

Tiberias, Sea of Galilee
 Syria

May 24th 1914

Dear friends!

Before giving you portions of the last two interesting letters of Mrs Stannard regarding her work in India, I would like to quote a significant passage from the Gospel of Buddha by Dr Paul Carus concerning the future Manifestation. It is on the page 217, a clear, definite prophecy about the coming of another Buddha. In the following passage he converses with his beloved disciple Ānanda :-

"Why should I preserve this body of flesh, when the body of the excellent law will endure? I am resolved; having accomplished my purpose and attended to the work set me, I look for ~~rest~~ This is the one thing needed. For a long time Ānanda, have you been very near to me by thoughts, and acts of such love as never varies and is beyond all measure. You have done well, Ānanda! Be earnest in effort"

"And Ānanda, suppressing his tears, said to the Blessed one: 'Who shall teach us when thou art gone?'

And the Blessed One replied: "I am not the first Buddha, ~~who~~ came upon earth, nor shall I be the last India

time another Buddha will arise in the world, a Holy One, a supremely enlightened One, endowed with wisdom in conduct, auspicious, Knowing the universe, an incomparable leader of men, a Master of angels and mortals. He will reveal to you the same eternal truths which I have taught you. He will preach his religion, glorious in its origin, glorious at the climax, and glorious at the goal, in the spirit and in the letter. He will proclaim a religious life, wholly perfect and pure; such as I now proclaim. His disciples will number many thousands, while mine number many hundreds."

In her letter of April 22d Mrs Steward says:- "I am still in the city of Calcutta and this has been possible owing to the unprecedented coolness of the weather and rain showers, never known before. All the papers are commenting on it. I, in my heart am thankful since it has enabled me to carry out many useful works. I have had some further experiences these days of an interesting nature and there have revealed to me the extraordinary spiritual forces working here in Bengal towards the Bahai principles. More and more do I see that the visit of Abdul Baha to this side will be fraught with momentous importance and I am being quietly asked by mature thinkers to establish definite Bahai work here. 'This is the Religion'

for Bengal and progressive India' was exallency said to me the other day and the interest is keen everywhere to learn more and more. The spirit moved me to notice a leaflet which had been sent to me inviting any who care to go to a great inaugural Festival in North Bengal about half way to Darjeeling branching off up country. I had an idea that it must be one of those religious schools of philosophers of which there are many all over India and wrote tentatively that I would come if practicable. To cut a long story short, they sent a respectable man Hindu to see me as they thought I was a "brother". However the town being a Magistrate Center one of the government Dap bungalows was available, so they said all could be managed and sent me a young man - a few photographer and Bioscope operator. He seemed a student of religious philosophy and quiet; so off we went - an afternoon and one night journey! I took my Camera and my Companion with too. Well, it was a typical Hindu affair - enormous crowds - installation of a new "Arram" - or religious colony. The leader a kind of god to the people who prostrate in the dust and roll in frenzy of hypnotic ecstasy at his feet when he is in public. Ten thousand people were fed irrespective of caste or creed. I heard many good things ^{about} this man in trying to establish

unity and progress among his followers. The police were everywhere but the festival had been licensed by government; for two years ago a great plot had been worked up against this brotherhood by the jealous fanatics and calling out "sedition". He and his followers have been persecuted in a small way, like the Bahais, because he has such an enormous influence for good on the village people. Anyhow his Secretaries and personelle were very nice, good men and intelligent. The Inspector of Police and his assistant asked ~~for~~ information about my work and I showed them the articles and illustrated papers etc. Well, for three days I saw many most interesting scenes. We did Cinema photos and the crowds were thousands, always surging around. My visit was regarded as the most remarkable event, some prostrated flat as I walked about. I was favorably impressed by the leader. He struck me as possessing some illumination and very intelligent, another kind of Rabindranath Tagore, the poet. He appears to exercise a purely subjective influence, for he speaks little. When the festival procession was finished we had some time to sit with him in his own hut and I told him something of our work. I had brought him the Illustrated papers which he looked at long and intensely. As he speaks a little English we were able to converse and he

expressed great desire to hear about the Bahai Movement. A friend, a religious harrister coming ⁱⁿ to greet him, when he heard I was the lecturer on the Bahai Movement in Calcutta he greeted me ^{with} excited interest. He said, he heard much and was keen on learning more, felt it to be a most fortunate chance I had come etc and then begged me to deliver a lecture. When the leader heard that many wanted to hear me, he immediately said it would be done and it was arranged for the following night. The scene the next evening was interesting in every way and I wish much you could have seen it. The common was well lighted and a low table had been placed near a large, open ground. The music and festivities of the religious order were stopped for an hour and my ^{audience} was large, at least one thousand. Hundreds seated ^{at the} on the ground and hundreds ranged round, back of me and everywhere; two police Inspectors with lanterns sat close taking down everything and many prominent men of the town came especially. Afterward, the Police asked for certain details. I handed them my long article article in Indian D. News with precepts. They returned it next day with a courteous letter, Hope I was able to do a little mild propaganda in an unexpected direction by this!!

