

# THE AMERICAN COLLEGE

OF

## TEHERAN

کالج امریکائی تهرآن

May 28, 1927

Dear Mother:-

The School year draws near to a close, one more week and our examinations begin. The graduating class has already finished their exams and are getting ready for the exercises next Friday morning. The Girl's School has had their Commencement. Because several of the American Teachers are due to leave on their furloughs this year and they wanted to get away immediately at the end of school examinations they had their Commencement early and got it over with. Miss Pomeroy is leaving in another three or four weeks; her three years are finished. Today will miss her a great deal because she was just about Teddy's age and came here a great deal. She is an awfully jolly person and has been a little too popular with the men to suit the dignity of some of the missionaries but I rather imagine that they will repent after she has gone and wish that they had more with the life that she has.

Miss Young is leaving for home to-morrow morning. She is one of the regular missionaries in the Girls School and with her going there is a big question mark in the minds of all of us. You will recall that she became engaged to our Mr. Young, although she is ten years his senior. We would have breathed easier had they been married before returning to America but they are both returning, she now and Young a month from now, and will not see one another for several months. They meet in Europe before they get home, although I do not know what their plans are. At any rate the thing that puzzles and perplexes us is just what Young will do when he gets to America with his own family and friends, with his family dead against the match anyway and his friends all so much younger than his fiancée. If he can stand the gaff, all very well and good, but if he does not it will about finish Charlotte, because she is not the one to recover quickly from such a thing. Mentally she is not built for such recoveries and with her age it is unlikely that she will become engaged again.

The third one which the Girls School is losing is Miss McHenry, the principal. Her furlough is also due but instead of taking her furlough she is marrying Dr. Schuler, our widowed evangelist. You may have heard of Dr. Schuler's matrimonial ventures; there have only been two as far as I know, but they have been varied. The First Mrs. Schuler was 26 years his senior. They were married when he was about 25 years of age, out her in Persia. One of the older missionaries told us of the affair, how Schuler met Miss Gale in Hamadan and how the Teheran people were electrified to receive a letter shortly afterwards to the effect that Mr. Schuler and Miss Gale were in love with another and felt that it was God's Will for them to get married. This particular missionary sagely remarked at that time that he thought God had said his last word on the matter when Mr. Schuler was brought into the World 26 years after Miss Gale. Well Mrs. Schuler died about five years ago, when she was about 80 and her husband just passed 50. He is not at all grey and inclined to look younger than he is, while they say that Mrs. Schuler was very old and feeble for the last five or ten years of her life. I marvel that the man was able to make such

a go of it, but he did. Since Mrs. Schuler's death his thoughts and attentions have turned toward Miss McHenry, about as many years his junior as the first Mrs. Schuler was his senior, hence say his ventures have been varied. It has been a clammy affair in my opinion. We like Lillian McHenry and Mr. Schuler, also, but because of their positions, she as Principal of the Girls School and he as senior evangelist, the thing had to be carried on under cover so to speak. Both of them have been unusually quiet and have kept their own counsels with the result that everyone knew everything and no one knew anything, a most unsatisfactory condition for a love affair, even for the couple involved, I think. Under the circumstances people could not help congering up thoughts about Schuler as his wild ventures in matrimony while his foolish attempts to be boyish in order to convince everyone that he was not too old to get married have been pathetic at times. However, praise be, the thing is over and the engagement is announced and they are to get married June 21, 1927.

The Girls School will be pretty well shot although they are getting someone to take Miss McHenry's place and Miss Pomeroy's place. Miss Young's successor has not been named, however, nor has Miss Chase's, the latter came out for women's evangelistic work and has just been working in the school until she learned the language. She is pulling out this year and going into her own work. The new principal, Miss Doolittle, has her work cut out for her. I can see, but then it may not be hard for there may not be a school at all next year.

The last prospect is not impossible in view of recent events. In a nutshell the Persian Ministry of Education sent a notice the other day to all foreign schools that made six demands, about four of which hit our schools between the eyes and hence the thing is plainly directed against the Mission Schools, and probably our College in particular. If I recall the six things they are as follows:

