

THE CHINESE CHIMES.

Frozen Number. p3

T'unghsien, Peiping East, China.
July, 1949.

WINTER WEATHER.

We claim no credit for having correctly predicted in the Winter Number of the Chimes that winter was upon us; a blind man could have done that. Our expectations have been realized, and, so far, we have not had much reason for complaining about the "weather". As a matter of fact the physical winter was the mildest we have seen in China. Ice was only about eight inches thick on the Luho pond, whereas it usually gets to be more than a foot thick. We didn't put up any but the Luho School borrowed our ice house and put in what they had some now have some to use.

But to get back to the psychological winter: The Nationalist army withdrew from T'unghsien December 14 and the Communists came in the next day without having to fire a single shot. This left the city with nobody in charge for a whole day. The police left with the army, prisoners in the jail were set free and city gates were left open and unguarded. There was a little looting but our mission compound escaped with no disturbance whatever.

Ethel Lovatt and I did not leave but Mary went with the rest of the foreigners and many Chinese leaders to Peiping when it looked as if there might be fighting here. Our schools closed but the hospital kept going and we took care of soldiers from both armies, as well as civilians. Soon after the Communists came they asked us to reopen the schools and we tried to do so but it was difficult to get in touch with many students so there weren't many in classes before the winter vacation. December 23 Margaret Barnes and Bill Satterthwaite walked to T'unghsien from Peiping so there were four of us foreigners to celebrate Christmas and New Years. For a while it looked as if the foreigners and Chinese who left T'unghsien for Peiping had jumped from the frying pan into the fire.

There was no fighting here but for a while Peiping was besieged and shells dropped inside the city walls, wounding and killing some people. In good Chinese style a compromise was finally agreed upon and a joint government carried on in Peiping until the Nationalist soldiers could get out and the Communists go in. I went to Peiping on my bicycle

January 25 and Mary came back in a three-wheel ricksha with me February 3. Other foreigners came later and we have made several trips to Peiping, though we must always get written permission from the police, and they have not always granted our requests.

FROZEN MISSIONARIES

One of the first notices which our Liberators posted was that they would protect foreigners. We had to register with the police and they have kept very close tabs on us.

Ethel Lovatt and Margaret Barnes got permission to go to Peiping some months ago and when they tried to return they found that they must have a written permission from the police in T'unghsien. This they could not get and it was two months before they were able to get back. Elmer Galt tried many times to get permission to go to Paoting to get his household things but he was never granted that permission. His daughter Edith, because she was connected with UNICEF, was permitted to go but not her parents. Our four women missionaries in Shansi have not left their province. They might be able to come out but they were afraid they would not be permitted to return. Helen Disney who has charge of Public Health work in Tientsin, T'unghsien and Peiping has been here once or twice but recently she has been refused permission to come to T'unghsien. The Leipers asked for permission to move to Peiping and it was a month before they got permission. When their goods were all loaded on a truck the police came and made them unload everything. They had to open a lot of things and the police examined things very carefully. What they expected to find we have no idea but evidently they didn't find it. The truck came out before breakfast but

they didn't get started for Peiping until 6:30 P.M. That was just a few days ago. Mary and I hope to go to Yenching for a few days a little later but we wonder how long it will take for us to get permission.

FROZEN MONEY.

When the Liberators came they brought their own money but we had no way of getting

any of it ~~except~~ the little which we got from exchanging the Nationalist money at a very low rate. Until Peiping was liberated there was no way of getting money from the mission treasurer. We had a good supply of food on hand and got along with ^{out} money for some time. Then one of the church members loaned us some corn which we could exchange for other commodities. We also had a good supply of coal in the foreign houses and were able to exchange some of that for money with which to buy things that we needed, pay servants etc. Soon after Peiping was liberated the new government set a rate for exchanging foreign dollars and we have had no difficulty getting money since. The price of food and other commodities has greatly increased in terms of Communist money. Grain is now several times what it was when the Liberators came. They don't seem to be able to control such things and from what we hear from Shanghai there is a ^{black} market for American dollars considerably higher than the official rate. The last I knew that was 1500 Communist dollars for \$1.00 U.S.C. It takes pretty severe winter weather to keep such volatile materials as money from flowing from one person to another.

FROZEN MAILS.

For some weeks after our Liberation we had no foreign mail and none was sent from here. Then it became possible to send some to Shanghai where a friend forwarded it to America. Now and then a few letters and magazines came from America. The latest we have had were written in April and May but there must be many which were written earlier which we have not received yet. We keep sending them to the Peiping postoffice and hope that sooner or later they will reach their destination. Our Christmas packages were on the way six or seven months but that is partly due to the shipping strikes in America. It is always a great joy to get Christmas packages from America but after waiting so long this year the thrills were greater than ever. Thank you all for having such faith in communications. So far as we know everything came through, and what a fine selection we had. It was the longest Christmas season we have ever known.

FROZEN MINDS .

The new regime under which we live not only tries to control people, prices and practices, it also attempts control of all thinking. College graduates must attend training courses before they can get jobs and teachers must be given the proper training if they are to continue their work. So far we foreigners have not been required to take such training but we don't know what the future may be like.

