

Wm. Smith

22 JAN 1925

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ANNUAL LETTER.

Linchow Station.
Via Pak Hoi
1st December 1924

Attention is called to paragraph 191 on page 52 of the Rules and Regulations of the Society (Part II, 1912 edition), which enacts that Annual Letters (dealing with the year ending SEPTEMBER 30) should be posted not later than NOVEMBER 30. You are asked to conform to this Rule, and not to mail 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 upon 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) taken 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 capital letters, and nothing beyond paragraph headings should appear in the margin. Please state if any part of your letter is not for publication.

Smith, Miss N., Limchow

S. China 21

LIMCHOW

One thankfully reports an uninterrupted year's work, i.e. no fighting, showers, or high floods, which in the past has been one's experience, & causes considerable drawbacks to progress.

Although one thanks God for the peace of Linchow overland has been sad & anxious on account of the ruin in the adjoining district. Thatched houses & villages have not escaped the ruthless exploits of the bandits, taxmen, children & cattle carried away, their little homesteads destroyed by fire with loss of life.

The "Women's School" (Sui Koo) with two little "protectors" of Miss Baker's (Snap, shot enclosed), had a narrow escape while visiting "Sheung Lok" (outstation).

A band of "thieves" made an attack - overpowered the soldiers - ransacked the homes, & in some cases burning - carried off women & children - the Amah had the presence of mind to get out of the children - run outside & hide in the hedges. After the thieves made off - she reentered the house & found all their provisions stolen.

An early return to Linchow was made - with but the clothes they wore - but thankful hearts were spared.

"Proto-Service"

The opening of "proto-roads" & running a "Service" of "Proto-Cars" & "buses" are the cause of rapid changes here, & this makes one realize in the very near future "Limchow" will be in the whirlpool of changes & chances along with the majority of China.

"Evangelistic workers needed"

One also realizes, very solemnly too, that the need for this Centre to be more strongly staffed, is urgent, especially with "Evangelistic workers" (Ling-Shaan) LING-SHAAN and MO-LI a distance of some 100 miles, are now included within this district & we hope very shortly the proto-road will extend

in that direction, & thus bring these "Stations" to within comparatively easy walking distance, for for the past five (5) years the Holy Communion Service has been held there, & the former Station "LING SHAAN" has a very fair Church membership.

With these progressive movements we long to see the letting go of the heathen customs (which a band here a few evenings past we witnessed the following strange combination: about six (6) ft. from the heavy wooden wall & running alongside was a long pile of "Char-coal" thirty (30) ft. long, four (4) ft. high & three (3) ft. wide, all covered with brushwood, all this in preparation for a "K'ich-t'eh-Shaan" i.e. passing over the fire, & therein a ceremony indulged in by members of wealthy families should a woman die at child birth, to prevent her soul from passing through the horrors of the "Sudkest hell". The Char-coal is lighted about 6 P.M. & by 8 P.M. is a glowing mass of coals, the "Witch Doctor" performs a weird ceremony, during which food & paper money (the latter burned) is offered to the spirit, accompanied by beating of gongs & Ch'ching-Cyabals, at 10 P.M. the Witch-doctor rolls over the child burning coals from east to east, the number & relations of the deceased woman run from east to east calling upon their household gods. After one such ceremony a request to us to go & attend the "cashed feet" of three people.

Making of best "cashed feet"

Women's work

(a) This branch of the work is of a threefold nature
(1) Training of "Bible-Women", two of whom are at present in the Women's School under instruction, both earnest keen women - One truly thanks God for raising up two such women, for there are now three "Bible-Women".

One of these has the following interesting story, after her own conversion, she determined to win her heathen husband for Christ, now a member of the Church, then having no child of her own, & desiring for his, she adopted one of the "picked-up-babies". She has a step of faith, for being from the land to do her share towards making both ends meet, by making "stirring" or "drying cloth". During the fighting last year, she bravely showed her colors, by selling the cloth to some distant hill-sides to day, when all women & girls were securely locked in their homes, afraid to venture out for fear of molestation from the Sincow Soldiers. She fearlessly told them she was obliged to do her work & trusted her Heavenly Father to protect her, which he did.

(b) Women's School & Station Classes. Women who wish to learn the doctrine are invited into the School for a month, where they are taught not only by the missionaries - also by a very earnest & capable

Christian Chinese-Woman Teacher. During the year past (14) women have had sound Gospel truths taught them & we hope several will be prepared for baptism with their little ones.

One of these women has an interesting story, she had come in touch with her when visiting "Sheng-Fok", & found her eager to hear the Gospel, but her old "mother-in-law" was opposed to the "Jesus Doctrine" at the same time quite pleased for my visit, which gives them "face" as they call it. But would not allow her to come to us. During last Summer holidays, a band of thieves attacked that neighbor's land, she hid on the roof of her home - her mother-in-law with her one little grandchild in her arms in her attempt to escape was killed by the thieves, the little child miraculously escaped unhurt.

Thus in this sad, though we believe, providential manner the way was opened for both mother and child, to come to the "Waiwei School" where we trust she will find a "home" who has promised to call "My Mother is thy husband" and will be a father to the fatherless child, for since her advent here, her husband has written to say that he has married again, & she is his wife no longer. Such is the fate of many of our helpless Chinese-Sisters & they have no redress.

(c) Inquirer's Classes, these are held in the "Great Hall" and during the past month have been splendidly attended, & our folks greatly encouraged to see the intelligent interest on the many faces, & when before there was a shrinking back when questions were asked, now, it is truly a joy to hear the quick eager answers. We feel that here too there are many hopeful signs, & we feel faith to believe that some will be moved by the Holy Spirit & request for baptism, one has already expressed the desire, but will first be accepted as a catechumen.

School

On account of there being several good Government-Schools here with a splendid system of education, our School are not largely attended, at the same time we realize the great importance to have Christian Schools "in order to provide for the children of Christian parents, & all for inst. to have a Christian education.

The Teachers have done a faithful year's work, resulting in very satisfactory examinations. A heathen school of some 60 children, which one visit, could not hear, that last year, the children of our School, gave the "blind people" in a village near by, a Xmas treat, expressed the wish to join them this year. Anything of this nature, i.e. caring for sick, weak & helpless is absolutely foreign to them, so we accept this healthy sign as a cause for much thanksgiving. Take courage, & hope for greater things.

"New
Gospel-
Hall"
This is a very real need, the present building used
as Gospel-Hall & "Bnp's School" is a "Confusion Hall"
the front-part being occupied by Soldiers, over which
we have no control, & naturally the atmosphere is
not always of a healthy or helpful nature.
The ground is already purchased & in a very good
position for both "Gospel-Hall" & "School"
We therefore make a very earnest appeal for practical
sympathy, & hope very soon this need will be supplied, i.e.
a "building" to be used to the Glory of God & for the
extension of His Kingdom.

In closing His heart is full of thanksgiving & praise to
Him who has fulfilled His promise "I will
never leave thee nor forsake thee" & we are
deeply grateful to the many friends in the
Home-lands for their loving intercessions &
prayers - for the work here.

I Remain
Yours in His Service
Nellie Smith