10-26-1917

Letter from May-ling Soong Chiang, 1917-10-26, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills

May-ling Soong Chiang

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My dearest Dada:

Your shoe-trees came a few days ago: and also the Sunday Supplement sent by Grandad. I have written him to thank him for the letter. As to the check I am enclosing: it is for the shoe-trees. A few days ago I received it, and as there is such a terrific lot of trouble to get it changed to Chinese money, and then send you a money order for the shoe-trees, I thought the simplest thing to do would be to make it payable to you. As for the magazine subscriptions, please just tell me how much that is: So much for business!

Well, Dada, I am taking [bypodermine] treatment for Acne which has troubled me for about two months. I am a beauty to behold at present, - and as all the external remedies seemed to be useless, I am at last subjecting myself to being punched by a ghastly needle. The effect on me is not unlike the typhoid injections of last spring. What a long time ago that seems! And how I wish I were with you now: - yea even with the accompanying terror of a Final Phil paper.

I suppose that I have told you that I am on the National Film Censoring Committee of China, have I not? Fancy a young, pure, and unsophisticated being like your daughter censoring what should be instructive for the public! Bah!

I have had the pleasure of meeting a Chinese gentleman of 82 who was educated
in the States. He used to be in the Civil War of ’60. Fancy! And he used to work in the office of the Springfield Republican.

Both my sisters Mrs. K. and Mrs. S. are in Shanghai now.

Well, Dada, I think I wish that I were doing something real: something towards a career. The life I am leading now will end in marriage only, I think. Not that I do not think that is a perfectly good and legitimate occupation; but I am afraid I am the sort that would degenerate mentally with marriage. And why? Because if you remember, even at college, I never worked unless I had to, or thought I had to: And I am not changed in that respect now. If I had a profession I could force myself to work, and work hard. At present, you see, I am not doing anything, and as in all probability my brothers, will be married within the next few years, naturally I would not care to be a burden to them. They would of course be good to me: but don’t you see, that more or less I shall be a [hauper] - or, - a fifth wheel so to speak, - unless I marry. Even now, I can feel that my 2 married sisters are putting their heads together for me to make a "grande alliance," and Mother is more or less acquiescent. Now I object to being parcelled off in this manner. But I grant that their logic is unrefutable. They say, "Now is the time for you to make the biggest match of the season, for if you do not marry while you are young, what are you going to do later on."

And what is more, altho I haven’t seen the man they have picked out, already I dislike him. Everything is in his favor, excepting good will. You may rest assured that if they talk marriage to me any more, I am coming back to the States! I have marriage drummed to me morning, noon and night. At present, I am in disgrace.
in the family, because when one of my
sisters suggested something to me about
marriage, I shut up like a clam, and
left the dinner table without a word.
Today I refused to go down for meals,
and having my food sent up. Of course I
know that they mean to be kind: but
just the same, I have such a beastly temper
that I hate to be tampered with.

I am glad that both my sisters' marriages
have proved so successful that they want me
to get married: just the same though, je ne le
veux pas- Hastily - Daughter.

(short note written on the back)
For mercy sakes, remember that all I write
you is strictly confidential -- M.
My dearest Sada:

Your Photograph trees came a few days ago, and also the Sunday Supplement sent by Giando. I have written him to thank him for the latter. As to the cheek jam, it is for the shoe trees. A few days ago I received it, and as there is such a terrific trouble to get it changed to Chinese money, and then send you a money order for the shoe trees, thought the simplest thing to do would be to make it payable to you. As for the magazine subscription, please not tell me how much that is. Damned for business!

Dear Sada, I am taking hypodermic treatment for Acne which has troubled me for about two months. I am a beauty to behold at present—and as all the external remedies seemed to be useless, I am at last subjecting myself to being pricked by a ‘shady needle’. The effect on me is not unlike the typhoid injections of last spring, what a long time ago that seems! and now 2
with June until you now; — you even
with the accompanying terror of a funeral
paper.

I suppose that I have told you that
June on the National Film Censoring
Committee of China, have I not? Fancy a
young, pure, and unsophisticated being
like your daughter censoring what
should be the instruction for the public?

Bob!

June had the pleasure of meeting a
Chinese gentleman of 82 who was educated
in the States. He used to be in the Civil
law of ’60. Fancy! And he used to work
in the Mine in Springfield, Republican.
Both my sisters Mrs. K. and Mrs. J. are
in Shanghai now.

Well, Dada, I think I wish that June doing
something real; something towards a career
the life June leading now will end in marriage
only. Think that that is a perfectly good and legitimate occupation;
but Jam afraid Jam the text that would degenerate mentally with marriage. And why? Because if you remember, even at college, I never worked unless I had to, or thought I had to. And I am not changed in that respect now. If I had a profession I could force myself to work and work hard. At present, why see, I am not doing anything, and as in all probability my brothers will be married within the next few years, naturally I would not care to be a burden to them. They wish of course be good to me. But don't you see, that was or less I should be a burden on, — a fifth wheel set to speak, — unless I marry. Even now, I can feel that my 2 married sisters are putting their heads together for me to make a "feather alliance", and brother is worth or less acquiescent, how I object to being parcelled off in this manner. But I grant that their logic is irrefutable. They say,
"How is the time for you to make the biggest
match of the season, for if you do not marry
while you are young, where are you going to
do later on?"

And what is more, said the man, he hasn't seen
the man they have picked out, already. I
didn't like him. Everything is in his favor,
even my good side. You may rest assured
that if they talk marriage, I see anything, I
am coming back to the States. I have
manage drummed to me morning, noon and
night. At present, I am in disfavor
in the family, because when one of my
sister suggested something to me about
marriage, I shut up like a clam, and
left the dinner table without a word.
Today, I refused to go down for meals,
and having my food sent up. Of course I
know that they mean to be kind, but
just the same, I have such a beastly temper
that I hate to be tampered with.
I am glad that both my sister's marriages
have proved so successful that they want me
to get married; just the same though, if we do
veux pas... - Harily - Daisy Lee"
For mercy sakes, remember that all I wrote you is strictly confidential—Mr.