home than anything I had seen in China. The walls were decorated with selections from Greek art and there were several cabinets of pottery, both American and Chinese. The most illuminating decoration was a large screen at the back of the room which was used to exhibit the boys own work. Being from a race of artists, and with a clever teacher to develop their color sense, they produced work that would send a teacher of art in America into raptures of delight. This particular teacher was to be our hostess and explained the work to us before dismissing the class, as they hadn't quite finished their designs. Imagine a class of American boys working industriously at art ten minutes after the twelve o'clock bell struck!

In the afternoon we were privileged to help in receiving the students of the lower school during an "at home." They came in groups of six or eight and were singularly at ease even when their English was meagre. Some sang for us--one group even regaled us with "Marching through Georgia" and "Tipperary" and did both with much spirit, though not hilarious or amused. It was deeply impressed by their attitude toward their work and by the seriousness of their purpose. It's a different thing to be getting an education when you live in a land where lack of education is so generally accepted. I've wondered whether the Chinese reverence for the scholar is not inversely proportionate to the number of him?

The Indemnity School had so long been a matter of interest to me that I came away with a distinct sense of elation at having made it part of my experience, and found it so worth while. As we left it behind in the evening and turned our faces homeward, the long shadows of the western hills, a little babbling brook by the roadside, and the spirit of youth that we had looked upon, made America seem not so far away after all.

Wishing that I could be there this minute even while knowing that I would not come back for anything.

Faithfully yours,
Amy A. Metcalf

American Board Mission
February 6, 1916

Dearest Faith:

Your letter came yesterday and delighted my heart. You know that they always do delight me--but don't take that as a reason for greater frequency for I know how strenuous is the life you are leading and how difficult letter-writing is.

Your touch of the "South End" brought back vividly my own first experiences. I know of nothing sweeter than that first bit of medicine
made real. And when your eleven-pounder came you were a bit scared but rose to the occasion and you experienced that responsibility-for-life sensation that comes to the older physician so often, and that is the largest factor in making the physician's calling sacred to him. It is good to live through it again in your beginning, for I am feeling the deprivation just now; being robbed of my work and set to saying "A. B. C."

Am glad that the reality of it has brought back the sense of being alive. Nobody who has never been unalive can appreciate the sweetness of it. I can't realize it, but the terrific nerve strain of this climate gives me glimpses of what you have gone through, in a way that I hadn't seen it before. I hope the realization of living has come back to stay and that these few last months on North College Avenue will be tempered as much as may be. I am so thankful for the C------ and their care of you. You see I still feel responsible for having gotten you into the atmosphere of N. College Ave. I wonder what the summer will bring for you? I hope it will be rest and quietness and happy surroundings. By the time this reaches you, spring will have come to Philadelphia and the Wissahickon will be sweet and damp and fragrant. I shall never forget the exquisite beauty of a quiet spring evening in the woods along that lovely stream! We won't have any spring in North China until June, they say. When the rains begin everything springs up in a night. Until then it just gets warm, it doesn't grow.

The Journal of the A.M.A. told me this morning that W.M.C. had purchased several dwellings on the corner of Twenty-first and Seybert. Does this presage a new lease of life? Is the outlook brightening? Your remark about Martha recalls my response to Katrine's announcement that Roger Greene, Resident Director of the China Medical Board (otherwise known as "my boss") was a cousin of Martha's. I told her that at our first meeting Mr. Greene had told me of the relationship, but that I promptly forgave him and that we hadn't mentioned it since.

If mother enjoys my letters by all means send them to her, and to Jen also. If the letters are interesting the credit is not mine but yours for you are the inspiration—it seems perfectly natural to ramble on to you about anything that enters my head, but it is difficult to write to other folks and the result is usually horrid and formal.

I am indeed glad to hear of the brightening prospects in Texas—and trust that it will in the future become increasingly easy and profitable to farm, so that some of the burden may be lifted from the Mother and Dad. Their work is just as truly mission as mine is, perhaps even more like a pioneer work, for I have the advantage of
city life, and many neighbors with high ideals and lofty principles; a thing that is lacking in Texas. I judge from your tales of their neighbors.

The social life here would be quite ideal if it were a little less formal. Can you imagine a community in which everyone had a college degree--sometimes several of them? Nine out of fifteen adults in our compound have Phi Beta Kappa. But that isn't exactly what I started out to say--the gist of my remark being that one meets so many delightful people here. Last Sunday as I sat in our English Church service I looked over the audience with an appraising eye in order that I might tell you about it. Way down in front was Dr. W. A. P. Martin who came to China in the 1840's, and who is naturally not young enough to do any active works but who stays here because China is "home" to him. Behind him is a row of people from our own compound--the Ingrams, father, mother and four children and with them our beloved teacher Chuen Hsien Sheng. "Hsien Sheng" means teacher, for in China everybody is called by his occupation. I am going to send you a picture of this man soon. He has taught all the missionaries in North China, I do believe, and is beloved by them all.

