



THE GIRLS ARE COMING

JUST GIRLS

THE ABIGAIL HART SCOTT MEMORIAL
SCHOOL

SWATOW, CHINA

SCHOOL SERIES X

PRICE .40

JUST GIRLS

THE ABIGAIL HART SCOTT MEMORIAL SCHOOL, SWATOW

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Introduction by MRS. LIDA S. ASHMORE

INTRODUCTION

In September, 1851, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson who were at work for the Swatow people in Hongkong opened a boarding school in the lower rooms of their dwelling house.

In 1860 the mission was removed to Swatow and Mr. and Mrs. Johnson located at Double Island with all the other foreigners. Here Mrs. Johnson opened her second school in the lower part of her dwelling. The girls came one by one until there were ten. After Dr. Ashmore bought the present compound, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson came up from Double Island and lived in a house on the back street in Kak-chick.

After Mr. Johnson's death in 1872 Mrs. Johnson removed with the school to Tang O where she remained a short time. When she left the school was dismissed. This closes the expensive period of carrying on the school work, when everything was done for the pupils, even to furnishing their clothes and hiring all the work done.

Conditions were changing in our mission work. The church membership was increasing, more Christian homes were found scattered through our district. The missionaries now felt that the Christians must be taught to bear their own responsibility in the education of their own children.

Mr. Partridge with his first wife, Henrietta, had come to Swatow from the mission in Bangkok and Mrs. Partridge in the autumn of 1874 opened a school with five pupils in the Kai tai lau, the house in the valley at the right as one goes down from the chapel. This was the first house built on the compound. In 1876 there were twelve girls in the new building.

the first one put up especially for the school work and it cost only \$400. It consisted of school room and dining room down stairs with two dormitories above. When the building became so crowded that there was one continuous bed all along one side of the large dormitory, the girls getting in at the foot, and a waiting list of applicants, it was thought a new building was needed. After prayer meeting one Wednesday evening the matter was discussed and it seemed best to all to ask the Woman's Society for a new building large enough to accommodate the school for many years. In the end the entire cost of the building, \$1829, was met from our own drawn-work fund and the \$2000 asked from the Society was designated for a house for missionary residence. Thus we have seen the school work housed in the ground floor of the dwelling houses in Hongkong, Double Island, Kak-chick, the compound and Tang O, the Koi tai lau, and the first school building.

When Miss Norwood opened the school in October 1878 new conditions for entrance were embodied in a contract signed by the father or head of the family, agreeing not to bind the girl's feet, not to betroth her to a heathen and if the contract was broken \$15 must be paid to the school. It was difficult to get the parents to sign these or to agree to them, but in six months' time twelve pupils were entered. After the school was really started there was very little trouble about the foot binding. There was more about the betrothals, for dollars came into the question and dollars were worth more to some of our saints in the church than Christian sons-in-law. It was fought out in one case and we won, and there was less trouble after that.

We have noted Mrs. Johnson's activities in the school. When she laid it down, Mrs. Henrietta Partridge took it up and was a most faithful and successful worker. About the end of the year 1883 Mrs. Partridge asked me to take the school for a few months for her. Upon her death early in 1882 the school fell to me, and I gave to it such care as I could for about twelve years during Mr. Ashmore's first and second terms of service. Mrs. Foster,

Mrs. Waters and Mrs. Linda Partridge have all done what they could to make the school what it was when it was handed over to Miss Weld, the first young lady sent out to us by the Society for the school work. During her five years an average of about thirty-two new girls entered annually. There were eighty-one girls in the school in 1911. Miss Weld raised it from an indefinite primary school up to High School grade, and she has had a number of graduates.

The number of girls who have come under the influence of the gospel in the school from the first has been, as near as I can find out as follows: Hongkong school 12, Double Island, Kai-chieh and Tang O 12, the first school in its own building 20, the one organized in 1878, 458 making a total of 502. This extends over 60 years of time—a cycle of Cathay.

(Written by Mrs. Lida S. Ashmore in 1911, in Swatow, China.)

JUST GIRLS

Sweet, attractive, happy girls; naughty, mischievous, roguish girls; studious, industrious, serious-minded girls; poor girls, rich girls, all of them just girls, to be loved and won for the Master. Shall I tell you about them?

WHERE THEY COME FROM

They come from the cities and villages scattered throughout the great Tie-chiu district, a region referred to in English as the "District of the Tides," having a population of about six millions, Swatow, a city numbering more than 60,000, being its port. From Christian homes come the majority of these girls, girls whose parents are poor but who have learned the value of an education such as a mission school alone can give. Other girls come—girls whose parents are unbelievers yet who recognize the advantage of a Christian training for their daughters.

THE ABIGAIL HART SCOTT MEMORIAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

is the only school of its grade in the whole District.

Across the bay from the thriving city of Swatow, nestled among the rocky hills at Kak-chieh (Angle Rock) is this Abigail Hart Scott Memorial School for girls, one of the earliest schools of our Society in China, having been opened in 1874 with five pupils. Swatow boasts of several government and private schools, and there are other missionary schools in the city, yet because of the quiet surroundings, and because this school is the only one of its grade in the whole Tie-chiu district, it is becoming a real problem to accommodate all who want to enter. This problem will, however, soon be solved for, by the generous Jubilee gift of Central District, we are to have an adequate new building with room for all grades and all necessary expansion. This will be indeed a new day for Kak-chieh.

