

Teheran, Persia  
September 15, 1928

Dear Mother:-

School has opened but not so auspiciously as we would like. To date we have registered only 261 students in the Middle School and College whereas on the third day of school last year we had registered 316. We are 55 students behind in number. I hope that we catch up with that number during the next ten days. Students will continue to roll in fairly regularly in the next ten days. In Persia they have not formed the habit of getting around on time. We fooled the boys a bit this year by starting lessons on the first day of school and counting the first ten day's absences double. This was the first ~~day~~ time since I have been out here that we have done that and consequently it will take two or three years to get the idea across.

If we do have a falling off in numbers there will be many reasons for it that I can foresee. Most of all the American advisors are not here to demand so many men who can work in the English language. In the second place the government is offering to their students 100 scholarships every year for students to go abroad and study in European Universities. The cheapest place for these students is France or one of the other Continental countries, and hence many of them will go there. In other words the French language is far more necessary for such students, at least the majority of them than English. American education, because of the additional travel alone is much more expensive than European, to say nothing of living expenses in America as compared with Europe. England does not offer many attractions educationally to these students, and hence the demand at present is French. The government is meeting the demand by bringing our fifteen French professors at government expense, and they are further bolstering their education by ordering a great amount of chemical and physics laboratory equipment. All of this has been done with a good bit of gusto and advertising. This has dimmed our star somewhat in spite of the fact that we are getting more scientific equipment this year than any other one school in Teheran, and we are also adding to our personnel probably more than any one school in the city. By personnel I mean American teachers. We failed to advertise these facts sufficiently, I believe, and the consequence is that the government schools have the drop on us somewhat. We hope to make up for that omission by getting out a good catalog in the near future. Our idea is that the students will send these things, north, east, west and south and thus advertise the school over Persia.

We are labouring under another difficulty, namely the uncertainty of the situation brought about by the disagreement of the Government with our program. To be sure that is settled now but the word has not yet been circulated fully that it is settled. Many are still labouring under the delusion that we are in the midst of an argument and that the School is still an uncertain quantity. With this year passed that uncertainty will have passed.

After I have said all of this we may find that the alibis are unnecessary and that we have as many students as ever. The recognition by the Government and the recognition of the College by the Board of regents of New York are certainly in our favour and

have a good reaction.

But enough of school. We have other troubles these days as well as school. The Avenitis is becoming a habit and we have not been able to get rid of it since coming to the city. Never serious but always annoying the doctor got tired of fooling with it and made us all send specimens to the Pasteur Institute for examination. He has only heard the result of Harriet and Hutch's examination. He will probably get the result of ours to-morrow or the next day. It is all very interesting. They found a bug in the specimens of both Harriett and Hutch, which Phil McDowell had never heard of before and did not know existed. Needless to say he does not know the remedy although there is a remedy and he is studying up the matter in the new books on tropical diseases of one of the Persian doctors out here. Apparently the French doctor of the Pasteur Institute who has spent some time in Africa and fooled around a lot with tropical diseases is only medical man in town who is aware of what we have. It is he who is making these examinations. If he turns up the bug on Teddy and myself also then all four of us will be sitting around like bumps on a log waiting for Phil to study the stuff and find the cure. It is great getting stuff that none of the doctors know anything about. All of the doctors get interested in you right away and pay a lot of attention which they fail to do at other times when you just have an ordinary sickness that has carried away several million in the course of its existence in modern times. Our nickname "Avenitis" is not so funny after all. We did have a new disease that had no name, and still has no name in ordinary parlance, other than a very long technical name which a doctor can scarcely remember. We shall take out a patent on our name and thus maybe attain a great reputation. Hutch has really been pretty hard hit by it. He lost eleven pounds during the Summer and looks pretty bad. When a thin man loses eleven pounds it is no joke. Personally I am enjoying life immensely. I can eat all that I want and have no fear of gaining. In fact I think that I lost two or three pounds over the Summer myself.

Teddy is even afflicted although very lightly. It is the first time that she has ever had a touch of this business. Poor Mrs. Williams carried her case as far as London with her where she was taken very ill, spent a week in bed instead of sight-seeing, and was barely put in shape to get on the boat to get back to New York. They thought for awhile of keeping her in the hospital and making her cancel her reservations. That is what I call real hard luck.

Meantime our new man Hill arrived yesterday. I have been too busy to see much of him, but he looks like a good sort and up to the job. The other man Gibson, who was to have come with him, as you know was taken sick in Paris and had to return to America. It seems that he got paratyphoid and the doctors told him that something was the matter with his insides which would make a return of his disease very likely. They urged to return to America and not to think of Persia. Well maybe they were right, but we think that they were bug-house and we hope that he gets into the hands of some sensible doctors in America who will send him back again. There are inoculations to take care of what he had. We have typhoid epidemics out here but by a liberal use of inoculations and some care we usually escape the stuff.

Bill close for the week,

With love

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