

5
Home of Baba Ollah.
Acca Syria December 8th 1914

Dear friends!

The other day one of the believers related a story about "Happiness". Do you like to hear it? The King of a certain country became violently sick. Many celebrated Doctor of his realm treated him but there appeared no improvement. After holding a general consultation and discussing all the symptoms of the King's malady they gave out as their final opinion that they are unable to diagnose his case. All the Counsellors and Ministers of the State were despaired and greatly perplexed. Lo! all of a sudden a poor man appeared at the door of the Palace and claimed that he will cure the reigning Monarch. The courtiers were astonished and credulous but they thought at the same time it will not harm the King if this enthusiastic pretender could see him and who knows, probably he might be able to cure their beloved ruler. At last he was given permission to enter the royal chamber. After thoroughly examining the King he said to the Ministers that they must find for their Chief the shirt of a "happy man", that no sooner he is dressed in it he will be made well. The old man and his strange treatment was ridiculed on all sides. They pushed him out of the palace and for the time being his "medecine" was forgotten. The King, on the other hand grew worse day by day and the anxiety of his subjects increased. One day one of the Ministers said to his colleagues: 'let us at least try the treatment of that poor man, perhaps it will be beneficial to the restoring of the King's health.' But whom do we consider a "happy man"? Surely, the Prime Minister. He was not present at their Conference but they called on him later on and proposed to him their plan. "I!" the Prime Minister cried out "a happy man! Gracious! I am the most miserable man in the Capital. With all the affairs of state, with all responsibilities, all the worries of office-seekers I cannot claim one moment of happiness. You must certainly find some one else. I am exempt from that magic circle. I do not know what happiness is." The Ministers inquired from each other whether any one of them is happy to give his shirt to the King but they found out they have all their anxieties, troubles, sorrows and griefs both private and public.

appointing a committee for this special purpose it commenced on its work with a thorough faithfulness. They went to the financiers, bankers, merchants, artists, heads of large concerns, captains of industry, millionaires, professors and teachers and to their utter bewilderingment they found none happy, each person presented to them a catalogue of his miseries and little by little the members of the committee become interesting Compendiums of the internal states of the subjects. Then they started to put their ^{already} tabulated questions to the traders, butchers, cobblers, druggists, carpenters etc etc and was disqualified. There was, then practically no hope to find a really "happy man" in this wide realm. At last one winter day they were passing by a stable, and they saw a ^{man} bare-footed man, clothed in a rugged overcoat standing in the sun. "Let us ask this ^{man} whether he is happy?" said one of the Committee. "Dear me! I believe from all the appearances that he is very unhappy," answered the second. "Hast thou not learned by this time that thou must not judge the people by the appearances?" put in a third. "Very well, then, let us ask him." Entering the stable they asked the shivering man whether he is happy. "Yes my sonnies," he answered genially with a broad grin. They stared at each other unbelievably and asked him other questions. He gave intelligent answers to every one of them. There was no doubt about that. Here at last they have found a "happy man." In their excitement they ran toward him to get his shirt for the sick King but when they pushed aside his tattered overcoat they were face to face with bare skin - the happy man had no shirt." —

Today I heard another story about the American Admiral of the two American warships lying at anchor in the harbor of Beirut and his visit to the Vali or the governor-general of that province. I do not vouchsafe its accuracy but it is being whispered from lips to lips illustrating American resourcefulness, courage, foolhardiness and "bluff". It is being related that the Captain of one of the warships pays a call to Vali in Beirut. In the course of conversation the Vali demands the Captain rather brusquely that the wireless must be put down. Most courteously the American Captain answers: — "We are ready to obey your command but we have an

1
'Admiral' in the ship who is in supreme command over all the officers. This matter must be referred to him." "But can I meet your Admiral?" the Vali asks. "Surely, your Excellency. He will be delighted to make your ^{acquaintance} but unfortunately he is a little indisposed," the Captain answers, "Then I suppose I must come to ^{the} ship to see him regarding this affair, you know it is imperative." "Of course, we do not like to trouble your Excellency, but if you can spare one or two hours from your official duties all the officers and bluejackets will be honored with your visit." "Then I will call on you with my staff at three o'clock this afternoon." "I can assure you that we will be all de-lighted to receive your Excellency and the Admiral will be honored."

The Captain returns to the ship and prepares a lavish reception for the governor and his aids. At three o'clock they all arrive. The band plays American and Turkish music, tea, lemonade, cakes of all sorts and shapes, ice-cream are served. After sometimes the Vali asks the Captain where is the Admiral? "Oh! your Excellency, I beg your pardon, the social side of our intercourse made me forget our affair; but as I told you the 'Admiral' is not feeling very 'light', he is too heavy to leave his 'bed' yet. Will it too much trouble if you call on him in his cabin?" Then the Captain conducts very ceremoniously the Vali and his men to the 'gun deck'. Pointing to it he very quietly says:- "your Excellency, this is my 'Admiral'; you may ask him your question. If he tells me to bring down the wireless I will, if not I will have to carry out his orders."

The Master often tells us stories about the misers of different countries. Here is one of them:- "Once upon a time there was a merchant in the city of Balsora. His name was Reza. Although he was very wealthy yet he was the most close-fisted, narrow-hearted man that ever lived in his town. For avarice and penuriousness he was made a proverb by his countrymen. Because of his stinginess he made his family suffer hunger and starvation. In his office he had a clerk to whom he paid a very small salary. This clerk had a large family and through the practice of the most economical means he could not make both ends meet. Often he dreamed of a rise

in his salary but in vain. At last an idea was flushed through his mind that made him hopeful that there surely will be a rise soon. They had only one more week before Newyear day and the poor clerk thought if he gave a present to his master he would no doubt reciprocate the feeling and augment his salary. Hence on that very day he went to the market, bought the head of a sheep, cooked it in his oven and carried it in a tray to the house of the merchant. The week passed without any signs and on the Newyear's day he called at the house of his master to wish him happiness. He was most hopeful and anticipated a bright future. When he entered the room the merchant greeted him very effusively. This made him more hopeful. "I thank you very heartily" the master said to his expecting clerk "for the gift you sent to our house. It saved us a great deal of expense I assure you. We have been feasting on it during the last week. The first day we ate its ears, the second day its eyes, the third day the skin over the head, the fourth day, its tongue, the fifth day its meat, the sixth day we cleaned its bones and on the seventh day its brain." The clerk was disgusted with this manifestation of stinginess that he left him and the town, starting to hunt his fortune in other climes. After travelling for several years and acquiring experiences as well as riches he returned to his native city and started ⁱⁿ a business of his own. One day ~~day~~ he was walking through the main street and his attention was attracted by a most palatial residence. He peeped in and saw a most beautiful garden. He inquired from one of the many servants lounging around: - "Whose house is this?" "Art thou an stranger?" "Not exactly." "Well, how is it that thou dost not know? This is the house of Kareem the son of Reza, the miser-merchant." "Oh!" gasped the former clerk of the miser "the father hoarded, the son is spending it." And ~~he~~ disappeared through the crowd.

From this morning till 11 P.M. many people called on the Beloved. Before noon he went out for two hours. Because the weather was a little cold and windy he ate his lunch and dinner in his ^{own} room. As a number of prominent men have left and are leaving Acca for Damascus to welcome "the Holy Flag", not knowing or ^{not} realizing the exact position of the Beloved, they are pleading him to go with them but he has refused this strange invitation. The Master will welcome the Flag of Peace, Love, Conciliation and international friendship.