

FIVE DOLLARS AND ONE GOLD EARRING

By Ann Coleman

(Lottie is seated, reading) Dear Miss Moon, Your recent trip in the States has caused a new awareness of the needs of the Chinese people, especially by the news of the terrible famine. Enclosed are a few contributions that were sent to me here at the Mission Board with a request that I forward them to you. Use them at your own discretion. Sincerely, H.A. Tupper.

Five dollars and one gold earring – wonder what happened to the other one. Oh dear, it's time I got busy . . . Let's see – where did we decide to go today? I wish I could be everywhere at once. I need to study my language – will I ever learn all of the tones? If I could just be able to teach in the villages alone . . . but if they can't understand what I say . . . well, after all, I've only been here one year – it will come. *(Smiles)* I guess we are a real sight to see. The Chinese peer from their gates as our chair-bearers carry us by – we are their entertainment of the day. With only six foreigners in a city of 80,000 they are bound to be curious. Will I ever get use to the shouts of “foreign devil” that greet us daily? *(Looks at earring.)* Was it a discard – was one lost? How important was it to her? Ha! I remember how important finding just one earring would have been to us back home. During the Civil War we heard the Yankees were on their way to destroy our Viewmont estate. We saw a big cloud of dust. Knowing it must be the soldiers, Mother gathered up all of the silver and jewelry and said, “Go bury this in a safe place.” I hurriedly dug a deep hole, buried the items, then we waited for the soldiers to come – but it was only a herd of scared sheep causing the dust. We breathed a sigh of relief, and I went to retrieve the jewels – well to this day when anyone of us goes for a walk over the land, we walk with eyes downward – still looking for the place where I buried the treasure. As I said, if we could find just one earring we would know where to look for the rest.

What can I do with one earring – was it the widow's mite, all she had to give? Would our friend have sent both if she had them – or was it of no more use to her that she turned loose of it? We need so many things for our schools, food for the hungry. *(Holds up earring)* Maybe it was a treasured gift from a loved one. Even with one lost, she still could have kept this one as a keepsake to remember. If that was true, she gave a sacrificial gift.

Mrs. Crawford, I'll be right there. When will the churches send us more teachers – poor Mrs. Crawford is almost ill with overwork. By the end of the day we will be so tired and there will still be those coming, begging to hear of Jesus. We cannot turn them away. We have the answer to the salvation of their souls. We must endure the fifteen hours of blazing sun somehow. I'll write tonight to the churches: “Send two of your choicest women – women who would be missed at home, whose going would make a gap in the church work and in the social circle, full of zeal, faith and consecration.” It is fairly easy to give oneself to mission

work, but it is not always easy to give yourself to an alien people. (*Picks up five dollars*) I know what I will do with the five dollars. It will keep a few fed – a little more millet in the pot for someone hungry. (*To earring*) We need so much help. The pastors in the states have been so concerned of late if they are meeting their baptisms quota. It seems to me if the pastors would push foreign missions as much as they have baptisms – wouldn't the money flow into the missions treasury? Wouldn't all the field get the needed reinforcements? The same Lord who said "baptize" said also "disciple all the nations." One earring – given for whatever reason – is better than not giving at all. (*Puts letter in pocket, folds money and earring into her hand, exits.*)

Monologue based on Catherine B. Allen's book, The New Lottie Moon Story (Broadman, c1980.)