

Bahai Nest

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Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria

March 16th 1914

Dear friends!

"The Editor of a newspaper or a Magazine" the Beloved said to the writer of a Beirut daily this morning "must ever take the side of Truth. Every fact before its publication must be thoroughly investigated. An editor is the moulder of public opinions, the educator of the masses of mankind. Truth is his sharpest weapon; ~~forceful~~ strong statements his impregnable fort; and plain, direct language his shield. He must be a worshipper of Truth, the standard-bearer of justice, and the champion of civilization. He must look upon his position as a sacred trust not to be bought by the plutocrats and so-called captains of industry. He must divest himself from ^{all} ~~any~~ prejudice and his ~~aims~~ ^{aspirations} must be altruistic and advantageous to the whole community. He must believe consciously that he is the real servant of the public and not their overbearing lord.

He must serve all, irrespective of any personal predilection or inclination." Then he spoke about other interesting objects, describing ^{reproduction of the} to him the palace of Ab-Hamrah which he visited during his sojourn in Stuttgart. When the editor left he was not only made conscious of the duties and responsibilities of his position but he was also informed with the principles of the Cause and a short history of the Movement.

Then the Master sent for Elvén Abbas and he presented to him a most exhaustive account of the progress of education amongst the Bahais in Persia and how in every city they are taking active initiatives to found schools not only for boys but for girls. From every part they are writing to Tehran for teachers; girls and boys are most eager to learn and the liberal members of the community are doing their utmost ^{to satisfy} this universal hunger after knowledge. The Master was most pleased with this glowing report. "Yes, yes" he said "the Bahais must be the real servants of

the Cause of public education. They must not fall behind in any branch of science. They must be in the vanguard of the army of education. Education is the life of a nation. Without it the nation is dead."

X ~~Then somehow~~ The name of Mary Magdalene was mentioned and he gave a glowing, eloquent, ~~tribute~~ ^{Abdul Baki} to this peerless woman of Christianity:- "Having ^{he continued} already made firm and steadfast the shaking and ^{doubtful} ~~afraid~~ apostles ^{Mary Magdalene} she started on her famous journey toward Rome - the then renowned Capital of the Roman Empire. When she reached Rome, one of the Roman generals who was formerly in Palestine and knew her intimately, met her. Not knowing of the change which had come over her during their separation he rejoiced in his heart that the old relations ^{would} be established between them, and therefore he greeted her with open arms and ^{great} demonstration. But something in her attitude and bearing stunned him, and a flash from her penetrative eyes conveyed to him, in a vague manner, the tremendous moral transformation

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that had
taken place in her life. 'No, No!' she cried out, 'This is impossible. The past is dead. Not one trace of the old conditions remains behind. Hast thou not heard of the appearance of Christ? I have embraced his Cause. I have become his humble disciple. I have burned away all worldly desires at the altar of his Love. I have felt in my heart the throbs of regeneration. I am intoxicated with the wine of his Teachings. I have quaffed from his hand the water of everlasting Life. He has instructed me with the spiritual precepts of celestial sanctity and holiness. I have left behind - Oh! so many hundreds of leagues behind - those dark, sordid worlds of moral laxity and looseness. I have washed off my slate clean. I have left the zigzag byways of passion and am walking straight in the Path of the Kingdom. Since ^{the day} that I believed in Christ I have collected the broken and scattered fragments of my life and ~~have~~ ^{myself} dedicated to the service of my fellowmen. Lo! friend! The star of a new hope is shining over my horizon, the

fire of St. Holy passion is burning in my heart and the
 waters of a divine fountain ^{are} gushing out of my inmost
 being. The General feeling the spiritual force and vili-
 nations of these words fell back on his own resources
 confused and ashamed. He ^{had} not expected such direct
 rebuff, and although he did not at the time comprehend
 fully the far-reaching significance of her words yet
 they gave him the most uneasy feelings. Realizing that
 this was the psychological time to gain her point
 she started to talk again before he was able to
 control himself: 'I have only one request to make
 of thee, not for the sake of past friendship, because
 that is dead, but for the sake of the Cause that
 I have ~~held~~ at heart: to arrange for me an audience
 with the Emperor. If thou bringest about this meeting
 between the Emperor and myself, then I will give
 my consent to become thy wife according to law.'
 He protested that this ^{could not} be done, but she insisted
 on the fact that he ^{could} do it. The General left her
^{promising to try} ~~promising to try~~ he was successful & the time was set for
 and after several vain attempts such an

