

March 12, 1927

Dear Mother:-

I let last week go by without writing a letter and under the circumstances I might seem to be more justified in letting it go this week than the last. I am preaching to-morrow morning and in addition have a class of boys to teach beforehand which I just started last week. That was the reason for my not writing last week. I was not properly adjusted to the new arrangement last week and hence at the end of the week the letter-writing time was taken up by class preparation time and teaching. Most remarkable to state, for once in my life I find myself on the Saturday evening, in fact, almost Saturday afternoon before the Sunday morning preaching and my sermon all ready, at least on paper if not in my head. I thought I would take time out from my preparation to write this letter before going further. I have several hours work ahead of me but that is no problem. The baby makes us get up so early in the morning, Sunday not excepted that I will have more time to-morrow before Church than I usually have, and I also have the entire evening ahead of me.

We have been dreaming some wonderful pipe dreams at the College this week. In fact we are always dreaming pipe dreams it seems and we are finding that Emerson's advice was sound when he said "Hitch your wagon to a star" and Shakespeare wisely added "you will be sure to strike a telegraph pole". We have hit the telegraph poles in the personalities of two new members to our staff this year with the hope of one additional member for next year. But this is not half of the recent dream. Several months ago we began to plan more definitely for our next College building, which we hope will be a 40,000 dollar Science Building. Entirely apart from that connection about two or three months ago I, etc. and myself were grumbling at our fate and how the Mission and the Board did not sympathize with our noble aspirations for the College etcetera and we laid our heads together to see what we could do about it to augment the meagre financial allowances from the Board. We thought of the Rockefeller Foundation in New York, but we knew no one there and we had to search further for one to plead our cause. We next thought of Percy MacCracken of Lafayette who is now living in New York and we decided that Hutch would write him a personal letter on his opinion about what we could do with the Rockefeller Foundation and whether they would be willing to help us. The answer to that letter came this week and Percy was far better than we had expected. He immediately went to the President of the Foundation whom he happens to know personally and placed the matter before him. Fortunately or unfortunately, we do not yet know, the Persian Government had already put in a request for help for a Persian University in Teheran, and the Rockefeller Foundation had already sent a man in the person of a Dr. Carter, who is now on his way to Teheran to look over this Persian University. When Pres. MacCracken learned this he requested them to wire the man and have him investigate us also. This the Rockefeller people agreed to do and now it is a race to the finish to see which, the Persian Government or ourselves will convince this man that we really need their help. They may help both, but that is not likely. We think they will help one or the other. When we do not know, and to what extent we do not know. We do not even know whether the man will arrive next week or next fall. He seems to be in Beirut at present.

For many reasons we sincerely believe that we are more deserving of the help than the Persian Government, principally because we are in a better position to use the help than the Persian Government is at present. At least it will give us something to think about.

between now and the time when the man arrives. Dr. MacCracken also gave us a lift at another place for he went personally to Dr. Speer to find out if we could not get more financial support from the Board than we have been getting. That also might bring some results. At any rate if asking is going to get us anything we have certainly been asking everyone and ev rywhere for the last year and it is hardly possible that it will not bear its fruit in the next ten years and longer.

Meantime I must confess that Persia is rapidly becoming an American Colony in more ways than one. As you know the government finances are being run by Americans and will likely be in their hands for some time to come. Ten new engineers from America have just arrived to start work on the railroad proposition. I do not know how many there in this Financial Mission at the present time but I imagine that there are at least as many in the Financial Missions there are Missionaries and not a one of them but has a real place in the government. In fact each man in his position has unlimited powers and is like a czar. Dr. Wilsbaugh's picture appears in The Public Ledger as Persia's Purse Czar, and while it would have been unfortunate for such a thing to get back to Persia, which it undoubtedly did, inasmuch as it reached us, yet the truth of the saying is more evident to us out here than to the readers in America. The Shah is his only rival in power and he only because he still controls the army. If he slips and the army becomes disrupted in anyway, Wilsbaugh will be the real ruler of Persia in the practical sense of the term. The Americans are without any of the interference which would be theirs if they were elected to office as Persians, or if they were Persians. Freed from practically all governmental red-tape, although they find sufficient obstacles to make them fret at times, they have a free hand to control, and everyone has perfect confidence in them. The confidence will last just as long as they prove themselves worthy of the confidence and thus far they seem to be men of integrity, if not men of religion. It is one of the severest blights to real missionary work that the interest of these men in our side of the work out here seems to be a flat zero, although they would be at a flat standstill if it were not for our school, inasmuch as practically everyone of their assistants without exception are graduates or near-graduates of the American Schools. Socially, they are all very friendly and most of them very enjoyable people, but perhaps for fear of political complications they will not be more than social with us. Of course there is great deal of religious fanaticism in the country which they must reckon with and our religious motives are known, and were they to unite with us in any open way in religious affairs one wave of fanaticism would be enough to sweep them out and undo all that they have done. And there are plenty of people lying around the corner hoping and praying for an excuse to start the ball rolling that will roll the American Advisors out of Persia.

Two anecdotes in fanaticism and then I will close. We have not been able to hold Chemistry laboratory classes on Saturday because the Jewish students refuse to light their lab lamps on a Sat. The one observance left them is this that they will not light a fire on the Sab. They get Moslems to come into their homes on the Sabbath to light the fires for them so that they can cook their food. The second incident is that women will not allow the censors to register their names and ages and their men-folks back them up in it, because it would be a great breach of Moslem propriety for a Moslem women to have her name registered in any public place for men to read it. The Afghan came to-day in good shape.

Must close with love

Walter

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