

No 11

Diary of Mirza Ahmad Schrah

Beginning November 10th. 1913

Ending " 16th 1913

Port Said, Egypt

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Dear friends!

The first glimpse that we had from the Master this morning was from the upper porch of the hotel. He was walking in the street followed by Ahmad Yagdi. All around him there was a motley crowd of Arabs - a European may say with more or less the same clothes - but they all looked upon him with an eye of reverence and adoration - as though he is ^{exceptional} coming from another world, an individual descended from the Court of divine Majesty. As he walked on ~~secretly~~ they made way for him and then advanced with the spirit of respect to kiss his hand or touch the hem of his garment. He walked through their dirty, evil-smelling streets and men, women and children came out of their unclean quarters and as he passed by ~~them~~ he smiled at them and they paid him the divine homage of love and worship. These simple Arabs do not know him - as the Bahais assume to know him and discuss his title and position pro and con - but they behold in him the Shining of the Spirit of God, they love him because he loves them, knows their needs, inquires about their conditions, supplies their spiritual and material requirements and holds aloft before their eyes the burning torch of true religion of Charity and the waving flag of moral rectitude. He appeals to their sense of justice and reason and leads them in his matchless way toward the radiant heights of brotherhood.

It was about nine o'clock when the Zoroastrian pilgrims with a few others from Bagdad wended their way toward Abnash Yazd's home to meet the Beloved. Tea was served and he came out of his room and greeted them. For a few minutes he was silent. Then he asked them to speak to him. "Tell me" he said "is Swatna of India better or that of Arabia?" One of the Zoroastrians who loves his native country very much came out earnestly with the answer. "Persia's climate is the best." The Master laughed. He could read in the eager eyes of our brother this thought "I want to see Persia great and glorious, civilized and prosperous, advancing steadily in modern culture and science," and henceforth satisfied his longing by the following remarks:-

Persia will become luminous. Her future grandeur shall by far eclipse her past ^{recorded} glory. How pure is the climate of the mountains of Yazd! Rest ye assured that Persia shall progress. On this account have the utmost confidence. God has brightened Persia. The example of Persia is like unto a garden which has been taken out of the cultivating hand of the gardener. The wild animals have run through its pastures, its meadows are turned upside down, its trees are leafless, its plants are dried and its tender, fragrant flowers trod under foot, to such an extent that whereas formerly it was a rose-garden it has now become a thorny patch. But when the real gardener appears he takes the garden again under his care and arrange it better than

its former condition. Whereas before it was a dumping ground for all kinds of refuse, the wise gardener clears it and causes the growth of roses and hyacinths and plants fruitful trees. Lestent to me. Do not heed the deliful prophecies of the malecontents. Persia will progress marvellously. God has opened every door before the faces of the Persians. He has unlocked before them the doors of heaven as well as the doors of the earth. I will illustrate this by the following example and the rest will become plain to you. In this world there is no soil as unproductive as the soil of Mecca. It is a desert of sand, black, bare mountains and barren sahara. There are no springs in Mecca. They bring in their drinking water from a very remote place. Now because this desert of shifting sand, these fearfully shaped dried mountains, the extremely hot climate became the birthplace of His Holiness Mahomed, the eyes of the Islamic world have turned toward it. Nearly three hundred thousands souls go yearly on a pilgrimage to Mecca to kiss the black sacred stone. Now from this you can judge what will be the future of Persia which is the birthplace of the Blessed Perfection, Baka-o-llah. Its climate is delightful, its soil is rich, its waters salubrious, its gardens charming, its meadows green and its topography varied. Reflect upon this and many mysteries will be revealed unto you.

One of our believers who was present mentioned that several hundred of Hajis had returned from their pilgrimage to Mecca but on their way they were robbed by the Nomads. The Master said

the following story in this connection:— About 38 yrs ago a ~~party~~ ^{party} of Persians who were natives of Yazd came to Acca. On their way they were stripped clean from all their possessions. Their steamer accidentally anchored at the bay of Acca and they came on shore. They did not know that such people as Bahais are living in the town. They inquired from the inhabitants 'Are there any Persians in Acca?' They answered 'yes'. A guide brought them to me. They were in a pitiful state. As soon as their eyes fell upon me, they started to cry. They said 'We ^{are} ~~have~~ been in Medina, the Arabs accused us unjustly with something we had never committed. Then they attacked all the Persians, beating us with their swords and clubs, killing six of us and taking hold of our belongings. We were fallen on the ground entirely unconscious. When we came to ourselves, the government officials saved us from the fury of the mob. There were many cuts and wounds in our bodies, but there were neither doctors nor medicine and nature had to lend its healing ointment. When news was received from Constantinople that we ^{were} ~~are~~ innocent they let us go. We have begged all along our way for our sustenance till we have now reached here. We are now at the end of our ~~rope~~ ^{rope} and are destitute of everything. When we reached at this port we thought we disembark, perchance, we may find some of our compatriots who will be willing to assist us. Here we stand in your presence, hungry and naked and

