

Home of Baha-Ollah
Acca, Syria December 17th 1914

Dear friends!

Although the world is disturbed our hearts close to the Heart of the Covenant are at peace. The sun of his Mercy is constantly shining upon us and the heaven of his wisdom pours down the copious rain of his utterances. There is no cessation nor intermission in the Grace of Our Lord. His is Power and Grandeur, Authority and Majesty.

When I arose this morning and prepared tea for Badi and myself I never ^{thought} that this will be our last day in Abou Senan. The weather was simply splendid, cool, bracing, clear and transparent. I simply enjoyed every minute of it and felt keenly the quiet beauty and charming scene of plain and dales, mountains and valleys. While we were drinking tea and looking forward to another sweet day of delightful companionship with the Beloved and a long walk in the hills to gather armfuls of narcissus Isfandeyar entered our Cabin and upset all our plans by telling us ^{that} the Master is going to leave and he ~~has~~ ordered to prepare the carriage. Seeing ^{my} cup of tea I leapt up from my seat and bounded out of door to get my orders. In a second I ~~found myself~~ ^{was} in the reception-room of Sheik Saleh and found the Master sitting in his accustomed place, writing. I stood erect at the Threshold. He raised his eyes from the paper and looking into my face said: - "Gather thy things. We are going to leave Abou Senan for Acca." I was back in my cabin and in less than five minutes I was ready. Then he sent for Badi Effendi and charged him to give great importance to the Baha'i school, for ^{he said} this is a service to the Blessed Perfection. His is a fine and useful life, because he is teaching and training these happy ^{Baha} children with such love and skill and patience. For the last few days I have watched his system of teaching and it is simply wonderful. In comparison to his life I consider mine such a useless thing. I find myself always in the way of the people. Every one is so good and kind and I feel so sorry that I cannot do something for them. I have been always and am such a helpless thing. I have longed to do something good and worthy of the Cause but my expectations have been always doomed to disappointment. I have neither the capacity nor the means at my disposal. Day and night I pray for greater capability and I hope ^I will fulfill my wishes and desires.

Before we started descending the Mountain the clouds covered the fair face of the sky and rain was pouring down. A horse was brought for the Beloved, the younger son of Shirk Saleh keeping the rein in his hand, Khase, two other Bahais carrying the luggage and myself walked down ~~over~~ the rocks and through the mud. In the morning as I passed the house of Beloved I heard a familiar voice from the Balcony and when I raised my eyes, ^{what} do you think I saw? The happy, laughing face of Mrs. ^{Lu} Getsinger. During the last two days of her arrival I did not see her for a moment and now I was going to leave Abov Senan without seeing her but I will carry with me her "laughing face" hoping ^{that} I will have the pleasure of meeting her in the not distant future.

The carriage was waiting for us at the foot of the Mountain and we rode in it and started on our way. The road was so muddy and sloughy ^{that} the wheels entered the mud up to their spokes. In the carriage there was a Persian Jew, by the name Esmael who has been a friend of the Master for the ^{last 10 years} years. He is an Orthodox Jew and a strong believer in the Jewish prophecy and believes ^{firmly that the} "Messiah" shall appear in two years. He knows a great deal about the Bahai revelation and has met Baha-Ollah. Several times he has promised the Master that if "Messiah" do not appear at such a date he will leave Jewish traditions ~~but~~ on the ground that his reckonings ^{have} been wrong ^{every time}, he has changed the date. Now he swears that this will be the last date and in two years his promised Messiah shall appear and make all the people Jews. Since our arrival in the Holyland the Master has seen him many times and helped him always. He is a funny old man, about 70 years ^{old}, with thin white whiskers and has been in Acca and Haifa for forty two years. Yesterday he came to Abov Senan and this morning the Beloved took him back. "Now tell me, Ismael" the Master said, while beating several successive ^{kindly} blows on his back and cheeks "Art thou sure that the Messiah shall appear after two years? If he do not appear in that ^{time} wilt thou continue to believe in the Talmud and Rabbinical lore? Several times thou hast covenanted with me and every ^{time} thou hast broken it. This must be the very last time, otherwise I will punish thee." He pledged his word of honor that this will be the last time and that he is sure, very sure that the promised One will become manifest in 1916. Then the Master spoke about Mohamadan and Christian Calenders, the prophetic dates mentioned in Daniel, the scattering of the Jews at the time of Titus and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Then he asked me to read aloud the articles published in *Servati'-Gouown*, especially the translation of his address in the Jewish Synagogue of San-Francisco for the benefit of Esmael. When we reached near Acca he related for us some funny stories about his experiences in Tiberias in former years. "O Esmael!" he said at last "Through the power of God I have been able to prove the divine station of Christ to thousands of Jews in America but I have been unable to do the same to our Jew in the Holyland. What I can I do with thee? They are the real Israel, they are free from prejudices but thou art so different. Nothing can shake thy faith in the Mishna and the Rabbis, although they have fooled thee several times. If I descend from Heaven today these Jews will be the first people to persecute and crucify him as they did centuries ago."