Near the Ingrams is a group of people from the London Mission, some of them from Australia, some from New Zealand--also Ireland, Canada and Scotland. In the same pew are the newly arrived Salvation Army workers, two of whom are Britishers and two Danish. These latter know six languages already and are now venturing upon a seventh! On the left is a group of students from the American Legation, which means they are learning the language and serving their apprenticeship to consulate life. In my immediate vicinity are several privates from the United States Marines, and a group of merchants, English or American. Besides these are Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. workers, English-speaking Chinese, tourists from the hotels anxious for a touch of home religion, and a choir. The organist, though, is more of an anomaly than the choir. Born of mission parents, he grew up in Tientsin, went to the English preparatory school at Chefoo, and then went into business, where he earns quite a fabulous salary. He has been away from China only six months in all his life--and yet he is horribly British. In other respects he is a rather attractive man, bright and witty, and possessed of the social graces.

And speaking about the British, it is now four fifteen by the clock so I must go down to tea. We are having guests to-day: a Y.M.C.A. secretary from Tientsin and a woman evangelist from Wuho, down in Polkie's neighborhood.

But I want to tell you of our "bat" on Thursday. As you doubtless know, this is China New Year time--a time when nobody,
excepting language schools, does any business. We did have that one day free, though, and determined to do something desperate by way of celebration. We couldn't get the whole class to join in, but seven of us, Mr. and Mrs. Smith of the Y.M.C.A., Mr. Bly of whom I've spoken before and the four of us who live in this compound, set out via ricksha for the Chi Hua Men. I haven't the faintest idea what "Chi Hua" means, but Men is "gate", and the place is the middle of the city wall on the east. Once outside we paid off our rickshas and scrambled down the bank of the canal. Here Mr. S-----, who acted as spokesman began negotiations for two "chuan bing" that being Chinese for a sort of overgrown sled which they use here and call "ice boat" because they never heard of using snow for any such purpose. I am reminded that ice-cream is "bing juh ling". Would you call that onomatopoetic? It makes me think of sleigh bells.

But to return—after ten minutes bargaining, which was very funny to us, because no one knew any more Chinese than the other fellow, and our vocabulary was only about one third of our necessities (the Chinese are very polite though, and never laugh to your face), we secured the "boats" and started off. It looks like this: We sat around the edges and dangled our feet while our propelling power ran ahead pulling us by rope, illustrated above. When he had gotten to going pretty well he jumped on to have a ride and still kept up a sort of stride with his feet on the ice, that moved the boat along a little. When it went too slowly, he would be getting off and pull for awhile. When we came to the railroad we dismounted and the coolie carried our "boat" over the track and we settled ourselves for another spin. The ice was thin in spots due to much warm weather and it cracked occasionally as we went across, but that only added to the hilarity. There was little danger of drowning, but one would almost rather drown than get wet with the canal water and live to clean up. We changed vehicles twice, for each man has his particular beat and doesn't dare to trespass on the next fellow's. During the last stage we picked up quite a following, for we passed the medicinal spring place and some of the natives recognized us. The last half mile we had to leave the canal and walk across country, and during that time Mr. B--kept us in a continual uproar by his remarks to these ragged little urchins. They asked him if he didn't want a coolie, and he told them he wanted a hundred. They told him he spoke excellent Mandarin and he answered them in Chippewa, which they declared was "Fa Koah Hua" i.e. French.

Then we reached our destination--the tomb of Princess Somebody-or-Other and our procession waited outside the gate. Like all tombs of royalty it had several pairs of stone animals along the front walk, two lions, two sheep, two horses and two men. Then there was another gate, and inside it a large stone turtle bearing a
tablet on his back. The tablet had a beautiful border of dragons, and an inscription done in both Manchu and Chinese. Some of the latter we could read. The tomb was a big brick affair that looked like a lime-kiln, but in front of it, doubtless a place for incense, was a wonderfully carved marble table, and all around was a grove of wonderful pine trees. Most of the trees one sees are in graveyards. The place is in a dreadful state of disrepair, as are most of their beautiful old places. We had a picnic supper on the marble table and then turned our faces homeward. Literally they weren't homeward at all since we were sitting back to back on the sleds but it accomplished the same result.

Mr. B---'s hundred servitors came along running behind and shouting with glee. They probably hadn't had so much fun in an age as they had following the foreigners. One little urchin with the face of a cherub sneaked a ride on my corner of the boat, and then asked me to give some money for helping push! When I told him that he ought to pay me for the ride he was so gratified that he called it square. For the Chinese love a joke and will take one as a substitute for money any time, even from foreigners, all of whom have loads of money! Even my nice teacher told me the other day that it would not be right for me to say that I couldn't afford a thing, because that wouldn't be true. (This in a general discussion of bargaining without any special article mentioned.)

Have succeeded in getting the mirror that I promised you--really it isn't a mirror for it has characters all over what ought to be the plane surface, but it is just as old, and just as curious. As soon as I have a chance to ask my teacher about the characters--for they are very ancient and I don't recognize any of them--I'll be sending it along to you.

Oh, I want to tell you something funny that happened to me yesterday--in the general morning housecleaning I got my dress shields to wash--but later when I looked I couldn't find them, and so decided that Hsi Nai Nai, our old sewing woman had taken the burden upon herself, for I had given her some mending, including my spats, but put it all out of my mind until the middle of the afternoon, when in came Hsi Nai Nai trying to sew my dress shields into the inside of my spats! They didn't fit exactly and she came back for instructions, or I might at this very minute be going around in white-lined spats. You never can tell what's coming next.

And now it's bed time, so good night and good luck be yours.

Much love, Amy