1. Adopt the government program of education in its entirety. This is rather difficult inasmuch as there is not stable government program and it is changed everytime the Minister of Ed. changes, which has been 4 times since we arrived in Persia. At present the program is in a state of flux and Dr. Jordan was invited sometime ago to consult with the Minister about the new program, but the time of the conference was never set and meantime comes this notice signed by him.
2. The principal, teachers, and students should answer any questions and all questions put them by school inspectors in a manner that is satisfactory to the inspectors. I believe we have always done that so that there is no danger in that one by itself.
3. The Moslem law and religion should be taught to all Moslem students. The books prescribed are puerile, vile, antiquated and useless educationally even in Persia. I do not see how we can teach them unless they are revised so thoroughly that I doubt whether the Persians would think it worth while to use them in their expurgated form. As a matter of fact very few of the Persians know what is in the contents of these books and care much less. I think the Ministry would be satisfied if we were to say that we taught these books and did nothing more about them. I do not believe that they intend that we should teach the books, only that we should say we would and thus close the mouths of the religious and political opponents of the Ministry of Ed.
4. The teaching of any religion, except the Moslem religion, to Moslem students is strictly forbidden. Of course this is aimed at the teaching of the Bible and if it is it probably cannot be complied with because nowhere in the world do I know of a prebyterian college that has agreed to excluding the Bible and the Christian religion from its curriculum for any group of students. As the notice reads it is exclusive, but what the Ministry will say about the actual practise of the law is another thing. There are probably some very large loopholes, but that will have to be determined later.

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inquiry

5. The propagation of any religion or doctrine that is contrary to the religion and civil law of the country is forbidden. This is also very severe, for interpreted literally it would mean that we could not even teach to Christian students the Christian religion, but the civil law and practise, as well as government proclamations in the past four years have repeatedly asserted that Persia has religious liberty, which has been interpreted that everyone has the right to his own religion except the Moslem, and he must always be a Moslem and has no right to change.
6. All examinations are to be under the direct supervision of the Minister of Education and his agents. ?????????????? Just what that means we cannot tell, and as a matter of fact we do not believe that the Ministry knows just what interpretation they are going to put on any one of these provisions. There are about four, any of which if applied literally will mean that we will "fold up our tents and steal away like Arabs in the night" (that may be a quotation - I do not know).

In other words the battle is on and the next year will probably determine a status as a school in Persia for a number of years to come. We do not believe that the above notice represents an educational policy, although many different reasons are attributed all are agreed that the motif is political and neither educational nor religious. It may be international politics, it may be local, and it may be personal. The man who signed the article has a son in the American College, while the Prime Minister has two sons with us, and hence it is only natural that we should smell a political rat somewhere.

One of the school inspectors visited us the other morning immediately after the notice was sent around and although he talked big yet he did not talk nearly as big as the announcement read, and he left no doubt in our minds that they were expecting us to come sound and make terms that would suit both ourselves and the Ministry. Politically the Persian Government cannot do anything until this capitulations treaty becomes void and that will not be for another year but no one of us is anxious to rely on that treaty, we would rather win the case on our merits.

Anyhow life has been getting a little too dull recently and it is good to snap out of it again. How prosaic school teaching is at home compared to this wrestling with "principalities and powers". I have thought many times recently how I expected Christ to overcome them all and I am sure that he will not fail after twenty centuries. We may have to turn a right about face in all that we have thought and dreamed about Christian education for Persia, we may have to abandon education altogether for awhile, as a means, - at any rate we ~~it~~ should be prepared for a good shaking up in the next year or two and a restatement of values in the Christian life and message.

I had almost forgotten the most important news of the week. Mary Elizabeth Hutchison arrived this week, Wednesday morning, 3.30 a.m. to be exact. She arrived with eyes open, pulled a long face and a yell at the prospect and has done her best to keep her eyes shut ever since.

She was one inch shorter than Walter Craig being  $20\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, but was a good pound and a quarter heavier, being  $7\frac{1}{4}$  lbs., and hence she presents a more pleasing appearance than he did when he was two days old. There were no hitches in her arrival, both the nurse and the doctor agree that Harriet had an easier time than Teddy but Teddy and Harriet do not agree on that. As near as we can figure out they gave more dope to Teddy and she did not know what she was in the midst of but in Harriet's case they erred in the other direction and as a result she was conscious all the time and has a very vivid recollection of what Dickens called "Hard Times". Harriet looks well and the baby is well. Teddy has been over to the Hospital everyday, except to-day. But to devote all the columns to Mary Elizabeth. Walter Craig is now 13 lbs. and Teddy and the baby both agree that he has gained a lot this week, at any rate the scales on Monday will tell the tale. He seems to have grown three inches in length according to Teddy's measurements which she took to-day. He gets a lot of fun out of life blowing bubbles and squealing with anyone who will take the time to talk to him and if nobody will accommodate him he obliges by squealing to himself in his bed or in the coak. Several times he has wakened Teddy in the morning by his boisterous playing; he can kick covers not pinned on him off, and those that are pinned he can kick himself out of, so that he seems on a fair way to successful boyhood.

With these few remarks from the proud father close,

With love



P.S. Needless to say most of this letter is not for publication in form whatever, either in Sunday School, Church or elsewhere. I could be run out of this country for much less than appears in these pages, should it fall into the right hands.