I spoke for one hour and no one moved and all seemed keenly interested. I gave them a very religious address on progress and on the question of women and the wrongness of useless caste claims to superiority etc. Anyhow the next day several good class young Hindu barristers and lawyers called on me for more particulars and one who stayed some time said he was a friend of the Maharajah of Cooh Bahar. He said he would assist the Bahai work materially if something could be established. Another elderly man, a Brahmo Samaj came only to ask this: 'Mrs Stannard! This religion must come here! Tell me, is all this work of interest to stop when you go. What can be to keep up the work?' I told him that we were working in the hope of a visit from Abdul Baha next winter and that beyond a certain point we could do nothing. A Master is needed to accomplish the rest. "..... Here the people are immensely developed religiously and know so well the powers and functions of a divine Leader. Hindus cannot leave India. They say to me, we want a Man - a Master mind we are ready. We are sure one sufficiently great could lead us towards unification..... If Abdul Baha comes all will be easy to arrange and workers come forward..... I have Bengali articles coming out and a Rangoon Bahai

going to Punjab calling to see me I gave him all the papers I could and told him to fire away at Urdu translations so that all will be in readiness. A charming Indian Lady with a magazine here is translating parts of the life of Abdul Baha into Bangali and will publish it later."

In her letter of April 28th she says :- "I shall hope to visit Lahore and Patiala about September if all seems well and favorable to it. I am leaving for Darjeeling. I have been working all the time most usefully here. The spirit leads me to one channel after another and I leave Calcutta with no end of people enquiring for my return and hoping I shall make this city my headquarters. All is in the hands of God. I never dreamt so much would open here, for my first two weeks were lost time. This owing to the people I expected a little help from failing me and all were busy in the colleges. Now all the channels are open to my work. The last proof of the way the spirit works has come through that visit I made into the country to that Hindu festival. Through that trip I came into contact with quite another stream and strange to say it brought my name back to a gentleman who was on the first P. and O. steamer I ever boarded to come to India. He remembered some

talks we had on board when I had not a glimmer of recollec-
 tion of him. Well, he did not rest till he found out my address
 as he had read of the Bahai Movement. He is a Moslem, young
 man in good government position here and says he will do
 anything in his power to facilitate propaganda work. He will
 get me to meet all the best Moslems. I gave a
 drawing room lecture to some friends of the Jewish man I
 went that trip with. There I met many well to do Jews,
 and some clever Jewish and Indian ladies and greatly
 interested all. A Jewish gentleman - great student of religions
 has come to see me; so now I have these two doors
 just opened which will be available on my return.
 I hope in Darjeeling to be able to do a little work, as there is
 quite a different class. If the Master does not come to
 India by next January I shall finish up here in
 March and leave the country as it will be too difficult
 to carry on the work without seeing him. Here
 the work makes it worth while - it is grateful work.
 In Cairo I was broken on the wheel for nothing. . . .
 Indeed the power of the spirit now in Bengal is little
 short of astounding. God is working here for gather-
 ing a great harvest. I can hardly utter a word

without finding an echo in some mind and heart. . . .
 Somehow I feel sure he is coming here next winter. . . .
 I have had a remarkable letter from one of the leading
 pleaders of that country town I visited. I lent him the
 New Reformer, the Splendor of God and the Messenger.
 He concludes his letter thus:- "I have been very much im-
 pressed with the qualities of your mind and heart and
 without being unduly eulogistic I may safely say that
 you will be successful in your mission and wherever
 you go you will attract every fertile mind to your
 side. As for myself I am now a sworn follower of your
 mission and for that I pledge you my honor as a
 gentleman and I emphatically say that I shall
 think it a proud privilege to associate myself with
 the movement. Every well wisher of India should
 see to the unification of religions and a day will come
 when East and West shall meet on the same platform
 and embrace each other as brothers and sisters."

In another letter to Mrs Stanward from Portman High
 Professor of Shindra College, Palhata he says:-
 Dear Madam: I read in the 'Empress of Calcutta' an account
 of the Bahai Movement with illustrations. There was

a photograph of the Master Abdul Baha and also a photo of my friend Mirza Mahmud. I had also great pleasure in seeing your photo there. I learn you intend visiting all the cities of India. When you visit the Panjab, kindly do inform me. The colleges in our province close about the middle of June and reopen in the middle of September. We have to be away for 3 months. I am looking forward with joy to the time of your visit. I hope you like our country. The Indian Hindus are rather diffident in accepting the message of Baha-Allah since the name is Islamic. I wish they were to look to the spirit rather than to letter."

The Beloved has decided to stay for ^{an indefinite} a number of days in Tiberias, for the weather is dry and agrees with him. We were with him for a long time in the morning and spoke on various subjects. In the afternoon several Turkish officers called on him and he entertained them on the veranda of the hotel. Invariably the subject of discussion is America, his speeches in the churches and his admiration of the splendid institutions of that country. He enjoys his quiet days of seclusion. Few people (Bahais) come and thus he is kept free from worry and mental agitation.