

Bahai Fest

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Mount Carmel Haifa, Syria

March 20th 1914

Dear friends,

Tomorrow will be our new year's day and for the last few days the Pilgrims have been reminding each other of the glorious privilege to be on Mount Carmel at such a time and receive a share from the Bestowals of the Almighty. This morning the steamer from Port Said brought with it ~~itself~~ Ahmad Yazdi, Mohamad Yazdi and Mirza Ali Akbar Rafsanjani who has been spending nearly 50 days in Stuttgart, teaching the Cause. Of course his preliminary report of the state of the Bahais in Germany was most glowing and pleased the Beloved very much. Many, many ^{meetings} were held there during his stay and many new souls were attracted. ^{Consul} Mrs and Miss Schwarz are serving the Cause with real devotion and love and their activities are becoming more and more centralized in this movement. Almost daily meetings have been held, speeches ^{delivered} and the public interest waxing more and more.

Then the Beloved started to speak about the wonderful faith and staunch love of the German believers. "In reality" he said "they are worthy to be called the sons and daughters of the Kingdom. They are the fragrant roses of the Paradise of Abha. They are ever ready to sacrifice everything in the path of the believers of God. They have understood the reality of this Cause, grasped its spiritual significance and realized more than anything else its universal aspect." He went on for more than 15 minutes speaking now of this believer, now of that, saying that at the Divine Threshold he is praying for all of them. Then he spoke very enthusiastically about the family of Consul Schwarz and how they are set aglow with the fire of the Love of God. "Miss Olly Schwarz, Farzede Khatoon is the 'embodiment of lights'. Although still young she speaks about the Cause with eloquence and sincerity. She loves this Cause passionately," he said at the close of his tribute to this noble, truly Bahai family.

Miss Rosenberg had asked from London whether it is allowable to pay the travelling expenses of a Bahai teacher who leaves his home and goes into another city to lecture on the Movement, especially at the invitation of the Bahais. The Beloved spoke as follows on this question:— "A teacher must never ask for money for any of his personal needs but the believers must by themselves in a voluntary spirit provide him with his travelling expenses etc, especially when he cannot pay for them. This must be done very quietly without any public announcement. It may be done either by the Committee, or one or a few individuals. Generally whenever the question of money comes up and arguments of a financial nature are vehemently presented, ^{in many cases} the people lose their spiritual fragrance. Therefore all the friends must dispatch the financial obligations of the Cause with the utmost joy and spirituality. Money questions must never become too prominent in any Bahai community, — ^{as they would put at the} thus driving away the spiritual mission of the Cause, i.e., to awaken the

souls from sleep, to vivify them with the Breath of heavenly civilization and to guide them into the Regnum of Reality. The Bahais must live in accord with the exhortations of Christ when he says: "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin: Wherefore, if God so clotheth the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore, take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or whereunto shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The bonds of co-operation and mutual assistance bind all the Bahais together and ^{they} are ever ready to sacrifice their lives for each other's sake. Therefore they must help each other not by compulsion but by voluntary contributions. In

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Persia the teachers are assisted in many ways, ^{and} in the majority of cases all their travelling expenses are paid but without any publicity."

What I know on this subject ^{have} and heard from the lips of many teachers and believers who come from every part of the East to meet the Beloved is this: There are many assemblies - Teheran, ^{and} Ashkabad for instance, which for the last several years have been sending teachers to various countries of the Orient and paying not only their travelling expenses but every thing ^{else}. Ashkabad alone has maintained four active teachers in the field, the yearly expenses of each amounting to hundreds of Dollars. And let it be understood that these friends are not wealthy and beside this one item of expense they have many other ^{expenses for} outlays or expenditures, such as the upkeep of Mashrekul Azhar, ^{Bahai} school etc etc. All these things are done without the blowing of any horn or the fanfare of publicity. In such manner the Bahais of the Orient attend to these duties without any apparent exertion ^{on} their parts.

During the day several Arabs called on the Beloved and in turn he payed them the visit. He went out three times during the day and each time I watched his firm steps and majestic bearing.

The marriage of our dear brother Mirza Ali Akbar of Russia to the daughter of Hossein Aga is settled for after-tomorrow and thus everybody is congratulating him. He has not seen his bride, in fact nobody has seen her. Mrs Hoagg tells me she is a charming girl but that is all. Those who are advanced in their ideas of social equality think the custom of oriental marriages is the most strange and inexplicable! How a couple who have never seen each other or talked to each other, even one word consent to be united together all through their lives is incomprehensible to them!

In the evening the Beloved gave a talk on one of the Bahai episodes in Bagdad, how a governor who was fallen into disgrace and prison was released through the prayers of Baha-Allah. Then he said: - "The German believers are loyal. They are attracted and sincere! How wonderfully significant it is that Mirza Ali Akbar, a Persian, goes to Stuttgart and receives so much honor and so many meetings are prepared for him! This is no other than through the Power of Baha-Allah."