

Casablanca, Morocco  
October 31, 1942

This certainly has been a famous week with much mail; three letters

from Nancy on Monday, two from Tacie on Tuesday, one from you on Thursday and two more today. Furthermore my cold is all gone; and to top off that, a cable from James Vail arrived saying he had been successful in arranging to send me some gasoline. So it looks like we may be able to do something for these men in the camps after all. If James Vail can now send over lots and lots of clothing we'll get somewhere.

In my letter to Jermi' I told him about meeting Dr Wyss-Dunant, the delegate to North Africa from the International Red Cross at Geneva. He has visited nearly all the camps. In about two weeks he is going to return here and we shall then have another conference. Then I think we can make further and more specific requests. I am hoping James will be able to get the American Red Cross interested in sending clothing and other supplies. For I expect it will be beyond what the American Friends' Service is set up to do. If we really do the job, it means that somebody is going to have to do a lot of buying, unless they are already equipped with a ~~big~~ huge amount of clothing. It is a great trial to me that distances are so great and communications so slow and transportation so poor and so many agencies involved, that it takes such a great amount of time before we can do anything really effective when the need is so great right now with winter almost upon us.

The encouraging thing, however, is that there are so many good people who are here already doing all they can and all of whom can do so much more if we can get a little transportation and a stock of clothing, medical supplies and other material. The aid given me by all the people at the American Consulate has been simply invaluable.

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You ask what effect events in Europe may have on work here. The answer is, I honestly do not know. As a matter of fact in many ways I know less than I did at home. I thought Lisbon was the greatest town I had ever seen for hatching rumours. Well this town has it all over Lisbon. The place continually bubbles with rumours. All one can think of is the floor of an incubator when the chickens are hatching. The floor is just covered with them as they go prancing about and they are continually pushed aside by the new arrivals which drop down from above and in turn go madly dashing about! And some of them look like the chickens that Charlie Pease, back in Lee, hatched out of a crate of packed eggs! They were sort of a pastey lot! Some of these rumours are palpably preposterous - many there is no way of knowing whether they are true or false, and some are rather obviously false. However some of the various censors might not like it if I peddled the more juicy ones, so much delightful gossip must wait for more peaceful times. But I am ready any day to enter Casablanca in a contest with Lisbon; or for that matter any other town in creation. You may remember that Stephen Field once said that a story in Stockbridge, once started at Sid Lincoln's corner would get down to the end of Church Street ahead of any electrical corner that could be produced. Rumours in Maroc also have ~~that~~ such properties. It is said that the Arabs have amazing powers for the speedy propagation of news; all I ~~have~~ have to say is, that at least within the confines of the city, the Europeans must have been very apt pupils of the Arabs.

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L.O.H.