WINTER ACTIVITIES:

Our mission schools have recently finished their first semesters under the new Regime. A few days ago entrance examinations were given for students who want to come to school this fall. About 1200 took examinations for entrance to Luho but the school does not intend to take more than about 200. We had over 700 in that school last term and it was too many. Over 100 graduated from the Higher Middle School. Mary and I taught English in the two upper classes and she also had classes at the Goodrich School for Girls. I also had an English Club twice a week which was organized by a fine group of students who really wanted to study English. I also had two Bible classes which were taught partly in Chinese and partly in English. There were many meetings which teachers and students had to attend and much time was spent in "getting organized" into all sorts of groups. Many of our students left school and took up work with the Communists. A few of them have come back to us.

Both of our churches have had Sunday services but the attendance has been small and there has been no Sunday School work. While the government advertises "religious freedom" ~~but~~ it very definitely discourages people from attending church services and many of the church members feel that it is well not to displease the new authorities.

Our mission hospital has kept open all the time, though there have not been many patients most of the time. Dr. Chang, who was there for over twenty years finally resigned and is now on a retirement basis. Dr. Su, the young doctor who came to us last year, is doing well with the medical end of the hospital and Mr. Wang Hsueh Jen, who was out pastor in Taiku, Shansi, for many years is acting as hospital superintendent.

UNICEF COMES TO T'UNGHSIEN.

Those of you who know this compound will be interested to know that the NCAS buildings are now being used by the United Nations International Childrens Emergency Fund people. They also have the Hunter house, except the annex where Ethel Lovatt lives,

for a store-house. There are five freight car loads of materials which came from USA for use in North China.

Beginning July 15 UNICEF will have a training school for Public Health workers. Edith Galt and Esabel Hemingway of our mission and Dr. McPhail from Canada, will teach in this school. Boys and girls will be given three-months training and then will go out into nearby villages to put their skill to work. Dr. Bloesser, formerly of Stanford University, is in charge of the UNICEF work in North China and has his headquarters in Peiping. He comes down now and then and we are glad to have the buildings used for this work. If they were empty it would be hard to keep soldiers out of them and we prefer the UNICEF people.

CHANGES IN T'UNGHSIEN FOREIGN PERSONNEL.

I have already mentioned the fact that the Leipers have moved back to Peiping and that two of our American Board Nurses are coming to live here. The big item for us is that the Robinsons are to move to Tientsin. The Stowes are going to Yenching which leaves Tientsin with no foreign family in our station there. At present there is very little church work that can be done here and restrictions are much less effective in Tientsin. We hate to leave this beautiful compound for the compound at Tientsin is not at all attractive but if there is need for us at Tientsin we are willing to go. At present we expect to move towards the end of August and hope that there will not be too much delay because of the local police.

NO WEATHER PREDICTIONS.

Some of our friends like Dr. T. C. Chao and Robbins Strong have expressed their opinions in the Christian Century about the future of the Christian church in China. We still prefer to keep our prognostications in gold storage. We are too near the scene to be able to see very clearly the forces that are operating around us. There is so much "tares" with the "wheat" that we prefer to wait a while to estimate what the harvest really is. We have been impressed with the enthusiasm that the Liberators have been able to instill into so many people but we wonder if there won't be a lot of disillusion later. We have been favorably impressed with the discipline and willingness to sacrifice among the Communist soldiers and other workers. Their propaganda ideals are excellent. We try to keep our minds open and hope that many of the ideals may be realized. The Communists have invited some Chinese Christian leaders to work with them in Peiping helping to adjust relationships between the government and the church. I know two of those Christian leaders, one is a member of our Congregational church in Peiping. He has been a Y. M. C. A. secretary for many years and has done an excellent work with speaking, writing and working with our young people. He was one of the Chinese delegates to the Paris Peace Conference a few months ago. Because the Communists refuse to recognize foreign consuls the delegates did not apply for visas on their passports and when they got to France the French naturally would not let them enter the country. I believe a few were permitted but most of them had to go to Czechoslovakia where they had a meeting. I heard our Congregational delegate speak in our Peiping church after he returned and was very glad to have had the opportunity. He reminded us that a New China is being born and said that there will be a place for the Christian church whatever kind of government China has. He also said that the church need not be afraid of outside enemies. The enemies are within. Unless we can put our Christian teaching into practice the church cannot expect to survive. I agreed with him but probably it was the Old Devil who suggested to me that this applies to the Communists, as well as to the Christians. Unless they can put their ideals into practice they cannot expect to survive. We and they are in the same boat in that respect. We have 1900 years of history back of us, which of course is no guarantee that we have that amount of time ahead of us. We have met other crises and have adjusted ourselves to new conditions in the past. I believe that we are fortunate to have an opportunity to remain here and carry on our work, even though it is restricted. I hope and pray that we may measure up to the challenge. I believe that we have made a good impression with our Christian schools and in some other work. There is no doubt that the Communists need help from outside. If they think that they can use the church and then cast us out when they have finished with us they may be able to do so. Again they may find that there is more in the world than economic and political forces. We humbly ~~will~~ be patient remembering that "they also serve who only stand and wait."