We were glad to found ourselves under the sheltering roofs of the Home of Baha-Allah. When the Beloved entered his room he sat quietly on the ^{divan} and said: "Oh! We escaped from Ahou Senaw. Did we not? Although the weather was delightful and dry I did not feel at home. In this room - the room of the Blessed Perfection - I feel happy and composed. Nowhere else do I feel ~~do I feel~~ so joyous and happy as in this room! Here, here I realize the peace of the spirit."

Lunch was served and Esmael and myself found ourselves around the table. "Hast thou read 'Vahye' Kaudet? [the little revelation] Therein are many prophecies concerning the events in Acca. It is a wonderful book. The Jewish Rabbis seldom give out this book. Mirza Yagoub who was a good Jewish Baha'i brought it to me. If you can get that ~~that~~ book you will enjoy its contents," Esmael does not eat food cooked by the Bahais - so the Master ^{with} his supreme attention to all the details had ordered a dish suitable to his taste. "We let everyone enjoy the freedom of his conscience. We have no prejudice. Once in Tiberias a Rabbi called on me. It was about noon and dinner was served. Several kinds of foods were set on the table. Our Rabbi could not touch any of these, so I asked our friends to bring him eggs, olive oil, lemon etc. He asked me whether I allowed him to take his food out of his pocket. Then he took ^{out} a piece of ^{dirty} smoked fish ~~and~~ and began to eat. Its evil odor filled the room. I questioned him: 'Be just, Rabbi. Dost thou consider all these daintily cooked dishes as 'Taref' and this putrid piece of fish as 'Kasher'? He did not answer."

In the afternoon the Military Doctor and the Pharmacist called on the Beloved and tea was served to them. They asked him about the war in Europe. He answered:- "It will be very difficult for Germany and France to endure the financial strain beyond the spring but England is indefatigable. She can endure it much longer. Anyway all the nations concerned are conquered and their losses will be simply incalculable. Demetris called on the Master and in the course of conversation said:- "The money received from your Excellency for the Orthodox Christians was spent for the benefit of all. We bought wheat and divided it amongst all the poor ones. Notwithstanding the difficulties you have been more generous to us than in former years, consequently each person received more than his share and all of them are praising the generosity of Abbas Effendi and praying to God that He may bestow upon him long life." For nearly two hours I was with him and while walking to and fro he spoke on several personal subjects.

In the evening the few believers gathered in the house and were reading the Turkish Articles in the Servat' forum when we heard the voice of the Beloved calling us to him. "Consider" he said when we all sat on the floor "how in this critical time these articles are published in Constantinople, in the very seat of Turkish power and dominion! The writer and translator of these articles is a strict Mohamadaw whom I know very well. You must praise the Blessed Perfection for He has glorified you from amongst all mankind.

One of the believers told him that the Government has taken possession of the Latin Monastery in Acre and locked its gate, They have also brought down the bell of another church. The Master said:- "What benefit will they acquire from these tyrannical acts. If they have lowered or silenced one bell there are millions of chimes that declare the name of Christ. This is not a disgrace to the name of Jesus."

Coming down we continued to read the articles. In the meantime they brought the word that Matosaref desires to call on the Master. After a few minutes he came and stayed till very late. The Beloved sent for the Turkish magazines and read to him aloud the translations of his addresses. We could hear his clear, resonant voice, powerful, strong and vibrant with life.

A heavy rain descended and deluged the streets of Acre.