OPENING DAY

During the closing days of September, while the heat is still intense, the girls begin coming to us from their humble and ill-kept homes, and the narrow, filthy village streets where their childhood has been spent. They travel under the careful guardianship of an older relative or friend, by boat and train, and arrive box and bundle in hand. The little old Grandma who guards the school gate has its doors opened bright and early, and stands there with a shining face, waiting to receive the girls, or to escort strangers to the reception room just within the yard. All the excitement attendant upon an opening day in an American boarding school is present here. Old girls greet each other hilariously, glad to be back again in the place where they have had happy times together; the new girls sit about or follow the old girls around, somewhat awed by the newness of it all, but their faces are eager with anticipation of what is in store for them.

THE NATIVE FACULTY

Prof. Lou, who has been teaching Chinese classics since the reopening of the school in 1916, takes a keen interest in the development of the school and the progress of the girls. Mr. Gueh, his assistant, has an entertaining way of teaching Chinese classical poems to his classes by chanting them in true Chinese rhythm. This proves quite distracting occasionally to the foreigner beyond the glass partition.

Of the native women teachers, three are graduates of the school, one having also completed a High School course at Foochow. These three, in addition to their class-room work, take their share in the responsibilities incident to dormitory and boarding school life. Miss Tang and Miss Ang are especially appreciated for their helpful spiritual influence among the girls, and Miss Ang's class for inquirers has brought splendid results. Mrs.

Wang is a graduate of a Presbyterian school in Amoy. Since she is married, with a little one of her own to care for, she lives outside the school, but her sweet character shows itself in all that she does, and it is a pleasure to have her as a member of the faculty.

A SCHOOL DAY PROGRAM

Busy girls, indeed, are these one hundred and four students in the Abigail Hart Scott Memorial School! The class-room claims most of their day; then they flock to the playground for gymnastics or to the assembly-room for music; perhaps they take a turn at the housekeeping activities of the day; and always there is the preparation of lessons.

HOW THE GIRLS PREPARE THEIR LESSONS

You and I would not prepare our lessons as they do theirs! To us their methods are strange enough. Sometimes when nearing the little outdoor reception room, one hears a loud voice,—a girl is standing in the middle of the room, with her back to the path close by; she swings back and forth shouting the characters from a Chinese text-book on the stand before her, oblivious to everything and everybody. Or, at other times, one may see three or four girls, arms locked together, each holding a book, walking up and down the yard, each girl declaiming her particular lesson. Apparently they do not disturb one another in the least.

Cold weather often finds groups of the girls sitting about the well-curb or the cement wash-tub preparing their lessons; anywhere where they find sunshine. During cold weather seasons, the fireless buildings are in truth far less desirable than the out-of-doors.

COLD SEASON OBSERVATIONS

Having spent several cold seasons in South China we have ceased to wonder that the girls wear several pairs of trousers, five or six jackets and woollen mittens, their necks not only protected with the collars of the jackets, but also swathed with two-yard woollen scarfs. These last do seem a bit superfluous.

Cold weather is certain to produce one picturesque sight. As we enter the assembly-room for the Tuesday evening prayer service, we behold ranks of figures wrapped in red blankets to their very ears, long braids of straight black hair showing conspicuously against the red of the blanket. For an instant the foreigner is inclined to think she has stepped into an Indian encampment instead of a Chinese school-room.

EXPERIENCES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Perhaps there is no subject in the curriculum which brings forth more sighs and groans from the girls than English. But English they want and demand, and it is good for them to get acquainted with another language, and to find out that it can be no harder for them to learn than Chinese is for us. When a teacher has to face a beginners' class of forty-five girls, speaking only Chinese, it takes some courage to keep one's determination to use English only as a means of communication.

THE UNEXPECTED

To one accustomed to the formality of an American class-room, it is somewhat disconcerting to be questioned in such an abrupt and unceremonious fashion as was the writer recently when she was about to begin a recitation.

"Kon-nie"! Hearing myself addressed I looked up, expecting a question relative to the lesson of the day.

"Kon-nie, the hat you wore yesterday was very beautiful! How much did you pay for it?"

My astonishment was so great I fear a full second passed before I announced that we would proceed with the lesson.

SEWING

One afternoon in the week is devoted to sewing. This department is also graded, and when the girls graduate from the Grammar grades they are able to make a suit of clothes. The suits which last year's graduates wore to their class day exercises were suits which they themselves had made.

HOUSEWORK

A woman is hired to do the school cooking and kitchen work, but it would be quite impossible for her to do it all alone; accordingly the girls take turns in helping to prepare the meals. No little part of this preparation consists in drawing water from the well and carrying it to the kitchen. The scholars also do all the cleaning of the buildings when Saturday morning's lessons are over. The girls usually make merry over these duties, and the work, for the most part, is cheerfully done.



