

Ramleh, Egypte
Oct 5th 1913

~~Dear friend~~

Our house is once more quiet, the birds have flown away and the garden is lying for the melodies of other nightingales. Nowhere on the face of the earth ~~do you~~ ^{do you} find so many different nations and religions as ~~one~~ ^{you} find them ~~to be represented~~ in the neighborhood of Abdul Baha. The Russians of the North with their picturesque dresses, the turbaned Achemas from the University of Al Ahzhar, the Arabs, the Turks and the highly civilized Europeans and Americans meet together with perfect harmony and agreement. Although in outward garments and even ⁱⁿ ideas of worldly culture ~~they~~ ^{there} differ yet they are impelled forward by the same ideals of ~~truth~~ and the oneness of the world of humanity. ~~As regards~~ ^{On the points of} international arbitration, comity of nations, universal religion, economic improvement of human society and the diffusion of education, they are all united, and

~~are~~ ^{for all} ~~brothers~~ ~~for all~~ ~~the~~ believers are brothers.
 Thus in a ~~practical~~ and concrete manner we
 are daily watching the progress of the Bahai
 world and come into touch with those
 who are putting their shoulders to the wheel
 and pushing it ~~onward and~~ forward. It is
 extremely interesting to meet these men - young
 and old - ~~all~~ inspired with ^{the principles} ~~one~~ ~~high~~ ~~lying~~
~~ideal~~ of fraternity and peace. With one
 common impulse they go ^{on} from step to step,
 and ~~and~~ ^{getting} nearer and nearer to the goal.
 They are earnest and ever ready to sacrifice
 their lives for the progress of the Cause.
 Once they leave the Holy Presence (they
 spread the Glad-tidings from clime to clime)
 (before ^{any} ~~they~~ reaching their ~~destined~~ home),
 They are so enraptured with this fire of faith,
 service to humanity and the love of God
 that each one of ~~them~~ ^{is} shining like unto
 the lamp and illumine the dark recesses
 of the hearts. They know that Baha-u-
~~Allah~~ will inspire ~~all~~ those who arise
 to promulgate the Word of Reality.

Leaving

It was ~~the~~ early morning. ~~I left the house~~ ^{and} ~~walked~~ ⁹ ~~went~~ toward the sea. I sat on a ~~big piece of~~ rock, the waves dashing against it, ~~all the time~~. I was musing in a quiet manner and watching the rising of the sun out of the clear blue. ~~Suddenly~~ ^{Some one} tapped on my shoulder. ~~and I turned around, saying~~. It was Mirza Jalel Sina. "Ah come ^{my} friend! I was just ~~now~~ ^{since} thinking about you. It is ~~now~~ sometimes that you have ~~not~~ told me a story. Will you please sit down and tell me one?" I said. "Would you like to hear the story of ^{the} forty camels?" he said, as he sat on the rock. "yes! I would love to ~~hear it~~ ^{Any story} ~~would do in order to pass a half an hour here.~~"

"Once upon a time ~~he started~~ there were forty camels living on a green pasture. The luxuriance of the meadows, the flowing streams, the delightful atmosphere and the beauty of environments appealed to them greatly. ~~Whilst~~ they enjoyed a life of plenty they frolicked joyously from one to the other

end of the ^{verdant meadow} ~~green pasture~~. Grazing through this ~~verdant~~ ⁱⁿ field ~~all the~~ ^{during} spring and summer, they did not ~~dream~~ ^{think} of ~~any material~~ change in their outward condition. Nothing could induce them to leave these premises as long as they had plenty to satisfy their hunger, ^{and} supply their comfort, ~~and expand the circle of freedom~~. With no thought of tomorrow, they revelled in the luxuries of today. Their minds being filled with the vain pomp and the alluring scenery of the present, they were not disturbed with the distant thought of ^{a future} ~~the rainy day~~. Of a more complete state of life they could not ^{conceive} ~~imagine~~ and the frontier of their ^{minds} ~~reasons~~ was limited by the visible horizon. They ate, drank, slept and ~~now~~ ^{rather and soon} and then took short excursions. Contented with their present ~~lot~~, dreaming of no other world, elated over their seemingly permanent happiness, stuffed with vain glory, elated with the ~~previous~~ idea of a false, ~~limited~~ patriotism they lived on, looking with deep disdain and soulful contempt upon any member of the party who dared to so much

