

Bahai Pilgrim's Home⁷
Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria
January 1st 1914

Dear friends!

I wish you a happy New Year! May this year bring you many blessings! May the hearts become the dawning-places of spiritual lights and the treasures of the jewels of the Love of God! May you become the instruments of conferring Eternal Life upon the bewildering humanity. May ^{from} your minds flow the quickening rivers of the heavenly Water! May your chaste and immaculate lips touch the spotless goblet of the ruby wine of the seraphic Immortality! May the bright stars of your hope arise from the horizon of Reality! May your souls become the divine thrones of the celestial mysteries of the Kingdom of Abba. May you meet every hard and harsh circumstance with a firm determination and unswerving resolution! May you arise with a super^{human} energy and unchanging fortitude, to spread the Cause of God!

When this morning I went down I met an old man whose name I think is Haji Ali. He has lived for many years in Acca and Haifa and has been in the Presence of Baha-ollah ever so many times. I fell into speaking with him about the days of the Blessed Perfection and I found him most interesting. He related to me the outline of a talk given by the Blessed Perfection about 24 yrs ago which I may translate & herein. He said: - "One day I with a number of believers, ^{was} in the Holy Presence of Baha-ollah. He spoke about the progress of the world and the ameliorations of conditions in general. He said, 'The world of today is not like unto the world of former times. The many wonderful arts and inventions have completely transformed the face of the earth, making life easier and existence more comfortable. Notwithstanding this the life of every organism, no matter how perfect comes to an end. For example the life of an ant in comparison to the life of man is short, yet the

ant, were it endowed with ^{human} intelligence would think
 that man lives eternally. Similarly these stars, these
 mountains, these seas shall come to an end. For each
 one of them a prescribed life is ^{destined}. It has a beginning
 and an ending. Consider how ^{many} large cities have been
 built by the ^{ancient monarchs} ~~antiquity~~ but to day they are all destroyed
 and are hidden under the earth. Once they were
 thriving and ^{progression} ~~pushing~~ communities, now their voices
 are silenced. The progress of civilizations to a certain
 degree has reached an exalted station in France
 specially, and in Europe generally, but from now ^{on}
 there will ^{be} a monumental upward march of
 advancement all over the United States. That
 country has just started on the path of progress
 and her future development will be just as ^{magnificent} ~~marvellous~~
 as her activities will be manifold in all the
 departments of life, physical and spiritual.

Thus Baha-Allah in the prison city of Acre saw
 through His divine eyes the America ^{of today} and its ^{unfolding} possibilities.

After a few minutes Basheer came down and reported that the Master wanted me to go out with him. I gathered my papers and hurried out into the garden. The Beloved was waiting. As soon as he saw me he ^{commenced} to walk and I followed. He called at the English hospital, which is a missionary organization. ^{Dr.} Mr. Coles is the head and ~~old friend~~ ^{an} of the Master. He welcomed him at the door and conducted him ^{to} the second ^{where his family has their private apartments. The reception room is} floor which is the living apartment of the official. It has one of the largest ~~halls~~ ^{valuable & many} decorated with the ~~most expensive~~ ^{valuable & many} rugs, curios ^{of which the Doctor is a collector} and antique objects. ^{showing} ~~who after the Bishop's~~ An old man, Archdeacon ^{who} was also introduced. ^{Dr.} Mr. Coles told the Master that while he was in Europe and America he had received many letters from strangers inquiring about him, knowing that he has lived in Syria for many years, and he knows well what kind of answers he has written. "I know, I know" the Beloved said graciously "you

would have written naught else but the truth. Daring (who is the highest dignitary of the English Church in Syria after the Bishop)

my journey in different countries of the West I have often
thought of you and on certain occasions I missed your
presence. Many evil reports are put in circulation by
our enemies in these parts and we have neither time
nor inclination to contradict them, but in the West I
found ^{the} human conscience has the ^{perfect freedom} ~~utmost free way~~ and
therefore I uttered the innermost thoughts of my heart
and gave ~~a~~ free rein to the expression of my hidden
ideals. The newspapers and the journals of the said
countries published them and the public ^{had} found
at last ^{an opportunity} ~~a way~~ to examine and scrutinize these
Teachings without pre-conceptions and prejudices." ¹⁸⁹²
Then for the benefit of the Archdeacon and Rev. Cotes he
^{repeated} reviewed feelingly and ~~warmly~~ the Contents of his
addresses in the Jewish Synagogues of America and
said how essentially necessary it is to ^{do} ~~discard~~ ^{lay aside all} ~~his~~ ^{and}
and prejudices, if one aims to help the ^{to regenerate society} ~~realization~~ of
a ~~society regenerated~~ ^{to} ~~and an industrial world re-~~
~~constructed~~. After this talk, ^{conviction} ~~he came down~~ ^{went on to his pulpit words} and called

