

Saturday, Dec 20, 1948

Got a telegram at 7 last night -
F and M Cholons 10 demam. Afine
thing. Too late to make any arrangements,
so I made all preparations anyway -
old the children, explained that they
were to eat with Maman, cooked the
eat meal, so we could eat quickly,
dined till twelve so I'd have that
out of the way, & set the alarm
for 6:30. By 8:30 I had the beds
made, me dressed, the dishes
washed, the living room swept, & we
on my way to Maman's. Yes, she
would feed the children at noon +
lend me 500 fr. (there was 20 in
my purse.) Then - there was no
train till noon. And one of the taxis
was broken down. But M. Paul
phoned & arranged for M. Nossin
of the Public Baths to take me, so
I went. He was out getting
some gas & at 9:30 we started off,
& at 10:10 we arrived at the station
met News, & it cost 800 fr. But
it was a real treat to travel down
the French landscape in an auto
for a change.

We had a lot of fun in Cholons
- shopped, ate a good lunch, &
finally got everything we really wanted
- even the black cotton stockings for
Maman, the bottle of Cognac for Papa,
the wool for Eliane, & Ohky's ties
for the rest.

Then we went back to the station,

Sunday, Jan 4, 1948

Such a pretty day, so sun-
shiny - the children & I planned
a walk before going to Christelle
for dinner. We finally managed it
after some difficulties, but it
turned out to be cold sunshine,
& the paths & roads were so muddy
that we could scarcely walk. Hard
on shoes, too, & I got cranky, I'm
afraid, watching freshly polished
shoes grow greyer & greyer. The
walk was a complete failure -
abandoned - & took it over to
show Maman.

After dinner, while I was drying
dishes with Maman (she walks with
no soap at all - just hot water),
we noticed the barometer behind
a stack of letters on the cupboard.
A barometer that works. The children
were fascinated & I had to explain
how it worked & why. But you have
a barometer in your house, said
Papa. Yes, said I, but it doesn't
work. Papa had that gleam in
his eye that I've learned to be
on my guard against. Oh, yes,
it marches, said Papa, confident
in the children's lack of French.
When Albert is there, if the barometer
is up, that ça fait du beau temps.
When the barometer is down, it
rains. "I looked puzzled. "I
don't understand." "Désolé, said

January 7, 1948

Now do women ever get anything
written if they have families? I
come up the road from Christelle
brimming with stuff I want to put down
on paper, but when I get home, it's time
for the children, and then to fix supper,
get them to bed, & get the dishes washed.
After which I'm tired enough that I
can't even remember clearly what I want
to say, much less put it down on paper.
Dorothy & Annette are in the big bed tonight
Such a suckers. It seems Annette was
& kept trying to smuggle. Dorothy won
no more away. Annette went right after, &
she just wouldn't move over when asked
to. I pointed out to Dorothy that "you
dislike touching someone, you just can't
sleep with her. And how about swapping
with Cleo (who sat up all sages) and
moving back onto the single bed. No, I
wouldn't do either, but Cleo couldn't
stand the thought of A. up against her
because of A's proclivities for bedeviling
I'll sleep with her, said Cleo. I've been
wet several times, & I don't care. No,
said Dorothy, she wanted to stay
the big bed. All this while A was so
highly interested spectator. We finally
compromised. A. got her doll to swap
with & would quit chasing D. D. & A.
both agreed to try to be a little bit
nice to each other - sort of roommates.
Said I explained to D. A. and I
promised to take A. up to the
bathroom before I went to bed. Now
at last they're quiet.

found that the three o'clock train had been cancelled, & sat down exhausted to wait for the 5:30 one. Suddenly at 4:45 I remembered that Cile's teacher was supposed to come visit us "after eating," & that I'd have to do some fast supper fixing when I got home. We made a beeline for the little shops across the bridge & bought sausage, bread, & cakes in practically nothing flat & made it back to the train. Got home! & I put supper on the table while News collected the children. Cile had a note from her teacher that she couldn't come after all, but thanks just the same. When I brought out cream puffs & ~~two~~ meringues for dessert, the children's eyes bugged. Those are the most unsatisfactory little cakes. I eat two bites apiece, & that mostly air. Or maybe I hadn't eaten enough bread & cheese & sausage. I found a wonderful Gruyere cheese in the groc. yesterday, that even the children like. It's so good that the only way we can exercise any self control is for News to slice it with the potato peeler. Gee, I wish it didn't take tickets!

Papa patiently, still with the wicked twinkle - when the barometer is up, that makes for good weather (or times), when the barometer is down, it rains." I managed to keep on looking puzzled. "You don't understand," asked Papa. "Non." "Eh, bien -" & he gave up. That old goat - he knows damned well I understand, but I'm not going to give him the satisfaction of admitting it.

It's been comparatively warm today with rain showers - a heavy ^{grey} day. Maman was sitting gleefully in the kitchen - can you imagine a ^{man} gain, as she explained to us. "Gumps! We drank a glass of wine today & she ate some of the dates I had bought, I do believe she likes wine better than coffee for her afternoon break, or maybe it was because she was hungry. The whole family eats that cheese without scraping up of the mold off." Papa arrived, towards leaving time, with a bookcase he had bought from the surplus at the camp, for Lucien's books. No & the one animal man had brought it & another in a cart that is made to be pulled by horses, but that has a loop at the front to it now that a man can put his shoulder thru. It's rather queer to see a man pulling a cart that size. Found out yesterday that my wild guess about the chevaling's opening days depending on the horse's mortality rate was not so wild. Maman says that whenever a horse has an accident & has to be killed the butcher opens up. Last year there were a couple of months when all the horses walked carefully - there just wasn't any horsepuck at all. That's another of the things that we hope will not arrive.