needy. you may deal with us according to your
 justice, sympathy and humanity. At least you
 may give us one turman (\$1) to carry us to
 Beirut. We plead for your mercy.' Thus they
 spoke and I realized they are telling ~~me~~ the
 truth. In short I prepared for them the means
 of their journey as far as their home - Persia.
 As their steamer was going to anchor one
 day in the port, I invited them to stay over for
 lunch and dinner and ordered tea to be
 served ~~to them~~. When they partook of the Pilau
 and other dishes prepared for them and before
 their departure one of them asked: 'Who are you
 and why are you living in this most desolate
 spot?' 'I answered. 'We are prisoners in
 this barrack town of Acre.' 'Prisoners! I
 can't believe it! Why? What for?' 'Because
 we are Bahais, they have brought us here
 and incarcerated us.' They were ~~very~~ asto-
 nished. Then one of them said. 'No indeed!
 whosoever tells us that you are Bahais
 commits an unpardonable sin. You are
 very good people. You are good Musulmans.
 They have told us that the Bahais are very
 bad people. You are the angels of heaven.
 You have treated us with such generosity
 and hospitality, not even equalled by a
 Maham-madans. I do not accept this. You
 are joking with us.' I answered 'My
 friends! Listen to me. We are not joking
 with you. We are telling you the ~~same~~
 truth. We are Bahais. We are prisoners.
 Hearken and I will tell you why we
 are here.' They became silent and then

I told them the history of the Cause, the principles
 and the events leading to our incarceration.
 They were very much impressed and left
 the town with a happy, yet no doubt
 a little incredulous about our being Bahais.
 Here the Beloved had a good hearty laugh
 and continued: "you must make the
 people understand the aims and teachings
 and behests of the Blessed Perfection, inform
 them to what Cause it has beckoned
 their attention, how it commands us to
 associate with all, to what height of
 purity, abstraction, sanctity, morality,
 behaviour and deeds the hath summoned
 us. Then Persia will become like unto a
 rose garden. If the believers of God like
 and act in accord with the commands
 and exhortations of the Blessed Perfection in
 a short time Persia will advance extra-
 ordinarily. I hope you will make India
 a rose garden - thus each one of you may
 become a fruitful tree, a brilliant star
 and a spiritual sign of the Kingdom of
 Abha. May you find a new severance,
 a new joy and fragrance and a new hope
 and courage. Do those Zoroastrians
 who have migrated to India centuries
 ago desire to return to their native land?
 You tell them that 'we declare unto you that
 that the glories of Persia will become in
 the future thousandfold. If you don't believe
 in our declaration make a note of it
 in a book that a day is soon coming
 when Persia shall reach the highest

zenith of glory, it will be built and become very prosperous. All the ancient cities of Persia will be built up and the fame of Persia and the Persians shall be spread over all the regions of the world and the greatness of the Persian civilization will cover the East and the West."

Then the Zoroastrian man went into his Presence when we left. The Beloved felt well. For the last two weeks all the letters have been kept away from him so that he may have a complete rest.

Later on three Arabs received permission to go into his Presence and he gave them a detailed explanation about "sacrifice". The feast of Beiram is the great Mohamadan feast in which everyone who is able kills a lamb or sheep, and distributes its meat amongst the poor. The outer sacrifice of the sheep is a symbol of the inner sacrifice. One must sacrifice his life, his identity, his being in the path of God. This is a spiritual sacrifice. We must strive to attain to this station," As some of the Zoroastrian Babais were present he pointed them to our Arab visitors and told them how through the Power of God these men who have never believed in Christ, the Word of God, Moses - the Interpreter of God, Ibrahim the friend of God and Mahamad - the prophet God have become believers in all these messengers of the Divine. That is why it is written in the Koran 'Thou dost not guide them but God guide them'." When they left they kissed the hem of his garment and his hands. I was much moved by this real scene of earnest devotion.

Then he called Mrs and Doctor Getsinger into his Presence. To Doctor Getsinger he said:—

"Greater love has man for no one than I have demonstrated toward thee. Consider that after my departure from America I have send for thee and am sending both of you to India to spread the Cause of God. Send to me always cheerful and happy news. The more you have love and genuine consideration for each other the happier is the heart of Abdul Baha. Be as one soul in two bodies. Then you shall be able to render more effective service to the Cause and will be loved and honored by all the people. This is thy first and most important work. Look at me! I do not listen to sickness. I do not listen to sleeplessness. I do not listen to fatigue. I do not listen to anything. I work and strive. I toil and labor. Both of you must walk in my footsteps and seek my good-pleasure and diffuse the fragrances of the Kingdom of Abha. This is the path."