on two Persian patients, who were overjoyed to be honored
 with the Presence of the Beloved. On our return he sent
 me to bring Mr and Mrs ^{Holbeach} ~~Holbeck~~ who were invited
 to dine with him. ~~At first~~ ^{Just} ~~the~~ "received them in his own
 room and gave them a beautiful talk on the immortality
 of the soul. He likened the spirit unto the nightingale and
 the body unto a cage. The nightingale ever longs to break
 the cage and soar toward the rose-garden. The divine
 bird yearns to tear asunder the bars and fly toward
 the open fields and green mountains where ~~the~~ ^{grow} Perfumes
 of ideal flowers ~~flow~~ ^{grow} ~~greatly~~ and sweetly ^{scents the air} ~~in the ambient~~
~~air~~. For this reason the holy, divine Manifestations
 and their immediate followers have longed to leave
 this mortal world and wing their ways toward the
 throne of the Almighty. When this physical cage is
 broken the nightingale of the spirit is freed, ready to
 fly heavenward. They know the spiritual harmony of that
 radiant world; they have ~~listened~~ ^{listened} ^{to} the ethereal symphonies
 of that Immortal Congregation; they have often bridged

the gulf of deadly materialism with many golden locks of invisible ideals; they have at times culled the roses of affection, the snowdrops of sympathies and the fragrant violets of service. On the other hand there are an increasingly number of nightingales which are blinded through their own selfishness and egoism. They are out of touch with the beauties and Bounties of the other world. They cannot conceive of a higher and loftier realm. Therefore they are satisfied with the limited space of the cage. Blind are they, they cannot see; deaf are they, they cannot hear, ignorant are they, they cannot understand. When one of the nightingales is freed from the cage it communicates in a spiritual language with those which are yet in the fetters of prison. It tries to impress upon their minds that the vast immensity of God's glorious world lies ~~very~~ near unto them if they just drop the scales off their eyes. But the birds which die in the prison of cage while they are blind and deaf cannot soar toward the sacred worlds of God. They

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just crawl on the surface of the earth. Their freedom from
such a condition and their flight toward the blue ether
depends upon the mercy and compassion of the True
One. In the above words I have not quoted exactly the
talk of the Beloved but I have given you what I could
retain in my memory. Another interesting question
which was touched upon ^{believe in the} guardian angels or
as the Master said the "Divine Powers." Without
the protection of these divine powers humanity cannot
exist for one moment. They ward off all dangers
and guard ^{man} ~~him~~ from ^{threatening} ~~the~~ ^{encroaching} evils. Man is
like unto an innocent lamb and all these dangers and
perils are like unto the ferocious wolves. "Imagine
a little lamb surrounded by a hundred thousand
wolves, threatening to tear it to pieces at every
moment. Were it ^{not} for the eternal vigilance of
the Divine Powers man could not live for
one second."

After an hour, dinner was served in the Dining

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room. Our American sisters with Mr and Mrs Ballack
were the guests. For the first time after many months
I was privileged again to sit at the same table with the
Beloved of the hearts. The dishes were à la Person and ^{loisiced} ~~may~~
appetizing. The ~~ball~~ of conversation rolled ~~around~~ ^{loisiced} many
topics, such as the birth of Christ, the Calvary, the Tomb
and how the Sepulchre was discovered by St Helena.
The notes were taken down by our dear sister Mrs Dagg
and no doubt in time she will share them with the
believers. After dinner we retired and the Beloved went
to his ^{room} even to take a rest.

In the evening the pilgrims had a meeting and the
Master called them up to the reception room. His talk
was a historical account of how the Tomb of the
Bab was built on Mount Carmel and how on every
step he had to neutralize the effects of the false reports
of the enemies forwarded to Constantinople. It was long
and most interesting and an authoritative document
for the future generation descended from the lips of the
Center of the Covenant.