

1
Home of Baha-o-llah
Acca. Syria. Nov 25th 1914

Dear friends!

The small circle of friends by whom the Beloved is surrounded in these days are very happy because it seems to me the sun of the Covenant is shining only for them. Like unto the light-adoring moths they flutter around this lamp of God and do not mind if their small, tender wings are burned. While the world is plunging into the dark abyss of self-destruction these sincere lovers of Truth are standing erect and humble before their Lord. They have closed their eyes to all the seeming differences and are ushered under the uni-colored tent of Peace. With their Master in their midst they laugh in the teeth of misfortune and inspire the weak hearts with true courage. They wish happiness for every one and deplore the gross ignorance of mankind. Now that all the doors of correspondence are shut we are thrown back on our own resources and the full enjoyment of the divine Society and companionship of Abdul Baha. For the last 18 days I have been almost with the Beloved and have had innumerable breakfasts, lunches and dinners with him. Every hour has been like a thousand years and I have learned not only from his words but from his deeds how to keep calm and undisturbed under trying circumstances. He has been a hill of strength to the weak and a torch of guidance to those who are in errors. His living, daily ways and manners have been the greatest examples to those who have no helper or guardian. I have preserved as far as I have been able all his utterances portions of which I have shared with you. Whatever he says during these days will be of the greatest spiritual value in the future. Hours he spends in reflection and meditation. No Tablets are being revealed, for we cannot mail them. Although the believers may be anxious to hear the news or receive his words, yet they must realize how impossible it is to attempt doing any one of these ^{tiny} pleasurable duty. They must wait patiently till the roads are opened and the broken rope of correspondence is again sewn together. For the present the Master is feeling very well and is very active by day and by night. We may meet him a hundred times, still we long to see him and touch the hem of his garment and invoke his blessing for all mankind of all races and religions.

This morning the Beloved had his tea alone and we had ours in a room adjoining his. The Vice Consul of France called on him and afterwards other persons from the various walks of life. Many of them have sent their families into the villages skirting the mountains and hearing Abhas Effendi is in the town they come purposely to see him and seek his counsel and advice. About ten o'clock he descended the stairs to go out and looked into my room. "How art thou Mirza Ahmad?" he inquired laughing. "Dost thou not feel lonely here? Any time thou feelest so, have a wrestle withostas Mahamad Ali. It will be a good exercise." I told him I am not equal to it because he is too strong.

On his return we had our lunch together and he retired to his room. At 3 P.M. 2 Orthodox priests in their ecclesiastical robes and very long black beards called on him. The teacher of their school was with them. When they entered the room he arose from his seat and walked to the door to welcome them. They had come as delegates on the part of their community to thank him for the donation he has sent for their poor at this difficult time. The spokesman said: "Master! Thou well knowest our hearts how deeply grateful we are to thee for all that thou hast done for us during the past many years. Thou art indeed the Father of the poor - for the poor of all the communities, Christians and Jews, Moslems and Zoroastrians. We thought this year the world has forgotten us and our children but we were mistaken, Our Master remembered us and came to our assistance and cheered the hearts of our youths. It seems to me that we have been always the recipients of thy bounties. How wonderful it is that even this year thou didst come to our succour. We are all encouraged that thou art amongst us. This very thought sustains us through our darkness and misfortunes. We are all happy and feel strong because Our Master Abhas Effendi walks through our narrow streets and is a source of comfort and consolation to the sorrowing and the heavy laden." Then as though remembering something he turned his face to his colleague and said: "I want to tell you something about the influence and goodness of His Excellency to me 18 years ago. I have had no occasion to tell you before. As I told you eighteen years ago Asaad Effendi of Haifa owed me forty Turkish Pounds. He did not want to pay it. I complained against him to Motosarraf, Paemmagam, Mofti and the judges but to no

avail. I consumed several months in going from this official to another. At last I was at the point of despair and thought better give it all up when a friend told me ~~the~~ the only person the only person that can procure this money is Abbas Effendi. Your Excellency no doubt remembers I called on you at the other house and having explained my case you wrote two lines to Najieb Yaseen and asked me to take the letter to him and get my money. Next day I started for Haifa and on my arrival I called on him and delivered the missive. No sooner he looked at the writing than he arose and kissed it reverently. Having read it he took me to the house of Asaad Effendi. Without any oriental ceremony he asked him authoritatively: - "Hast thou forty pounds?" He answered meekly: - "yes." "Then go and bring it." In a second the money was produced. Najieb took it in his own hand and counted the exact amount. "Mushai le priest" This is your money. Here also five francs for your travelling expenses. Please sign these papers that you have received your money. The man was so stupefied that he stared at both of us in utter amazement. I left that same day for Acca."

The Beloved as though not hearing the above story said: - "I am the friend of the poor. I wish to be one of them. His Highness Christ was poor, His apostles were poor, All the holy souls were poor. The heaven was the covering of the Man of Nazareth, the stars were his lights, ~~the~~ earth was his bed and the grass of the field his food. He said blessed are the poor. Therefore we must be very happy because we are the companions of the Spirit of God. When I was in New York and London I attended the meetings of the poor and what I had I shared with them with the greatest joy."

When they left the house the Master asked Khosro to give us tea and we had a spiritual feast listening to his interpretation of the Koran and the verses predicting the coming of Baha-Ollah. A significant verse in the chapter of Jonah is as follows: - "And God calleth to the 'Abode of Peace'; [Bagdad] and He guideth whom He will into the right way." It is one of the old customs of the East to give a title to each city, thus "Daross-Salam", "the Abode of Peace" is the well-known title of Bagdad amongst the Mahomedans up to the present day. All the cities in Persia beside their own names, have ^{also} their title

In reading the Koran one is struck with the number of verses relating to the "meeting with God". For example the following two verses are typical: "To him who hopeth to meet God", the set time of God will surely come." "As for those who believe not in the signs of God, or that they shall ever meet Him, these of My mercy shall despair." The Master said:- "Notwithstanding these clear tests the Shiites do not believe in the "meeting with God"; but they say in the end of the time so many extraordinary events will transpire that there will remain not a single soul without believing in God. The Sunnites have this tradition: 'ye shall behold your Lord as ye see the moon on the fourteenth night of month'. They believe that the 'meeting of God' is possible, but only in the day of resurrection. However, the Blessed Perfection is independent of all scriptural Proofs. The proof of the sun is its own existence. It is not necessary to prove the existence of the sun through the light of the moon, the stars, the growth of plants, animals and men. The evidence of the sun is its own rays and nothing else. Hence the proof of the Manifestation of Baha - O'llah is His own character, deeds, works and words. His evidence is clear, his light is shining and his Argument is irrefutable. All other proofs although valid in their own spheres are secondary."

Before sunset he came down and was walking in the corridor. Because Khosro had set a clock going, had cleaned the well, cooked a good dinner, placed a glass in the broken window, and many other expert things the Beloved said laughingly: 'he is a man with a thousand talents'. He continued for half an hour speaking, joking, laughing. We followed his moods closely. He was very happy. Then he went up:- In the evening we had a nice meeting and Ostad Mohamad Ali sang some of the beautiful songs of the Blessed Perfection. "How these poems of Baha - O'llah are spiritual and divine! They are conducive to one's detachment and serenity!" With a wonderful serenity and calmness he spoke on these subjects which are conducive to the consolation of the hearts. Every word was like a beam of light which penetrated through the dark corners of the souls. Without him we could not go calmly through these dreadful days which are worse than anything that can be imagined.