

Agency, Chungking, Szechuan

Oct. 17, 1923. Wednesday

Dear Father and Mother:—

I have been very busy this week and so could not write. I left our other pad for Evelyn and Etheridge to use and bought this new one here. It cost \$1. The blotting-paper is yellow instead of pink.

I got my arithmetic and spelling all correct on Monday. We finished up our notes on South America by writing about Chile. We also finished "The Vision of Muzak" in the reader. We were to have ^{had} a literature test on this lesson on Tuesday, but I was not there.

We played on Burwells' field on Monday afternoon. We played baseball but I was not feeling top-top and took no very active part. Billy Simpson played best.

When we were playing, who should come along but Mr. Sparking and Malcolm Allan. Malcolm joined in the game. Mrs. Allan came to the boarding-house that night. They had crossed on the gun-boat.

Mrs. Crutcher wanted to chat with Mrs. Allan so Bee and I took supper. The children were very noisy but we got through all right. Bee read some of "Nelson's Babies" and at the end of the meal she read the psalm we were up to—psalm fifteen. Then I led in the Lord's Prayer.

I did no home-work that night—I was busy packing.

Flora and Beatrice said they would be very kind to Evelyn. One night she cried a long time—Sunday night I think was—because some girls were whispering together and she thought they were talking about her. (so they were, a little bit of the time.) Then Margaret Trush said, for all she ^(Evelyn) knew they were talking about collecting money to buy a doll for her. This made Evelyn think that they were talking about the time when she broke Bee's doll and so she cried and cried and said she wanted to go home and wanted mother. I managed to cheer her up, though, and got an extra quilt out of the trunk for her and lent her my birthday bedsocks. She did the same thing when she was asked out to dinner on Sunday and refused.

She cried another night when Etheridge did something to her for peaking into the boys rooms when they were undressed. Mrs. Crutcher comforted her that time. Whenever she cries like that her head aches.

I promised Miss Tufts to help Evelyn with her sums but I didn't do it then and I can't now. She got the ruler on her hands once because she had hardly anything done and what she had was wrong. She knows the two and three times tables and is learning the four times.

I got up early on Tuesday morning and dressed while Mrs. Crutcher packed the bedding and some other things that were not in yet. She packed a few more things while I was breakfasting at Burwells. (Mrs. Crutcher had decided to send me with Mrs. Allan and Malcolm, Mr. Spurling and Mr. Jones).

I came back and said good-bye and a little later I started off with Mrs. Allan and Malcolm. Mr. Burwell went a little way with us and then went back. The Bells were behind us quite a ways but Mrs. Bell caught up with the baby and Mr. Jones, and got to Abays house just a little after us. Mr. Spurling was there already. Mr. Bell had gone another way with his loads. We all set out for the river after a little while (spent in looking for a parcel for Cunningham in my loads which was not there) and soon joined Mr. Bell. We reached the river and walked a long way along the shore till we came to Mackengies with the great big sign. Here we boarded the Shu-Lung and passed the morning there. I read the History Miss Tufts had given me and learned my spellings. We had a Chinese dinner and then Malcolm and I played with some wooden beads he had in his pocket. We played with them a little in the morning, too. After dinner we made them play pom-pom-pull-away, nuts-in-May, and tag and have a fight and run races. All this was when they were on a string of course. (The string was from around Malcolm's books from which I studied.)

Considerable firing was going on all the while.

The captain of the Shu-Lung is very nice. His name

is Lupton. Quite a lot of other people were on board. The Shu-Tung has another boat alongside with the cabins on it. It says on it bow - "Shu-Tung Flat" "Flat" is in smaller letters and underneath "Shu-Tung".

About two o'clock we crossed the river. A little sampan started about the same time and was fired on. We were not fired on, I think. The people were down low in the cabin boat behind a lot of mail-bags. We had dinner on the cabin boat.

There were a lot of coolies waiting to carry our loads where we got off but somehow my load was left behind.

We walked a little ways, stopped, (Mrs. Allan took a chair) and then went on to the Agency. In our first walk (it was very short) we saw a strange little white dog about ten inches high with a blue eye and a brown eye.

When we got here we, Margaret Franck, Malcolm, and I, played a game of tennis. Margaret won. We had six little iced cookies for tea.

I played some pieces on my violin before supper. After supper (what a enormous, delicious supper I had.) Mrs.

