

ANNUAL LETTER

Linchow Fu Station Nov 1923

Attention is given to paragraph 191 on page 52 of the Rules and Regulations of the Society (Part 11, 12th Edition) which enacts that Annual Letters (dealing with this year ending 30 September) should be posted no later than November 30. You are asked to conform to this Rule and not wait until your statistics (to December 31) are made up.

The purpose of an Annual Letter is to give the Parent Committee a general view of the work accomplished by the missionary during the year. But matters of detail which are interesting or important should be included, as well as references to outside events which have any considerable influence on the missionary enterprise. It will be helpful if you will begin your letter by indicating as briefly as possible (a) the sphere in which you work; (b) the department of work in which you have taken part during the year. Also (1) when any of the work referred to in the course of your letter is new please indicate the fact plainly, and in the case of a new station or out-station state where it is situated; (2) kindly make it clear whether the work to which you are referring is done in connexion with a church council or other church organization.

Missionaries engaged in Literary Work are asked to give in tabular form a clear list of the translation and revision work, etc., (A) in which they have been occupied, (B) which they have completed during the year. Those who edit papers or magazines should state the fact.

All native names should be written in English capitals, and nothing beyond paragraph headings should appear in the margins. Please state if any part of your letter is not for publication.

LIMCHOW FU

The City of Limchow Fu is strongly walled & being within fairly easy reach of a Port, is of strategic importance, & therefore constantly entangled with political problems & warfare; within this year alone, having changed hands twice, causing much suffering & distress among the people, whose one desire is to be left in peace, being perfectly contented with their "tilling of the ground & the fruit thereof", & their business life within the City. But unfortunately here, as in other places – it is the few Leaders seeking for position & gains, & selfishly ignoring the interests of those who should be their "Care", who cause all this distress & suffering amongst the mass.

The following will give our "Friends" at home some idea of the problems & difficulties with which ones work is beset.

Once fighting begins the City gates are closed - walls fortified & all communications with the outside world cutoff. "Refugees" with their "precious bundles of clothing" come into the Compound, we fly our "well-worn" & "well-torn" "Union Jack" which wonderfully comforts the

hearts of the Refugees & for the time being all work at a standstill. Thus we are outside the City surrounded Soldier, robbers - & fighting – but wonderfully secure , because trusting in our “unseen Captain” & his host.

Once again things quieten down, we sally forth to find out how all have fared.

We walk the length of one rather long street called “Market St” and on nearly every door was this notice posted ”Lost-all” or “Lost-past”.

“Lost All”, or “Lost Part”

We enter one home, & could we but picture to you the wanton destruction we are met with – you like us would plead more caused to our “God of Justice” for these poor helpless Brothers & Sisters who have nowhere to go & no one to look to for protection & justice.

Not alone have their “precious pigs”, poultry, rice, salt, bedding – clothing been stolen, & not alone have doors been pierced through – but from wall to wall, leading from home to home – have great holes been made where the thieves have broken through to steal, & stools – lamps wantonly smashed!! We return home with aching hearts for these people whom God has called us to “Serve” & whom we have learned to love.

Desertion Of Babies

One very sad evil resulting from “warfare” here, is the is the desertion of “new-born babies” –

In looking through my “Diary – notes” I read the foll:-

I picked up a little baby outside our Church. After investigation I read it, belonged to a woman, a wife of one of the soldiers, who had it called to another part of the District to prepare for War; the woman wishing to follow him, had deserted her child.

Evangelistic

Station Class & Women’s School

It is only possible to hold these “classes” during certain months of the year. “Harvest season” & “Chinese New Year” the women cannot be spared from their homes. The membership this term, unfortunately, was small, but we have come to thank the God for the Four (4) who came forward with the request for baptism.

We look forward to the re-opening of the “classes” with greater hopes and expectations.

Guest Hall

“Tuesdays” are specially devoted to working amongst the “women” who gather together in the “Guest Hall”. The meetings are most satisfactory, as regards numbers, but we need much “prayer” for the working, & the “Holy Spirit” in their dense and darkened minds. They are taught to read & memorize “short prayers” & “Choruses of Hymns”, then a “Gospel-Talk” is given from large coloured pictures. These gatherings are homely & friendly & give splendid opportunities of meeting the better class people.

Sunday Classes

The classes are held for both “Christian” & “Heathen” women after the “Church Service”, & are regularly & well attended.

Sunday Schools

The “Girls” Sunday School has been continued throughout the year. The “Day School Teachers” giving both regular & valuable help. The “Boys” Sunday School has been re-opened in the face of many difficulties, & it is a cause for much “Thanks giving”.

Itinerations

To a most interesting side of the work, giving opportunity & telling out the “Glad News” to those who seldom, if ever, hear. Preparations are made for a few days prior. Perhaps we are fortunate in striking “Market Day” in a fair size Town, some 15 miles away. We find a good open space for an “open-air” Meeting – & very soon the space is filled with one living mass of precious Souls. Interest appears to be keen, but in many cases “Curiosity is keener” for perhaps many have never before seen a “foreigner”. After the meeting we find a ready sale for the “Gospel”, & here one prays that each one sold, will reveal a “Living message” from a “Living God” to each “Buyer”. “With God all things are possible”.

Further afield we truly are objects of “Curiosity & interest”. “Are they men or women” we constantly hear said on every side. Children run away screaming or hide behind their parents for protection, & the dear “old Soul” overcome by curiosity said “Teacher I invite you to tell one are you a man or a woman”, & when she knew I was a woman just like herself – her relief was intense. In villages nearer to hand – the children are not afraid of us, & follow in crowds & gather in force as we go along. I frequently remark I feel like the “Pied Piper of Hamelin”.

Another time we visit some of the large houses, & they are wonderful – there in one main “Entrance”, but once inside you are met with a perfect image of “turnings” on every side, leading into the various rooms occupied by the many different families, belonging to the one “clan”. In one house we visited there were over two hundred (200) members of the one “Clan” divided

into three (3) sections, “rich”, “middle class” & “poor”, in this instance many of the latter , “servants” to the “rich” members. From house to house we go, gladly welcomed & listened too – although at times these busy people continue their work while they listen, others with more leisure seek to entertain us, giving us “Tea” to drink, the a bowl of “min” a kind of “macaroni”, so long & so difficult to manoeuvre on ones “Chop-sticks”.

Here one sits on the small stool chopping vigorously away at the food for the “precious joys” until there attention is arrested by some thing our message, there a girl is being treated for pains in the neck & back, a woman is engaged to cure her, & by her side is a shell of “Pea-nut” oil, & with another shell frequently dipped into the oil ___ up & down the back, until the blood nearly flows. This being a favourite treatment for aches & pains, & in the “face” pinching is resorted to, often one meets people with dark red stains on face or neck, & knows immediately, this is the cause. Here again a woman employed in pulling out the “eyebrows” & hairs just around the forehead, of a young girl, who is preparing for her marriage. Then again there are those who drink in our “message”, & cannot spare us to leave them.

Women’s School

“Tell us more” is repeated over & over again. It is on just such occasions that our hearts are full of gratitude to all “Friends” who are generous by help in supporting our “Women’s School” for it is such women as these we invite to come for more Teaching.