

Teheran, Persia
February 25, 1928

Dear Mother:-

Another week and no pictures fro Mount Carmel. The lady recovered from her illnesses, and the proofs which she furnished were in fairly good shape. Last Tuesday I went down and ordered the pictures. They were to have been done yesterday. I sent for them, but they were not done. I sent to-day again and they are not yet done. I have been disappointed so many times now that I always send a servant down to see about them and bring me the news as to how the work is progressing. Perhaps that is not so successful as it might be for hurrying her up, but at least it is a lot more economical of my time. I cannot get to her shop and back in less than an hour, so that I cannot afford to be running back and forth everyday for nothing.

I only hope that the pictures are worth something when they are finished. We finally decided to put two of the group pictures together in an attempt to get one good one. On one the baby and myself were fairly good and on the other Teddy was not bad, though on the first one in which we were pretty good she was terrible; looked as if she had been on a "drunk" or was just recovering from ether.

Thus much for pictures. Persia has resorted to semi-barbarism in the matter of public executions, although from what I understand of American newspaper talk on some recent executions, supposedly private, in America, these "public" executions in Persia are less public than these at home which are behind barred doors.

This past week they have resurrected an old law for hanging murderers in a public square, located just at the entrance to the bazaars. It is a strategic point for impressing the ignorant of the southern part of Teheran, and there is little doubt that such is the purpose. Unfortunately those who have studied the results upon the crowd of such a procedure seem to be united in the opinion that public execution instead of filling people with fear and causing them to obey the law is usually a means of encouraging more lawbreaking. It is my opinion that the government feels somewhat shaky and is trying desperately to be impressive. Another morning last week they ~~guk~~ shot a man supposed to be the ringleader in a plot against the life of the Shah. The plot was uncovered two years ago and the men have been lying around in prison ever since. Some are not yet convinced that the men were really actively engaged in the plot, but it is passed now.

Recently a member of parliament combatted the appropriations for the coming elections to that august body on the ground that the money only enabled the government to interfere in the elections to corrupt them and that when the parliament was elected it was a powerless body. To substantiate his claims he read the telegrams which he had unearthed, telegrams from a certain general to various districts which were under his charge instructing them to elect certain members to the majless (parliament) from those districts. Suffice it to say, that as far as we know the man is still out of jail and enjoying his health, i. e. the man who disclosed these telegrams in the parliament and objected to the appropriations for the elections. For that matter the general who sent the telegrams is living in Teheran, and enjoying freedom although he has since been deprived of his command for other very much more serious offenses than corrupting elections.

Otherwise the political situation is unchanged. Conversations still continue between the schools and the Ministry of Education. The latest is that we will not be able to teach the Bible as such after this year, though we will be able to teach it.

as ethics. "Debineem" (Let us see) is what the Persian always says under such circumstances, and a most useful phrase I find it. When all other arguments fail with a student that always settles everything and places the final settlement in the indefinite future, and it is just about as successful as our habit of "laying a motion on the table" in business meeting, when we want to defeat it without bringing it to a show down. We still continue our way merrily.

The people across the way from us, namely the Russians, are still in the political saddle, and the British are squirming in order to get them out. Unfortunately for them they do not have the pressure which they can bring to bear that is quite the equal of the Russian neighbours to the north. England is far away, while Russia is just next-door, and these nice "world revolutionary non-imperialistic Communists" are not the ones to let slip such a golden opportunity. It is only discretion that keeps them from annexing Persia outright. Don't misunderstand me, the Russian is no worse politically than the other European diplomats, and likewise, in spite of all the nice things he would preach to the contrary, he is no better. But having set up a soviet government and therefore being at loggerheads with Great Britain the two nations have fallen right back to their position of twenty-five years ago when they were at loggerheads once before over Persia and India. In the years just prior to the war they had patched up their differences and had agreed to carve out Persia between themselves and stop fussing with one another. The war and communism brought an end of that agreement, and so here we are back again to where they started and once more Persia is the football. It is an interesting game to watch, although highly unscrupulous from an ethical point of view. One does not mind dirty politics when they are in his own backyard. You sort of feel that you have a right to make a mess there if you want to, but when you step in someone else's yard and smear mud around just because he isn't strong enough to chase you away it assumes the appearance of a mighty mean trick. Thus you have a summary of the conduct of Great Britain and Russia in Persia.

To get away from politics and come closer to home again, I am enjoying another attempt to get rid of malaria. This time I have gotten hold of "Malarina Cremonese" a new Italian medicine that is supposed to cure you and render you immune for a year, without any deleterious effects. Would that it might be so. I had a very little fever last Sunday, and before taking the quinine went to the hospital and had the doctor take a blood-test. After a long search he thought that he had found the bug, and I started on quinine, but the next day, just when I had taken enough so that I was hard of hearing the doctor told me that he had let Phil McDowell see the ~~parasit~~ specimen, and he had decided that there was no bug present. However, Phil told me to take this new medicine on general principles inasmuch as it claimed to be harmless to the person and mighty harmless to malaria. So here we are. I have had not more than the little fever, one half a degree for one afternoon, but whether I am to thank the quinine which I dosed upon on for 48 hours or the new medicine I do not know. I do know that I have had a stomach a little bit off all week, but that may be the effects of the quinine, of the fever, or of the new medicine or of something else, and I know what to do about it.

With that review of the family's health, I will close. The rest of us are going all right.

Love

Walton