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Letter from May-ling Soong Chiang, 1918-12-07, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills

May-ling Soong Chiang

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Dear Dada:

I have been so busy that I’ve really neglected you! Well, I am getting to be a regular banker! The Y.W.C.A. here is having its financial campaign, & I am on the committee. I have been busy chasing up banks! And the bankers here really are very nice, and of course the appeal coming from a Chinese is far more effective than if it were from a foreigner. I’ve just received $100.00 from the [Baugn E’Suds Chine,] & I don’t doubt that contributions from other banks will come soon.

I go to the managers of the Banks personally and look them in the eye, and literally the money rolls in! I never say the same thing to two men; I just size them up to see which of my arguments would most likely appeal to him, and then I strike while the iron is hot! For instance, one man might be interested in the development of social service, another would like a more “commercial” argument (and then I show them why it is to their interest to help the young women of China etc.) etc. In each case, however, I tell them that I am a volunteer worker and that I get nothing from my service expect the satisfaction of knowing that I am trying to work for the betterment of China, and that because they cannot give their service, I am now giving them the privilege of giving financial support. I find that my being a volunteer worker, they are most impressed with that fact.

I am liking this job! The men are very polite and seem interested. They are mostly foreigners, & I think they are impressed with the fact that Chinese are interested in Chinese! [Compreny?] I have also made some friends among the foreign women whom I did not know before.
They seem glad to give and told me of their friends who would be willing just to know me as they do not meet many Chinese girls. But on the whole, I think the banks are my specialties and here are dozens of them here. The women do not give nearly so much as the banks of course, but at the same time their interest in the Y.W.C. A. and their willingness to co-operate would be of untold value both to them and to the Association.

There are in all 60 workers for this campaign, but comparatively few feel that they would dare to brave the lions jaws in the offices of business men. Now don't worry, I always take one of the old maid secretaries along for chaperone, but I do all the talking because as I told you the appeal coming from a Chinese girl is more effective than from a foreigner.

You will be interested to know that I always put on my best clothes (suitable for street of course) when I go to the offices. For to my mind nothing gives one more confidence than the feeling that she has on a becoming hat, plenty of powder to keep the shine off the nose, and sumptuous furs. And then too, to be well dressed means that a larger contribution will be assured, for the men would be ashamed to give any sum too small to buy my shoes with at least! And then again, I never ask for money as charity: I always give the men the privilege of contributing to something which would in time benefit them, for a better China socially means a greater China commercially. I am enjoying my work very much, and as I have the motor at my disposal, I do not have to exert myself unnecessarily, and can reserve my strength for the interviews.

I am giving 2 mornings a week to the Y.W. to do office work for them, i.e. interview people, pay bills, checking accounts, writing reports etc. I am also in charge of the Returned Women Students Bible Study Institute to be held on December 28, - an all day affair. I am making out the questionnaire, & probably shall
open the meeting.

Very busy child you see! Especially as we are having company for dinner tonight & I am not yet dressed.

With love
Daughter.
Dear [Name],

I have been so busy that I've really neglected you! Even, I'm getting to be a regular banker! The Y. W. C. A. here is having its financial campaign, so I am on the Com. nights. I have been busy clearing up books! And the bankers here really are very nice, and of course the appeal coming from a Chinese is far more effective than if it were from a foreigner.

I've just received $100.00 from the Shanghai Students Union. I don't doubt that contributions from other banks will come soon.

I go to the managers of the Banks personally, and look them in the eye, and literally the money rolls in! I never say the same thing to two men; I just size them up to see which of my arguments I can sell them on; I then drive the points home; and they're likely to accept their, and then I think about whether the iron is hot! For instance, one man might be interested in the development of social clinics, and then I would take a "commercial" argument (and then show them why it is to their interest to help the young women of China, etc.) etc. In each case, however, I keep them that I am a volunteer worker and
that I get nothing for my services except the satisfaction of knowing that I am trying to work for the interest of China, and because they cannot give their service, I am now giving them the privilege of giving financial support. I find that my being a volunteer worker, they are very impressed with that fact.

I am liking this job! The men are very polite, and seem interested. They are most hospitable, and think they are surprised with the fact that Chinese are interested in China. One day, I have also made some friends among the foreign women whom I did not know before. They seem glad to give and to help me in their friends. They are glad to give, and to know me as they who would be willing to help Chinese girls. But on the other hand, we deal with many others. I think the banks are my specialties and that there are dozens of them and almost as much as they are. At the same time, their interest in the N. W. C. and their interest in to cooperate would be a matter of inestimable value to them and to the Association of ruled workers, both here and in the Association of workers for this campaign. There are in all 60 women for this campaign, but comparatively few feel that they would dare to
have the lions jaws in the offices of business men, how do I worry, I always take one of the old maid secretaries along for comfort, but I do see the looking glass as I led you the appeal coming from a Chinese girl is more effective than from a foreigner.

you were interested to know that I always put on my best clothes (suitable for that of course) when I go to the offices. In my mind nothing suits one more closely than the feeling that she has on a becoming hat, plenty of powder to keep the shine off the nose, and of course to keep the shine off the nose, and some flowers, too. And then too, it is very

never ask for money as charity, I always give the man the privilege of contributing to something which would in some benefit them, for a better China socially means a greater China commercially. I am enjoying my work
my much, and as I have the water at my disposal, I do not have to exert myself un-necessarily, and can reserve my strength for the interviews.

I am giving 2 mornings a week to the Y.W. to do office work for them, i.e. interview people, pay bills, checking accounts, writing reports etc. I am also in charge of the returned women Students' Bible Study Institute & the host

on December 20, an all day affair. I am making out the guest list & probably shall make the meeting.

Very busy child you see! Especially as we are having company for dinner tonight & I am not yet dressed.