an audience ~~was~~ designated. Alone, fearless and self-confident Mary Magdalene stood gracefully before the Emperor. She made an ideal picture of repose and undisturbed calmness. The Emperor, looking at her, thought she ^{was} a pitiful suppliant, who had come to ask for a gift from his hand or intercede ^{for} his mercy for the injuries wrought by the legions. Inspired and with simple eloquence she raised her voice: 'Sire! Surely thou hast heard of the coming of Jesus Christ in Palestine! In Jerusalem he was crucified through the accusations of the highpriests and Rabbis. I am one of his humble followers. The Christians have delegated me to come to thee with the following message: It is well known that the highpriests and doctors condemned Christ to death. They incited the populace to demand his crucifixion ^{from} the government. Thus the governor was forced into ^{this} act by the urgent demand of the public. Now that their mad passion is calmed down they have realized how they were fooled by their religious leaders in condemning a holy Man to death. Hence

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they have arisen with great fury to persecute and kill
their highpriests ^{and Doctors of religion}. But Christ does not approve of vengeance
and those who are walking in his footsteps are not pleased
with it. The principles of Christ's life were love and
mercy. He prayed for his enemies on the cross. He came
into the world in order to show men a new application
of the law of Love and he embodied this divine Idea
in his life. He was the founder of the law of non-
resistance. Now the Christians beg your Majesty to
issue a royal edict to the governor of Jerusalem to
stop the Jews from persecuting their own leaders.
This was my message.' The Emperor was greatly
moved and impressed by such a strange request,
and it is said, ~~that~~ he issued afterward such
an order to the civil authorities of Rome in
the Holy Land. Later on the General
married Mary Magdalene and she lived in Rome
till the end of her life - ever serving to the best
of ^{her} ability the Cause of Christ and inviting new
souls to the Kingdom of God. X"

From this most wonderful story the Beloved turned his attention to a poetic description of the life of St Barbara and her glorious martyrdom at the hand of her own father. From morning till noon we sat in His Presence and the priceless words of the treasury of the Kingdom flowed from his lips. It is simply impossible to describe these hours of heavenly association. In the world of existence there is nothing more glorious than to have a Beloved like unto Abdul Baha. When he starts to speak or smile I am lost to all that may ^{be} going ^{on} all around me, my whole attention is centered on his words and the marvellous effect they have on the hearts of the hearers. Beside his love I wish for nothing else. Every one knows that we are not even worthy to receive a drop out of the ocean of his love. Who am I? Who are you? Who are we? Nothing. Abdul Baha does not need any one of us. He does his own work. Are we led to assume superiority over others because we can deliver a lecture before an audience, or ^{are} writing

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a few insignificant letters, or are travelling for the
sake of the Cause, or Abdul Baha has been kind and gra-
cious to us? How narrow is our thoughts! How small is
our brain! Are we going to make this holy Cause a source
of distinctions and privileges? Do we think to suffer
others to believe that Abdul Baha bestows upon his disciples
any worldly titles? Is this our conception of the Cause?
Is this our understanding of the spirit of this Movement?
Is this the Church of Rome to have priests and cardi-
nals and Monsignors and Fathers Superior or the
camp of a Military Napoleon to confer the titles of
Field-marshal, generals and adjutants? Great
heaven! What are all these fetid ideas? Where do come
from these unholy broodings? The greatest and most
heavenly titles - if titles we may call them - are
the "Servants" and the "maid-servants." What
title, Our Beloved has selected for himself? "I am
the servant of God, I am the servant of the servants
of God" he says repeatedly. At the end of every
Tablet that he sends out into the world, how

does he sign himself? Friends! Let us always remind ourselves that this is purely a spiritual Cause and those who have accepted it ^{should} never think for one moment that they are going to receive any titles or emoluments. The Bahais are a community of servants and maid-servants, brothers and sisters. The only hall-mark of distinction is active service and its results are humility, meekness, the absence of any feeling of superiority and utter submissiveness.

In the afternoon the Beloved received the Vali of Beirut and other officials and entertained them for longer than ^{one} hour with the stories of his trip to America and Europe. Later in the evening we had a meeting. As I was translating for Hajji Mirza Heyder Ali I arrived a little late, but I caught up the thread of his talk. He was speaking of the decadence and complete disorganization of the present order of the Ulemas, and their former power and influence. He illustrated his point by a story from the rich records of the Mahommedans at the time of the Conquest of Constantinople. Tablets were chanted and the meeting was brought to an end, the believers felled with the fragrance of his words.