper?

Your letter took from Oct. 31 to Dec. 3. The most speedy letter has come in exactly two weeks. Hu Shih-tsang was hurt in Chengtu with a baseball bat, thrown by Sie Wen-mei. Do you remember? The bat hit her face and loosened some teeth. She's been having pain recently, and had three teeth out, two of necessity, and the middle one so that a straighter teeth could be put in, on a plate with the others. She's rather fragile. I hope that the teeth may have had something to do with her poor health, and that now she'll be much better. Miss Keh has just said that she won't be back to our dep't next semester, for her husband's job now takes him to S'hai. There's a possibility that Pao-t sien's husband may go to Peiping or Tientsin or Shanghai, but we shall try to persuade her to stay the year at any rate. The college is definitely counting on me taking furlough next year. If no one is brought out, perhaps some adjustment can be made here, or someone in China brought in for the year. Whether or not there'll be transportation is another question again, but surely by summer some of the international problems will be ironed out.

Eva's sister, Marion, died recently. You know she had been a psychiatric case for a year or two, and was a real responsibility for Bertha, though there were two special nurses. I think Eva feels relieved, rather than otherwise. Do you remember that her nephew Alastair was given about ten years to live - kidney trouble, wasn't it? He died last week. Gwen who spent so much time with him will feel lonely. Eva would like to go to England this summer if she could get to Hongkong where she'd fly. Do you remember Li Ming-chi, who used to come to the apartment in Shanghai when you were there for English lessons? She had a mental break in America, was brought back, and now is in the psychiatric hospital just below us. When people from here visit her, they find it most distressing, for she wants to come back, and is so unhappy, and keeps asking where she is, and if it's a hospital. She recognizes people. I meant to go this afternoon to see her, but there was no one else free, and I think it's better for two of us to go. Tsai K wei was here this week, at a NCC conference; she has left her job in the YW.

The students - or a few of them - suggested an exchange of presents at the Xmas party, but we've voted to urge everyone to omit gift-giving to one another, and to give generously to relief. There's such a lot of people in poverty this year that it seems a pity to worry about giving one another presents. At the Thanksgiving Service there was a general collection to help the free-ward work at the university hospital. There are lots of beggar boys on the street; at the slightest hint they insist on shoving, and then demanding pay. The poor children are desperate, no doubt. A group of women sew regularly at Mrs. Trimmers, making clothes for the poor from what is donated. I cleared out my old things, and sent a parcel off, which was very much appreciated.

Ruth and I have been invited for Xmas dinner - at noon on Sunday - to the Daniels'. We are so happy to be invited there, and so early.

We may have Saturday as a holiday. The Wednesday chapel is a religious play, and the fun-making comes as a program on Thursday night. The class advisers and other teachers will entertain the students left on campus. That means that Ruth and I are involved, since we both advise classes, & the Sophomores, and I the Seniors.

On Sunday the English majors went to Lotus Lake with a picnic lunch. We were late in starting after morning church because of the air-raid, but we had a wonderful time: the air was like summer, and we enjoyed with the sunshine, colored leaves, and the view of the lake. This time we stayed on land, on one or other of the continents, and after a hearty picnic lunch (manto, peanut butter, roasted beef, fried fish, candy, and oranges) we went to see the chysanthemum show, not so good as other years, but still lovely. It was the last day of the exhibit, so some flowers were rather droopy. The girls said they "had some money left over," and insisted on buying me a plant. Our other pots (chiefly Phoebe's gifts) are almost done. I keep meaning to go to the garden for bunches of the bright yellow tiny variety, but haven't done it yet.

On Monday the cold weather began. To-day I put on my new felt-lined shoes, so comfortable and warm! I don't have on my warmest clothes yet, and have been very comfortable. Right now I'm sitting beside the diesel stove, as cozy as can be. We were able to get oil, so ought to see ourselves through the coldest weather. Several tent stoves have been put up on the campus, some burning hard coal, another coal balls, another diesel, and another sticks of wood. Ruth was in bed yesterday with a stomach upset; I'm wondering if it is dysentery which appears every now and again. She's relieved of various committees, now that the administration is more and more entirely Chinese; for the first time in many years she doesn't go to Executive, and not to Academic council either since she isn't the head of a department. Also there is a new dean. She complains of being just tired all the time, and says if it doesn't change she'll see a doctor soon.

A good letter recently from Essie -- she sends you her love -- I'll try to enclose it here, as being more satisfactory than reporting what she says. So sorry the letters I sent on the Gordon were so long delayed. Tell Mrs. Doxsee I send her lots of love for Christmas and the New Year. I want, of course, to be remembered to the Reeds, Connie, Edna, the other friends I may not, such as the Ridleys. Right now a drum is sounding. The four o'clock buglers haven't sounded yet, but they'll start any moment now. People now look so padded that they look much stiffer in their movements. Babies fall over, and lie there helpless.

On Saturday I went to Central Hospital to have lunch with one of our graduates, the head of the school of nurses. She was married a month ago, and I like her husband very much, head of the surgeons' department. Her ayah cooked the food, and we thought it delicious.

My green sweater, made over from my old suit, is quite satisfactory, not perfect as to knitting, but it fits and it's very warm. Now I'm at a pair of socks out of the same wool, the heelless variety. A lot of wool was sent out for student relief, and it's being sold and the money used for relief. I got some, but haven't begun on it yet. I utilize time in meetings by doing some knitting. This afternoon near five we meet Dr. Wu at Eva's house for a sharing of information.

A very happy Christmas and a much better New Year. I hope you enjoy the Christmas season very much. Much love to you. Buy yourself a gift from

My manly.

affectionately, *James*