



December 1, 1898

Dear Friend,

I am a 16-year-old girl. I live in a place called Mount Lebanon which is part of the region of Syria in the Ottoman Empire. (I drew a map for you here). My mother had worked in a silk factory weaving thread until recently when it was closed down because of foreign competition.



I want to help my family. We are looking for a place to live and work where my parents could get a job. Is North Carolina a good place for us to live right now? Would my mother be able to work with fabrics and textiles somewhere? What kinds of jobs are there in North Carolina? Where should we live if she wants to do the same kind of job that she has been doing?

Also, I need to be sure that my family is not going to be mistreated or sent back to Mount Lebanon. I have read some newspaper articles about the Chinese Immigration Act in the United States. Is it true? Is your country really sending people back to China, even though they were invited to come to the United States to work on the railroad? I thought that the United States was the land of opportunity for everyone. My family wants an opportunity to work hard and take care of ourselves. Please find out what you can about this Act in your Congress and let me know if it would hurt us.

You may not get this letter until 1899 because the ship carrying it is slow. My family really needs you to write back. Thank you in advance for answering my questions. I am so grateful for your help.

Sincerely,

Maria