Jones put up two lanterns in boxes (a signal for readiness). Then one was put down out of sight and Mr. Jones flashed the other ten times by putting a big piece of card-board in front of it and raising it and putting it down again. In this way Mr. Jones sent messages to Mr. Abrey across the river. When he was through he put up the other lantern as a sign. Then Mr. Abrey would flash a message to Mr. Jones. They used the Morse Code I think it was. It was very much like the Morse Code at least. A long exposure ^{of the light} indicates a dash and a short one a dot. A short pause is the end of a letter and a long pause is the end of a word, ten flashes the beginning and two lights the end.

I slept in Eleanor's bed last night. The mattress is not as soft as the school ones but I slept all right.

I left that old tube of Pepsodent with ^{Evelyn} and started my new one last night. I wasted some by knocking my tooth-paste-laden tooth-brush from the bureau on to the carpet. I picked up some, though.

I forgot to say that as soon as we found my load was not here some of the men went down and had it sent up.

I wrote to Mrs. Cutcher to-day to send over some of my things that I left there. I asked her to send my pen, pencil, and rubber but she said she had put them in already. I found them ultimately. She sent over my ruler, dictionary, napkin ring, card material, and a dickie.

I played tennis and tick-tack both this morning and this afternoon. Tick-tack is just hitting the ball back and forth over the net. We three got up to thirty-three without a miss. We don't count it a miss if you can keep the ball bouncing and then get it on your racket and hit it over or if the ball rolls on to your racket and you get it bouncing and hit it over.

The Shu-Tung is leaving in the morning. That is what they are wig-wagging (so they call it) with their lights to-night. The allans are going on it and the ~~Ballou~~ ~~also~~ ~~for~~ W. M. S. ladies staying here - Miss Smith, Miss Brown, Miss Fraser, Miss Bremercke. Dr. Smith, another boarder, is going on another boat, the Chuan Tung, I think.

I have exhausted all the news now, I guess, so good-night.
Thursday, Oct. 18, 1923.

I forgot to say yesterday that I am taking two two-pound parcels of chocolate to Chengtu - one for the Cutcher girls and one for Ebert Carson and Jimmie Neave. Mr. Jones put "Kinness of Miss Catherine Leonard" on both parcels. He spelled my name wrong but corrected it. He also changed "Miss Freda Cutcher" to "Miss Agnes Cutcher."


I practised some on the piano to-day. I learned some spelling, too. What does derogatory mean? I couldn't get any sense out of my dictionary.

My pen's gone dry so good-bye. I'll tell the rest to-morrow.

Saturday, Oct. 20, 1923.

I didn't tell the rest yesterday as I said I would, because I went across the river for a visit.

On Thursday morning I put together a puzzle named "fig-sew." I don't know why it is called that. It is a picture of an old man with a red coat and a cloak over his shoulder, playing a violin. A girl with a very full skirt and a ^{yellow} cloth with red flowers and a red border, on her head (the ^{cloth} hangs down to her shoulders like a nurse's head-gear) is pouring something red into a glass for him, out of a strange kind of bottle. All you can see of the bottle is the neck. That is green. The rest is all covered with a kind of straw matting. It bulges away out. Margaret helped some and then went and played the piano.

On Thursday Margaret and I built a house big enough for us both to get in. There were some baby-pen sides lying around. Two of these were roof. The house was circular and made of the blocks here. Afterward we made a house with baby-pen sides for the ends, one for the roof (with the curtains from a near-by sedan chair on top and a few boards), blocks for one side and the block-box for one side of the door-way, (the box made a cupboard) and a board on two blocks for the other side of the door-way. Later still we built the house against the veranda side and built each other in with blocks. We built the blocks like this — . We would put a chair against the end to hold it up. I built Margaret Franck and Barbara in and pretended ^{it} was a prison. Mrs. Franck came along with Stephen and said it was a lion cage. The roof was a little too low for Margaret and me so when I was built in I sort of lay down on three chairs. I took my speller and dictionary in with me and we pretended that Margaret was a strict school-master who locked up his students to study. When the block side was being built when I was in it fell and one block went on my toe.

Usually we have just cookies⁶ for tea, (the children, that is), but on Thursday we had some buttered toast and to-day some white tea, extra.

Yesterday Margaret and I put together some Scripture Puzzles (Bible pictures.) I was going to do "fig-saw" again and had done some when I went to change my dress to go across the river. I had on my blue with the red patent leather belt (the shiny part of that belt is cracking, I'm sorry to say) and I changed into my blue Korean cloth dress.

Mrs. Jones had invited herself to Abrey's ^{place} for dinner and she took the Hartwells with her. The three Francks also went and took me with them.