planes
 dream of other spheres of existence. They argued
 that neither by choice ^{nor} necessity ~~we~~ ^{they} must ~~be~~
~~ourselves~~ ^{be} ~~worried~~ over the idle conception
 of a future ^{life} condition. "Let us eat and ^{drink} ~~and~~
~~lie on the fat of the land~~, romp on the grass
 and bask ⁱⁿ ~~under~~ the sunshine. Our fortune
 is secure, our happiness is ^{unchangeable} ~~permanent~~, our reign
 is supreme, the means of enjoyment are at
 hand. Why should we care for anything else?
^{revel} ~~with~~ ^{these} ~~such~~ ~~palliative~~ arguments and ~~reflexions~~
~~evidences~~ they stifled the voice of conscience
 and checked the promptings of the Spirit. The
 spring and summer ^{months} ~~days~~ rolled by and dreary
 seasons of autumn and winter ~~came~~ ^{drawing} ~~well nigh~~. Of course during the fair weather
 they did not batten ~~the~~ ~~whales~~ nor shoot off
 their ~~accustomed~~ ~~lethargy~~ ~~and~~ ~~indolence~~ ~~to~~ ~~get~~
 by a store for the rainy days; ~~that they~~
~~may save themselves from shame and ignominy~~
 Believing ~~foolishly~~ in the inevitability of
 the ~~changing~~ seasons, they found
 themselves to their ~~awful~~ despair in dire
 want, ~~hardship~~ and starvation.

As by a ~~sign~~^{spell} of the Magician's ^{wand} the ~~whole~~^{whole} aspect
 of ~~the~~^{their} nature was ^{changed} ~~suddenly transformed~~, the
 grass was withered, the leaves dried up, ~~the~~
~~underbrush~~^{underbrush} ~~of leaves~~ and no food could be
 obtained anywhere. ~~To keep the wolf out of the~~
~~house.~~ ^{Day by day} day the weather became colder and
 more bitterly biting; the flowing rivers and streams
~~were~~ frozen, the thunders pealed forth, the
 windows of heaven ~~were~~ opened, the mighty
 torrent of rain pouring down, the snow ^{covering}
 the field with a ~~spotless~~ white blanket
 and the hail adding to the general discomfort.
 The camels ~~now reaping the crop of their~~
~~heedlessness~~ shivered with intense cold
~~neither~~^{and} could ~~they~~ find ^{no} shelter, ~~no matter~~
~~how scanty.~~ After much deliberation they
 decided that there ^{could be} ~~is~~ no other way of relief
 than to send ^{one of their members} ~~of the members~~ to scour the
^{Beyond} Country. ~~Beyond~~. perchance he may find a
 green pasture or a verdant meadow.
 The one ~~to whom~~ ^{was entrusted} this com-
 mission started out. Many days elapsed
 and there was ^{of him} no news. Those who were

showed

left behind ~~manifested~~ signs of worry; not only ^{because} they feared they will lose him but ^{because} ~~they were hungry and famished~~ ^{because} the knife had reached the house and ~~did not know how to get their whereabouts~~.
 At last ^{the messenger} he appeared on the scene, thus allaying ~~their further anxiety~~. But he brought with him of wonderful tales of adventures accompanied by heart-throbbing descriptions. They all gathered round ^{him} ~~their emissary~~ and listened to him with breathless ^{eagerness} ~~enthusiasm~~:—

'My friends! ~~in time of pleasure and grief~~! I have been away for sometimes but I have followed up a line of investigation that ~~has~~ unfolded before my eyes many wonderful things, the recital of which will be very hard for you to believe unless you see them with your own eyes. Beyond the frontier of this country I found Elysian fields, most enchanting in their verdancy and ~~most~~ extraordinary in their luxuriance ~~and evergreen vegetation~~. In all my life I have seen nothing ^{like} ~~similar~~ to them. The dwellers of those divine gardens told me ^{that} perennial spring reigns there! ~~like a garden~~.

