

No 19.

Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Beginning March 1. St 1914

Ending March 14th 1914

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria.

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Words of O. B. to me

Bahai Nest

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria

March 1st 1914

Dear friends!

One of the peculiarities of man is ^{his} the desire to know what others are doing. This ^{knowledge} will enlarge the circle of his sympathy and encourages him to do his work with greater zeal and enthusiasm. The simple knowledge that our dear brothers and sisters in different parts of the world are serving faithfully the Cause which we have so much at heart is a great incitement and stimulation to us no matter where we are living. For this reason I would like to quote in this letter a few extracts from the letters of Mrs Stannard and Mrs Getsinger who are carrying a wonderful work of spiritual awakening in India. Mrs Stannard writes:—"I am very good friends with all the Brahms Somaj people and they are deeply spiritual. The leaders, the Sen family are descendants of Keshkub Chander Sen, a greatly illumined man and founder, co-evil

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with Bahai Revelation! I am hoping great things through
Brahmo Somaj and Theistic channels for the spreading of
the Bahai Unification Principles Please tell dear
Abdul Baha that Lua Getsinger has given a good lecture
to the Theosophists (Bombay) here - all Parsees nearly
and that when she had finished the President got
up and spoke so beautifully about the wonderful
revelation of Baha-Allah, and then imagine our
happiness when he read aloud some of the Hidden
Words, saying, 'How beautiful! What divine thoughts!
Let us listen to the glorious Baha-Allah!' Really he
spoke like one quite overjoyed! He then told the
audience, which was a large one, that he had followed
all Abdul Baha's talks and works as told in the
Christian Commonwealth. We are likely to come ^{also} as
a great happiness to many seekers in the Theosophical
movement here. I shall be lecturing to
the Theosophical Society tomorrow on the mission
of religion on earth, carrying on from Mrs Lua
Getsinger's subject 'The Messengers of God' If

the Master comes next year to India he will turn the tide towards the right path and influence large numbers I am sure. This is written many days before the mail goes to inform you that I am off to Madras for a week or ten days. Gopaul Chetty, editor of New Reformer keeps begging me to come and says so many people want to welcome me from the Brahm Samaj. I believe he himself is a good Bahai for he is always publishing our news and in the coming number of Magazine he has reproduced, at my request, Mr Andre's excellent Edinburgh lecture on Bahai Teachings. Of his own accord he is also putting in my address to the Theists. Now I was just off to Calcutta but when his letter came this morning I suddenly decided that I would go across to Madras^{and} then up to Calcutta We are ready now I feel to touch certain centers before renewing operations after rainy season At my lecture to the Theosophists on the mission of Religions I took pains to make it plain that all Founders of religions and Baha-allah especially came to cause brotherhood and peace and keep people

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in order. There were two very strange looking men who sat close to the door to hear my lecture. They were Englishmen. As soon as I had finished they left. I made my lecture as comprehensive as I could showing religious history in its universal sweep. They both looked very interested, so I hope they came for their souls' good if nothing else."

Mrs Getsinger has been to Surat where she has delivered several lectures and interested many people. Dr Bahram and N. R. Nabil of the said city have done wonderful work of preparation and the Master recalling how he met the former on his first visit to London has already praised him in the meetings of the believers and Pilgrims. Now it seems Mrs Getsinger is going another time to Surat. She writes: "On account of these appointments arranged by Dr Bahram I am going to Surat instead of ^{to} Madras with Mrs Stannard. From there I hope to go to Lucknow and Dehli. Mrs Stannard will do these other places and the Bahai cry will be raised from

all parts of India at once I was deeply touched
over the cablegram of the Master inquiring so lovingly
about my health I beg the Master to stren-
gthen me if he wishes me to work and serve him
in the glorious Cause. Otherwise I only hope to go on
speaking and teaching until I die in his Path, uphol-
ding the Standard of the Covenant. This would please
me more than anything should it be his will and
wish. Mrs Stannard works hard and is
very deserving. I beg the Master to bless and strengthen
her "

The Bombay Chronicle February 7th publishes a
long article on the "tenets of Bahaism," "Lectures in
Bombay" and then goes on to explain the contents of
^{these} lectures delivered by Mrs Stannard and Mrs Gutzinger
at the Persian Hall. It says: "Elucidations upon
tenets of the faith as these touch the religious and
humanitarian standpoint may be summarised as
declaring the essential unity of all religions and the
oneness of humanity. . . . Brotherhood among the

Bahai, we are told, is regarded as absolutely indispensable,
 irrespective of race, color or religion and there must be
 no pretentious mental attitude, but a real and living
 philosophy of life. All Moslems, Christians, Jews or
 Zoroastrian Bahais should fraternize as one family, for
 they practice the two great Bahai ideals of unity and
 love The world should consider great re-
 ligious founders as light-bearers and what they teach
 should be the object of worship Religions degenerate
 because it is the invariable tendency in humanity to
 forget principles enunciated by the Founders and
 worship the material or historic aspect neglecting the
 light intended to be used. Light being one, it stands
 for the analogy of truth and all religions are woven
 round identically similar principles Since life may
 be symbolized as a tree Baha-allah declared, humanity
 to be leaves, ^{flowers and} fruits thereof, and in time humanity
 will consider it as rationally inconceivable to fight^{2nd}
 kill one another as it would be for the leaves and
 branches of a tree to quarrel with its blossoms and fruits . . .

