

Agnes Scott College,
Decatur, Georgia.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO PARENTS.

OFFICE OF PRESIDENT.

November 4, 1909.

Dear Friends:-

We feel it to be due you and ourselves that we make the following statement concerning the sickness at Agnes Scott, of which I presume you have heard through your daughter.

We have had up to this date seven (7) cases of typhoid fever. All of these have been removed to their homes. Apparently the disease is of a mild type. There are several suspicious cases in the Infirmary which we are watching very closely. Otherwise the health of the student body is good. We have not a single case of any other contagious disease. This is a plain statement of facts which I feel it to be my duty to lay before you with all candor.

As soon as the first case developed we began to look carefully for the cause. We have had our drinking water examined by the State Board of Health and it has been pronounced thoroughly sanitary. Notwithstanding this we have changed the source of our drinking water supply. Our milk supply was also examined and pronounced sanitary. We have also had an officer of the same Board visit Agnes Scott and make a complete examination of our dormitories, class rooms, kitchen, food supply and everything connected with our premises. The only thing which he found to criticise in any way whatever was the possibility of danger from flies. We find, however, that we have not as many flies as we have had in former years when we had no sickness; and besides, the servants who would be most exposed on the fly theory are perfectly well. However, we are taking vigorous measures to get rid of all flies, and the Doctor now assures me that we have eliminated that danger, if it was a danger. We have, therefore, failed to find any local cause whatever

of infection. We are having the best medical talent in Atlanta to look after the situation.

You will desire to know what we propose to do to eliminate danger of future infection. I have just given orders to have this plan put in effect, namely:- To allow nothing to go to the table except cooked food: To have all drinking water sterilized by boiling; To forbid all connected with the institution to drink or eat elsewhere than the College, and to observe all hygienic rules. As you know typhoid enters the system by the mouth only. It seems to us that the plan we have adopted will effectually prevent any future danger. Of course if there are any here who have already been infected it will show itself, but I believe we can eliminate all possibility of the disease affecting those who are at this time free from the germ.

Agnes Scott has had a remarkable health record. Never before in the twenty (20) years of its history have we had a case of typhoid to originate here so far as we have been able to ascertain. I am now told by physicians that the proportion of sickness here to our total number of boarding students (195) is by no means surprising. I beg to assure you that we are doing everything known to medical science to clear up the situation and to eliminate as far as possible all danger. I do not believe there is any cause for alarm, and I hope you will find it consistent with your duty to your children to allow them to remain until the situation develops further, of which I will inform you.

You are doubtless aware that sickness in the country is not by any means confined to any one locality. It seems to be general all over the land, and I really believe that we have less of it here than is to be found in many other places.

I shall be glad to give you any information you may wish, and you may rest assured that I will not fail to put you in possession of facts as they develop. Should your daughter be sick I will inform you at once by wire.

Very truly yours,
F. H. GAINES, Pres.