OUR SCHOOL BUILDING

MUSIC

Many of the girls are clamoring for music lessons but at present there is no one who has time to give them. "Better Jade" is the only one in school who plays the organ sufficiently well to lead the singing. The girls have improved wonderfully and now can take their parts nicely in the hymns in church.

GYMNASTICS

Volley-ball has found its rightful place in the lives of the girls. A good, exciting game of it on the cold days, when one needs a "warm up" is just the thing. Games and rhythmic exercises, under the able leadership of Miss Pou, are helping to create some of that grace which is so lacking in the Chinese figure.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON RAMBLES

After the Sunday morning church service, followed by personal workers' classes, and a Sunday School session in the afternoon, the girls are in need of exercise. A climb about these hills gives what they require, for the lovely views of Swatow and the harbor, of Double Island and the sea beyond from these summits puts an end to every trace of the blues, so common to school girls in every clime and country, and makes them glad that they are alive.

THE GIRLS WHO EARN THEIR WAY

Perhaps you are interested in the girls who are "working their way." There are a number of them. If a student requires financial aid, she must do something in return for it. The girls are very clever at knitting, crocheting, hemstitching, tatting and cross-stitch work. One girl makes most attractive breakfast sets, using native cloth and working pretty cross-stitch designs in colors.



MISS HELEN FUI



OUR SCHOOL BABY

THE "SCHOOL BABY"

I must give you a glimpse of the "school baby." She is the dearest youngster! We all love her! She and her two sisters are in the school for the first time. They are daughters of a wealthy man, a non-Christian who believes in paying for his daughter's education. Not having sons this father likes to dress the "baby" like a boy. (Notice the jacket buttoned up the front instead of at the side.) She is the brightest of the three sisters and we trust that in time she will become one of the Master's jewels.

ONE OF OUR GRADUATES

You will want to know Mrs. Lin, who, for many years has been connected with the school as pupil, teacher, and personal helper to the foreigner in charge of the school. Her familiarity with all details of the school work, her ability as a teacher, and her tactful dealing with the pupils have made her services very valuable. Although she now has four children of her own to care for, she still renders important service, and retains her interest in all the activities of the school life.

ANOTHER GRADUATE

We are very proud of Miss Helen Fuc, one of our graduates. By her own pluck and determination, she succeeded in completing a High School course in Foochow. Following her graduation she accepted a position in our school, where she acted as head-teacher most acceptably for a year and a half. Knowing that Miss Fuc herself was desirous of further training, and realizing the need of college trained native teachers to fit in with the future plans of the Abigail Hart Scott Memorial School, arrangements were made for her to enter Gihing College, Nanking, where she is now a student. We look forward to the time when this gifted young woman will return to help us in training the many girls throughout this district who are looking to us for a Christian education.

STORY OF "BEAUTIFUL JADE"

Shall I tell you about "Beautiful" or "Better Jade" from the village of South River, and why she has to earn her way? At the opening of one fall term she suddenly appeared. No one came with her. No one knew anything about her, and her strange manners were rather disconcerting as well as amusing. In time we learned something about her family: that her mother and older brother were Christians; and that they had given her enough money to pay her way for a few months. With the coming of a Chinese New Year her family demanded that she return to go to live with her future mother-in-law. The girl refused. Why? Because the man to whom they had betrothed her was in "foreign parts," already married and having children, and she knew that in time he would return and she would become his second wife. As she persisted in her refusal, Beautiful Jade's family declined to furnish any more money or to help her in any way to obtain an education. To resist the tearful pleading of this girl for work was impossible; in the end, by accepting all kinds of tasks, she has been able to remain in the school. She has developed into a quiet, dignified Christian girl, and whatever the future may hold for her we feel sure she will remain true to the ideals taught her in this school.

STORY OF TWO SISTERS

I must introduce next two sisters, "Flare Phoenix" and "Worthy Phoenix" of Custom's Port. They are girls of real character and quite determined to win their way through school, supporting themselves the while. And they do it, too! How? By crocheting. Never did hands move as swiftly as do theirs! The results are astonishing. A father's desertion, providing no support for his family, has made it necessary for these girls thus to work their own way. The younger girl graduates from the Grammar department next term; she is so bright that we hope she can return to take a High School course at least.

CHRISTIAN LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The Christian atmosphere of the school is sweet and pervasive. Every month there are students who desire to join the church and by far the greater majority of the girls become Christians while they are with us. The girls have their own weekly prayer meeting and their own missionary society, which supports two Bible women. The Christian girls join a personal workers' class led by Miss Ang who teaches them how to work for others. Each one selects one or more non-Christian girl to pray for and try to lead to Christ.

JUST GIRLS BUT THE FUTURE HOMEMAKERS AND LEADERS OF NEW CHINA

Just girls, I have called these students who come to us! And so they are. But we also think of them as the future Christian leaders and home-makers of this great nation. Their part, their influence in the making of a new China will not be a small one.

It is our earnest hope that they win in our School awakened minds, capacity for honest work and honest play, the foundations of enlightened Christian womanhood, and, above all, personal love and loyalty to Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Example.