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All morning the Beloved was very busy receiving people and answering their questions and attending to their needs.

The President of the railroad and a number of other officials called on him and had interviews with him.

In the afternoon there was a very large meeting held in the large, central reception room of the home of the Beloved. The feast was given by Aga Hossein Haji, the brother of Ahmad Yazdi. All the believers and Pilgrims were sitting on chairs around the room, Mr and Mrs Holback and Mrs Hoagg were also present. While tea was dispensed a door was opened and the Master, his face shining with health and happiness entered the room. Every one was on his feet and as he sat, a deep, spiritual silence fell over all and the throbbing vibrations of ethereal feelings floated over the gathering. The hearts were praying, ^{while eyes} the gazes were turned toward him, ^{and all} the attentions were centered upon him. There was such silence, such deep, unfathomable ^{silence} springing from the ^{the} Deep of the ocean of Being. Speech is natural, silence is supernatural. Speech is temporal,

Silence is spiritual. Speech is a river, silence is the sea. During those few moments of silence everyone felt very near to Abdell Bala. Then he called me to himself and asked me to go and bring a copy of the Washington Star containing the article on the departure of Mirza Abdul Haq. I knew he was going to speak in my absence, so I looked around to see whether Mirza Mahmoud was here to write down his words but I remembered ^{that} he accompanied ^{in the morning} the newly arrived Pilgrims to Acca and the visit of the Holy Tomb. However I had no other alternative but to go, but I ran all the way up the mountain and return. It was a hot day, and when I entered the room I was breathing ^{hard and} beads of perspirations falling from my forehead. Before my entrance I caught these words: "How the believers of God have been self-sacrificing!" Then after giving him the paper, and took a seat near the doorway, he continued: "With what joy and transport they hastened toward the arena of martyrdom! With what attraction they gave

up their lives in the path of the Blessed Perfection! ⁹ With what enrapturement they have associated with the people! They were always surrounded with danger, and impending peril. They rested not for one moment. Their nights were spent with the apprehension that tomorrow ^{might} be their last day. Their days were passed with the dread that they ^{would} shall not see another night. They did not drink one drop of water with the feeling of security. ^{Friend}

Let us read and remember the incidents of the lives of these heroic martyrs, bring before our eyes the glorious records of their deeds, print upon the Tablets of the hearts, their glowing self-convincing utterances; - so that we may become inspired with the same severance, impelled by the same detachment, release ourselves from every thought and mention and devote our time to the service of the Glorious One! Then we will observe the results of such a determination. Then we will see this dark dungeon changed into a realm of light. Then our natural emotions will be transformed into spiritual susceptibilities. Then the fire of holy

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longing will consume the harvest of self-consciousness
and self-love. Baha-Allah in one of his poems says: 'The
mark of ^{the} chain is yet visible ^{on} my neck and the impress
of the fetter can be seen around my ankles.' We must
ever remind ourselves of these events and be aware and
thoughtful. If these wonderful, tragic lives are not reviewed
from time to time their significance and spiritual
import will be lost sight of. We must read and pen-
der over the details of the lives of these martyrs. The
martyrs of Yazd, Ershakan, Teheran, Mazandaran, Reyrez,
Lanjan, Tabriz testified with their own blood that this
Cause is revealed on the part of God. From the life of
each martyr we may learn the secret of firmness and
self-sacrifice and then imitate him. If we are not
fortunate to run with them shoulder to shoulder toward
the arena of martyrdom, we can at least be their
humble followers. Thus we may discover the key
to their spiritual state, ^{to} their severance, their altrea-
tion, their exhilaration and their ^{rapture} ~~happiness~~. How
they were ever soaring with the wings of renunciation

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towards the highest apex of sanctity.

Then he went on relating a long, fascinating story of his own rich life while in Bagdad and how while still very young he spoke about the Cause in a meeting of the Ulama.

Our dear brother from Kerman left this evening for his own native land. He had a long, private interview with the Beloved in the morning and was ^{extremely} happy when he came out of His Presence. It will probably take him four months before he reaches Kerman, as he is going to stay a few days in each city to meet the friends and cheer their hearts with the recital of his heavenly experiences in the Holyland. From here he goes to Port Said, then India, then Persian Gulf, then starts his slow journey homeward over mountains and deserts stepping here and there to teach the Cause of the Kingdom. His love and devotion for the Beloved was really extraordinary, ready at every moment to shed his blood in his path. May God protect him throughout his long journey.