whether the

The blasting ravages of autumn nor the cold frost
 of winter gains any foothold ^{in that climate} ~~there~~. Its meadows
~~are always green~~, its pastures ^{are always} verdant, its water
 cool and its weather ~~is~~ temperate. The only
 difficulty that one meets however at the
 entrance ^{is} ~~is~~ that ~~the~~ gate is ~~very~~ small, indeed ~~a~~
 smaller ^{than} the eye of a needle and the passage
 leading to the garden ^{very} ~~is~~ narrow and ~~hazard-~~
~~ously slipping~~. In order to enter through this
 small gate we must ^{etherealize} ~~alter~~ our bodies,
~~become humble and meek~~, be changed into
 pure spirits, leave behind mortal desires ~~and~~
~~passions~~, become free from the ties of carnal
 appetites, sanctified from ^{worldly} ~~sensual~~ ~~flitting~~
 pleasures, released from ^{and} ~~the~~ coarse ma-
 teriality, and abandoning all the unruly pro-
 pensities of sinful self. If we can charac-
 terize ourselves with these attributes
 and it can be done in a twinkling of an
 eye — then ^{as radiant beings} ~~we will~~ ^{shall} enter ~~at radiant~~
~~beings~~ into that garden of bliss. ~~It is~~
 Of course, ^{it is} ~~rather~~ painful to go through
 these cataclysmal experiences and let

go on heedlessness, for at every step we ^{must} sacrifice something that we consider very essential to the pursuit of our pleasures and the gratification of our ~~inordinate~~ desires. But once ~~we are~~ freed from ~~all~~ these ~~shackles~~ and chains, the rest of the journey is ~~mostly~~ ^{with ease} accomplished. Now if you are made of such heroic stuff and are courageous enough to face these ~~alchemical~~ process of purification, let us start on our way. I have ~~been~~ already ^{gone through the} put to test and having actually seen the garden know whereof I am speaking. ~~Having been~~ ^{carried away} ~~was~~ ^{led} up by ~~such~~ ^{this} glowing description and not fully realizing the difficulties of the personal sacrifices they ~~must~~ ^{should} make, they started out and crossing many ~~mountain~~ deserts, they reached at last at the gate. The guide instructed them how they ~~must~~ ^{should} look through the hole. ~~Having done so~~ ^{spread} they saw ~~spread~~ before their eyes the most splendid panorama of nature and scenes of ravishing beauty. First they looked at the extreme narrowness

of the hole, then they looked at themselves and ~~not a few~~ started to laugh at the clever
 joke played upon them. 'How can ~~one~~ ^{one} ever ^{pass} go
 through this hole?' ~~one~~ ^{one} cried out ~~astonishingly~~ ^{in despair}; 'This
 is all ridiculous,' another one jeered. 'Push!
 How can a camel go through a hole?' a third clam-
 ored. ~~Some thinking over the matter seriously~~ ^{A few without troubling themselves much}
~~sacrificed every wish and mortalities to~~ ^{all their personal desires}
~~behold! they passed easily through the~~
 hole; others could not give up self and the
 frothy bubbles of this mortal life and
~~thus remained behind.~~ "This was of course
 the fulfillment of the saying of Christ
 in the New Testament: - 'It is harder
 for a rich man to enter the Kingdom
 of heaven than for a camel to pass through
 the eye of a needle.'"

When we returned home the tea was ready
 and Haji Nag was dispensing it ~~as a~~ ^{like a} real, old
 Patriarch. After awhile the Beloved passed
 by and handed me a package of photos from
 Mrs Killis of Spokane, ^{Washington} for distribution amongst
 the Oriental friends. He looked well and

was on his way to Mija Abdul Fazl. In the afternoon the learned Editor of a monthly magazine, called El Bayan published in Cairo called on him. This Editor expects to write an article on the Cause and so he has come to the source ^{for his} ~~to get~~ ~~correct~~ information.

Mija Moneer and ~~myself~~ were taking a walk ~~just~~ before sunset when we met the Master coming ^{toward us} ~~all alone~~ from the opposite direction we followed him and he came to our house. He sat on the veranda and apropos of something ~~he~~ spoke about his first trip to Beirut about 30 yrs ago and how one of the celebrated judges of Islam Sheikh Mohamed Abdou met him and was constantly with him during his 40 days ^{sojourn in that city} ~~stay in Beirut~~. Afterward when some stranger asked his opinion about the religion of Bahá'u'lláh he answered: "While other leaders of the religions of the world are talking, the Bahá'is are doing the work of unity and spiritual awakening. Their action and word coincide with each other. They are dead in earnest."