

Photocopy of letter to Miss C.V. Barrett

4519 Fifteenth Ave. West

Vancouver, 8 B.C.

December 13, 1955

Dear CVB :

It was good to get your letter and the lovely little picture of the St Louis Gate. I can well imagine that the last few months were not easy to bear but I still contend that so-called "retirement" can be a happy and even creative experience. You must lie fallow for a time but before long you will be blossoming like the Biblical green bay tree. But you must learn to feed yourself well -- none of that tea and toast business when you are alone. The budgies can be very endearing and several times I've been tempted to have one. The trouble is that I still have that itching foot and the little things don't like being boarded out.

However, I do have some birds in the back garden! There is a small feeding tray up on a post with a roof over it and it is great fun to watch them these frosty mornings. Usually, there are just juncos but in the Arctic weather we are having in this banana belt, we sometimes get more colourful visitors. I just looked out of the back window and there was

a towhee, complete with speckled waistcoat and black topknot. Later on, there may be a varied thrush or two.

My little grey home in the West has had its face lifted and now looks very stylish. A new Duroid roof, mixed jade green and frosty white, windows white with green edges and front door the same. Most of it paid for with this little typewriter, believe it or not. Like you, I hate the slippery streets and as a rule we are not bothered very much with them here. But when we get a "silver rain" look out. I heard that you could get stuff to put on the soles of your rubbers and went in search of it. It is grand, but very messy to put on -- it really is a sort of asphalt -- and you must be careful not to enter your friends' abode without leaving your footwear on the doorstep. It is called "Grit Kit" -- why not ask Eatons about it?

Montreal and Vancouver seems to be rivals in the riot business. Our police department has been ~~grewix~~ going through a horrible scandal and there is even talk that the Mounted Police may have to take over for a time. The "teen-agers" are a menace and there seems to be no way of controlling them. One wonders a bit about the merits of "progressive education" -- my own feeling is that you Catholics are right in your view that you can't separate religious and academic education.

(Please turn over)

Kind mine please!

Christine  
Winnipeg

Last summer my WGH Alumnae Assn. decided to get the history of our school of nursing written and you can guess who got elected to do it. However, I made my own terms -- no pay of any kind other than out of pocket expenses such as travel. I spent a month luxuriously housed in the Nurses Residence at the Winnipeg General Hospital and dug up the musty archives since 1867! It was a weird sort of experience, some of it, rather like seeing a film of one's early life run off backwards. Now I'm plugging away happily at the manuscript. If I have my way, it won't be a long book -- perhaps a bit bigger than the MGH.

Well, my dear, God bless you and your home and your budgie. And be proud that you can feel that you helped a goodly proportion of young Canada to make a three-point safe landing on this stormy planet of ours.

Affectionately

Peter Johns

