5-25-1919

Letter from May-ling Soong Chiang, 1919-05-25, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills

May-ling Soong Chiang

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Transcription

25 May, 1919.

Dearest Dada,

Last night I had such a funny dream about Ruth Tuthill that I am writing her a letter enclosing it in yours as I do not know of her address. In the dream she seemed to be in great trouble and needing me very much, and so vivid was my recollection of it that I can not get it out of my mind.

Your letter from Camp Meade, the first one since your return there, reached me a couple days ago. There are so many things I want to say to you that I am almost incoherent. First of all, I think you need not worry whether you will ever amount to anything, for I have no doubts on that subject. I grant the one does get horribly confused when one does not feel solid ground underneath. I think matters with you stand as follows, you do not like your life at camp, but still less do you like the one in N.Y., because at camp, altho you feel that the work is not congenial and hence you cannot put the best of yourself in it, still it is making you learn something and in a measure the work itself absorbs your time and hence you do not feel so useless as you would feel were you without it. Then also if you were in N.Y. there are the wishes of the family to consider and when you are actually there you more or less rebel at their taking for granted certain things about you. I know this sounds horribly mixed up and were you any one but yourself you could not make head or tails of it. But anyway, have I diagnosed you correctly, if crudely? If I have we have a working hypothesis.

The result of affairs is that you are losing your self confidence, is it not? And you are not sure which is the correct path to take, if there is such as thing as a correct path. I think I can understand what you are going thru for since I have been back, I have had something very like the experience you are having, only in my case I was sure what I wanted only the gods did not see fit to give it to me.

But in your case what are you going to do? Well I think you are right to return to camp, for work, even tho it is not congenial work, is the best thing to get back you self confidence. Any one without self confidence is rather weak-kneed, but in your case your overflowing abundance of your faith in yourself was really the most unique characteristic you had in differentiating you from the rest of the crowd, and the trait which made people view you differently from the rest of the gee-gabbing crowd. And so for mercy sakes, get to believing in yourself as a Self true to Itself.

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have confidence in its being capable of accomplishing things that can not be 
attained by others. When you once get that part of your ego in good working 
order the rest will be pure sailing. Do you know, I have noticed that the 
most successful men are usually not the ones with great powers as geniuses 
but the ones who had such ultimate faith in their own selves that invariably 
they hypnotise others to that belief as well as themselves. And the funny 
part is that when they arrive at that stage they really do extraordinary things. 
I happened to make this remark to one of the foreign diplomats I was talking to, and 
he just twinked and said, "Well, I agree with you, young lady, in fact I 
confess that personally that is the basis I myself have been working on. 
Of course you have to admit tho that this abundance of confidence as con-
fidence and not as conceit, is a trait more often innate than cultivated."
And so you see when you are born with a gift it is too bad of you to maltreat it.

In the meanwhile[stet] while you are finishing your course you 
might be thinking of what you are going to do afterwards. Personally I 
think civic work would be the one in which you would be most interested in, 
at the same time I am going to add an amendment to my statement which will 
make you horribly mad. But I am going to add it anyway. It's just this, the 
role in which you would find the most satisfaction is that of being wife to 
a lawyer, or any other professional man. And the reason? Well, you simply 
have such an awful lot of sympathy that is running to waste unless you find [page break] 
a fit channel to bestow it. I fancy a man with a clean cut incise mind 
would be the one for you, but that is for you to decide. I tell you frankly 
 thro, a profession no matter how absorbing or inspiring lacks the human ele-
ment which is necessary for the feminine sympathy. You can call me a crank 
and anything else, but I know that my theory is correct. You are different 
from the average American girl in many ways, but in this desire to have 
co-equal in work and play, you are like the rest. And even the flippest 
shop girl, in all her ignorance and slanginess is really seeking her partner 
in playing the chances in life, even when she does all those vulgar and 
pitiable acts which the rest of us dondemn.

I know you think I am horrible, but anyway think what you please 
and ten years from now you can tell me whether I am right when I assert that 
the profession of marriage is the one most important profession for every 
woman. and cannot be subordinated by any other profession or inspiration.

By the way, after various other attempts to get into touch 
with me, what do you suppose our friend H.K. has done? This morning he joined 
our church. Now considering that there are over twenty other churches in the 
city and considering that he has no special friend in our church and that 
there are other churches nearer his home than this one, and considering that 
in all the months past, I have never seen him come to this church, why should 
he join the church to-day? Now why? If he persists in this does it mean 
that I shall have to stay home from church as I have done from every other 
function where there is a likelihood of our meeting? I wish he would stop
for I do not even want to see him! Why do you suppose I turned so against him, when once for almost a year I had thought that I loved him? The next thing he will do will be to take a Sunday school class next to mine. Oh deliver me from such trouble! I wish the man had sense enough to leave me alone or go hang himself.

With love.

Daughter

P.S. This letter is very private; its contents not to be divulged.
M.
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[Signature]

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