To Luva he talked with great animation, his strong voice at times reaching to a high pitch. He was speaking with a glowing conviction and divine authority. The room was filled with the inspirational atmosphere of his spiritual utterance. I will try to preserve here only a few notes out of rushing torrent of celestial music breaking upon our ears from the unknown sources which were full of orchestral beauty and mystic charm:—

When thou dost enter a city in India associate with the people in the beginning as a tourist, as a person interested in India

and a love of Indian people and institutions. Meet all those who come to see thee or thou callest on them with sympathy and do not in the least prejudice them. Thou must reconcile together the adherents of various religions and the votaries of different creeds with the solvent alchemy of love and infuse amongst them Bahai freedom of conscience and solidarity. If some one ask thee 'who art thou and why hast thou come to India?' Answer. 'I am a teacher of the Bahai Cause. His Holiness Baha-Allah has commanded the Bahais to consort with all the religions and nations with the utmost concord and harmony. In our estimation mankind are the children of God and as the children of the Almighty it is enjoined upon us to love one another and co-operate with each other. The past century of prejudice and bigotry has passed; the cycle of the oneness of the world of humanity is being ushered upon us. Then speak to them with great power and penetration and cause them to soar ^{to the} divine height of spiritual brotherhood and divine Unity.

When thou arrivest in the city of Calcutta and happen to meet the Editor of _____ say to him: - Today a most glorious Sun hath dawned from the horizon of Persia. Even the blind ones have felt the penetration of its heat and rays but you are submerged in the sea of your own thoughts. We who have been living in the furthestmost part of the globe have beheld the rays of this world-illuminating Sun and are illumined thereby. How is it that you are yet sleep upon the bed of negligence

This is the same Sun which dawned 1300 yrs ago from the horizon of the Arabian Peninsula but now it has appeared with greater potency from the horizon of your country and its heat ere long shall cover the whole earth. Now is the time of your redemption! Now is the period of your salvation. If ye are blind, become seeing. If ye are deaf become hearing. If ye are mute, unloose your tongues. If ye are lame, walk ye erect. If ye are dead, be resuscitated. If ye are negligent become ye mindful. The Sun of Reality hath arisen from the horizon of your country. ^{Rejoice ye O ye Ommah!} The breeze of Bistamal is wafting from the direction of your native land, be ye stirred! The nightingale of significances is singing in the rose-garden of your home, hearken to its melodious songs. This Movement hath deeply affected the American and European world and hath made us the real friends of Persia. Know ye this of a certainty that the East never conquer the West through the power of material civilization but it can accomplish this as it has done in former ages through the Power of divine Religion. Now Persia is a position to complete the spiritual victory of mankind through the Potency of the Universal Religion of God. What a marvellous Sun is this! What a stupendous movement is this! Now the world and its inhabitants are being consciously or unconsciously stirred and moved by its soul-satisfying effect!

O ye Persians! The Sun of Righteousness hath arisen with healing in its wings! Are ye not aware of it that your country is the dawning-place of this Glorious Orb. The first rays

of which is the owner of the world of humanity, its second ray is love for all mankind, its third ray is universal Peace, its fourth ray is the correspondence of science with religion, its fifth ray is Universal religion, universal language, universal education etc etc. Speak in meetings and assemblages with a spiritual power. The Holy Spirit shall inspire thee. Explain the principles of Baha - ollah. Make them understood by all the people. Cry out at the top of thy voice.

Furthermore say to the Editor: 'Despotism ruined Persia. Despotism withered away the genius of Persia. Despotism extorted the incomes of the people unjustly. Despotism made the inhabitants of Persia poor and destitute. Despotism hastened into the arena of martyrdom 20,000 Bahais. Despotism played a havoc upon the resources of Persia. Despotism brought to the verge of starvation the ancient families of Persia. Despotism cast ashes of gloom and despair on the intelligence of the Persians. Despotism kept the people in a state of ignorance and illiteracy. But when the Persians upraised the banner of Constitution every one became hopeful expecting Persia through the beneficent influence of a democratic government will loom large in the family of the living and progressive nations and will enter upon an era of upward prosperity and internal development. However instead of uniting all their forces together they formed various political parties with conflicting policies save to work against each other and thus heap greater disasters upon the

already weakened and disorganized state. Consequently we observe that even Constitution upon which the hope of every one ^{was} suspended, did not yield the desired results. Yes, Constitution would have saved Persia, were these political parties united upon a broad, national, constructive platform; therefore the lack of such a common ground made confusion more confounded. Notwithstanding these mighty events the Persians are yet sleep but there are certain impelling forces which are working for their final awakening."

In the afternoon again we were in his Presence. He was in a happy frame of mind and joked with Doctor Gettings. He shed the sunshine of joy and beatitude. Then he ordered grapes to be brought to us which he divided it amongst us with his holy hand. We stayed with him about 2 hours; many stories were told and light subjects discussed. When we left him we knew—he is steadily improving in his health. Coming out of his presence we walked toward the store of Ahmad Yazdi and there met many of the friends. His store is the rendez-vous for all the believers who desire to meet each other. A telegram is sent that Khosro may come from Ramh to attend to cooking and I have no doubt he will start with the very first train. He is so happy in the service of the Beloved and whenever he is away from Him, he is grieved and sad. Other pilgrims are on their way and before long many people shall arise to drink from the fountain's head of truth. The Master loves them most affectionately.