It had been raining and the streets were pretty bad. We walked down to the river. Mrs. Franck, I think it was, rode in the chair. We crossed the river for six hundred cash and walked to the Co-op. where they sell the yarn. (Mrs. Jones usually says "Co-op.") Here Mrs. Franck let me put on her rubbers because there were holes in my shoes. They are only the toe kind but only the toes of my shoes are holey.

We stayed there for a while and then we walked to Abrey's. We took an unusual road and wandered a bit before we got there. The Hartwells stayed at Abrey's and Mrs. Jones and Barbara, too. I took Barbara's chair from Abrey's to Neve's. The Francks, (Margaret and her father) walked and Mrs. Franck rode. We took some fruit, a lamp, (for Miss Tifts) and a couple of Youth's Companions and a St. Nicholas to the school.

We had dinner at Neve's. Margaret and Lorna didn't go to school in the afternoon but played around with Margaret Franck and I. At recess I saw Evelyn who told me that she had been in bed all Thursday morning. I guess she just had a cold.

Sunday, Oct. 21, 1923.

I didn't feel like writing after supper last night so

I didn't. I read some crazy stuff instead.

I will go on about what happened on Friday.

Mrs. Jones came over to Neaves' house in the early afternoon. She took Eleanor as soon as she came from school (at three) and went back to Abrey's for tea. She went home without taking me, and the Franchks decided to stay at Neaves for the night so I had to stay, too.

The Sparlings, I rishes, ^{and Capes} and Longleys all went when Mr. Irish came for them. The Longley girls had been invited to the Sparlings for the week-end and I guess Robert had been invited to Capes.

I read between four and six o'clock and Ethoridge and Martin dug a cistern (so they called it) and Freda, Jessie, Evelyn, Margaret Franck, Margaret Neave, and Lorna made mud-pies, mud shapes, and mud ice-cream.

I had supper and breakfast at the boarding-house and slept in Margaret I rishes' bed. Mrs. Cuntler furnished a night-gown. After supper I played "Star of the East." There is a metronome at the school now. Also peanut butter. Also they have the "Books of Knowledge" there now. Dr. Kelly gave the school a cheque and that is what it was used for.

Next morning I read some and afterwards (I don't what time it was) I went off with the Franchks taking my two clothes-hangers, geography note-book, and history text-book which I had left behind.

We went to Abrey's (Mrs. Franck in the chair) where we saw Miss Lufts and the Cunninghams. Then I took the chair and we went to the river. Just as we were getting into the boat we saw another boat just come across. In it were the Andersons, (three), Miss McNaughton, and somebody else. The Andersons invited the Franchks to go to dinner on Sunday. Mrs. Franck took the chair from where we landed

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on the city side. When we were going, the soldiers tried to open the fruit-box (but Mrs. Jones told them it was fruit) and made Mrs. Frank stand up and shake herself in her chair, but returning nothing happened.

A different lot of soldiers are here now. They came when we first crossed the river on Tuesday. Dr. Kelly says that Yang Sen has retreated but is only about forty "li" out from Chungking.

I forgot to say that the Allans, Bells, and ^{the} four W.M.S. ladies went down to the Shu-Lung on Thursday morning but it only crossed the river and didn't go till Friday morning. When we were crossing the river to the school side we saw it go and waved to it. I rose on it waved back.

I still sleep in Eleanor's bed. She has a cot set up.

I had a bath last night and gave my sandals to Mrs. Jones to be mended in the afternoon. I also got out my wet clothes that Mrs. Cutcher had put in my box from the wash when she rushed me off. They're all dry now. Mrs. Jones is kindly having my two middies ironed. The other things don't need it. Mrs. Jones is going to have my dirty clothes washed. (I changed this morning.)

The Simpkins, ^(Greg) Taylors, and Miss Crawford got in to-day by the "Fu-wo". The Simpkins went away somewhere. Mrs. Taylor sends her love to you, mother.

The Hartwells are still on the other side of the river. I think they are at Neave's.

Dr. Taylor wants me to say that he will be glad to see you all again.

There was Chinese church at 10.30 A.M. at 4.30 P.M. there was church for foreigners but I didn't go. I lay down for a little rest and when I got up I changed my dress quickly but all had gone when I came down. I looked at the Britannica and went for a walk on the tennis court and had a swing. Mrs. Frank said she would take me to the hills on Tuesday. Hoping you are all well, lots of love and best wishes, your loving daughter, Catherine.