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No 15

Diary of Merza Ahmad Sohrab

Beginning December 31st 1913

Ending January 15th 1914

Mount Carmel. Haifa Syria

Bahai Pilgrims Home
Mount Carmel Harfa, Syria
December 31st 1913

Dear friends!

The spirit of an old Bahai about 80 ^{years of age} yrs ^{has just soared} soared toward the Kingdom of Abha. His name was Sheikh Akhul Gasem. He had lived in Acca for many years ~~long~~ before the departure of Baha-ollah. He had seen in his life many blessed days ^{before} before and after the death of the Blessed Perfection; so, like unto a nightingale, his spirit soared out of this mortal cage toward the rose-garden of Abha. In the morning ^{after his death} the Master called on his wife and son to console them. He stayed in their house for an hour giving them directions for the burial of the dead. When he returned there ^{was} was a large number of believers and pilgrims present in the garden, ^{and} As he entered they all bowed ^{before} before him. He sat on the raised, low wall dividing the garden ^{and} the ^{broad walk} ~~avenue~~ leading to the broad steps of the house

and motioned to others to do the same. Half of them sat on one side ~~and~~ the rest on the other. It was a day of perfect sunshine and glorious air, ^{redolent with} The ^{sweet} scent of the flowers and ^{blossoms} ~~blossoms~~ was sweet and redolent. After a few minutes silence he said: - "I have been out to see the wife of Sheikh Abul Gasein. He was one of the blessed souls, ^{in the Cause} (His end has been very good). He was a very ^{old} Bahai, He had many, many Tablets from the Blessed Perfection. He has left behind one son. May God confirm and assist ^{his only son} him so that he may walk in the footsteps of his father." Some one asked a question which I did not hear but I wrote down the Master's answer: "If we - all the Bahais - who are beneath the shade of ^{the} Sadrat-ul-Montaha, arise to teach the Cause of God, unquestionably the Almighty ^{will} shall confirm us. We must lay aside every idea, thought, mention, desire, service and devotion, ^{except those prayers which are obligatory,} and occupy our time with teaching the ^{spreading the fragrances of the merciful} Cause, and serving at the Divine Threshold, ^{except those prayers which are obligatory.}

Through teaching ~~the~~ Cause the Blessed Tree shall grow
 and develop, the world of humanity will become illumina-
 nated, the blind ^{ones} find sight, the deaf hearing, the mute
 speech and the dead life. These things shall not come to
 pass except ~~except~~ through the promotion of Truth. This
 is conducive to the regeneration of the world of man, the
^{development} progress of the ideals of mankind, the ^{unfolding} disclosure of the
 mystic virtues of the inhabitants of the earth, and the
 advancement and exaltation of the infinite degree of ^{will} exis-
 tence; even the world in its physical aspect shall become
 ameliorated and perfected, ~~How~~ the teachers himself become
 spiritual! How will ² he become ¹ illuminated! How ³ will
^{they} he become ² divine and ³ celestial! He will enter into
 another and higher state; he will be enlightened with
 another light, he will be endowed with a new power,
 and he will gain a new spirituality. Ordinarily
 a moral teacher strives day and night until a
 person abandons one of his many evil attributes
 but as soon as the guidance of God and the Faith of

God down from the horizon of his heart he is a changed man. All his evil characteristics are transformed into the praiseworthy attributes. Whereas formerly he was a coward he becomes courageous. Whereas before he was ~~soiled~~ ^{debased} morally he becomes sanctified and holy. Even in his intelligence, his knowledge, his sagacity, and in his ~~mentality~~ ^{morality} he is a different man."

Then ~~he~~ ^{the Master} went up to his room and we climbed the mountain toward the pilgrims' Home. In the afternoon there were ten large carriages ready to convey the believers to the home of the deceased ^{one} ~~which~~ is quite out of the town. Every Bahai was there and after the performance of the simple ceremony the body was taken to the Mosque and the Mohamadan prayers were offered. There were a number of Shikhs walking ahead the hearse and chanting the formula "There is no God but God and Mohamad is His Prophet." The Bahai Cemetery is out of town at the very foot of Mount Carmel. It is a large

tract of land newly acquired, ^{and} It contains only ^{a few} ~~one or~~
 two tombs. The tomb was already prepared and the coffin was
^{lowered into the grave} laid down. ~~There~~ ^{There} was a Mohamadan Mullah who read the
 rituals for the dead. He commanded the dead as though he
^{was an fellow} ~~was~~ alive. "If the angel of death comes to thee and asks
 of thee 'Who is thy Creator?' Do not be afraid. Say, he is
 the Lord the Most High, the One God, the Maker of heaven
 and earth; Mohamad is His Prophet - - - - -" Amongst
 others, I threw in a few shovels of the earth. Afterwards
 Foroughi and his son, each in turn, offered a prayer
 for the soul of the dead, and the former delivered a
 short oration on the ^{penitible need} ~~impermanency~~ of the worldly things
 and exhorted his ^{the} ~~son~~ ^{deceased} to adorn himself with the same
 qualities and virtues of the father. The poor man
 had willed that all the believers be present at his
 funeral, and thus his last dying wish was ^{carried}
 out to the letter. ^{Kindness} ~~How~~ ^{is thoughtfulness of the} The Beloved is ~~kind and~~
^{for} thoughtful of even those who pass away is one of
 the miracles of his life and work.

When we all gathered together again in the Master's House
 we found that a number of our Jewish Bahais with
 their wives, as well as our Bahai students of Beirut
 College ^{were} on the point of departure. The believers were
 scattered in the rose-garden and the silver-beams of
 the moon with the radiance of countless stars added
 to the charm of the night. The departing friends one
 by one met the Beloved in his room to receive his
 last blessings, to look probably for the last time on
 his heavenly Countenance. They came out weeping.
 We embraced them and were sad to see them leaving
 this holy Spot. Many of the believers went with them
 to the steamer to say farewell. They carry away the spirit
 of enthusiasm. They will refresh many souls with the
 wondrous story of the Beloved and teach many souls
 in as many cities. May God protect them and
 encircle them with the lights of Reality! Ere long
 we shall hear their news of victory and triumph
 in the propagation of the Word of God.