

Home of Baha-Ollah
acca Syria. Dec 11th 1914

Dear friends!

Like a sweet, pure, lovely child of heaven the Master said: "I want so much to go to the blessed Rouzeh today. There, at the Blessed Tomb, in the Invisible Presence of Baha Ollah I pour out my heart and invoke His benedictions. Oh! I am so tired with the worries and troubles of this life. Herein one finds no rest nor joy. It is a house of mourning. I want to fly to the Sacred Threshold and fill the goblet of my heart with His heavenly Peace. There, I shall find happiness and unalloyed ecstasy, but the weather is so bad, the rain is pouring down, the wind is blowing hard and the day is unfit to go out. Mirza Ahmad, tell me, what slight ^{we} do today?" Considering the inclemency of the weather I thought it would be better if the Beloved stayed indoors and after some reluctance on his part and persuasion on my part we came to the fortunate conclusion and the Visit to the Holy Tomb was postponed to tomorrow afternoon.

About 2 hours before sunrise I was called out of my bed by one of the two believers who stayed last night in the house. The Master was up, the Samavar was boiling and tea prepared for our delectation. But it was the thirst for the "spiritual tea" that awoke me. Hurriedly I was dressed and made my way through the darkness to the other house. I opened the door of the blessed room and entered unannounced. The Master was sitting in his accustomed place on the divan in the corner of the room fronting the window. Only a candle was burning on the opposite table strewn over with letters and books. There was a pause and a stillness and the dim light added to the mystery and magic of the sacred moments. The eyes of the King of Kings were closed, his white beard shone, his countenance was spread the calmness of the Deep, his spotless white turban (Moulavi) towered above his head and as I looked well I saw his silvery locks nestling beautifully over his broad shoulders. This is indeed the unearthly majesty of the Lord! Who dares to doubt for one second that he is not sitting in the

Presence of the god-man, the visible incarnation of the Divine Idea. Out of the unutterable stillness the voice of the Beloved of the hearts was heard: "Happiness is the ambrosia of the spirit and the nectar of the souls. It confers on man the boon of immortality and the gift of spiritual vision. Happiness is the morning star guiding the wandering steps to the perennial abode of the blessed. Happiness is crystalline river flowing ^{from} the divine mountains through the paradise of the mind and causing on its banks to grow the imperishable ideals of humanity. Happiness is the cherubim of the Almighty which inspires mankind to perform feats of self-sacrifice and deeds of disinterested philanthropy. Happiness is the melodious-singing nightingale which transforms the darkened world of sorrow into the beaming-realm of celestial beatitude. Happiness is the waving ocean in the depth of which the diver finds the pearls of resignation and the corals of renunciation. Happiness is the elysium wherein grows the asphodels of good-will and the amaranths of forgiveness. Happiness is the heaven of God in the blue fields of which are studded bright rolling orbs of satisfaction and fixed stars of contentment and Happiness is the scintillating Crown of humanity the shining gems of which are the Teachings of the past prophets and the principles of His Holiness Baha'ullah. The happiness of man is not dependent on outward things, such as ^{riches}, honors, ornaments and clothes. It is however dependent upon the susceptibilities of the heart and the attitude of the mind. Praise be to God that through the Favours and Bounties of the Blessed Perfection the means of Happiness are prepared for you. Render ye thanksgiving unto Him for at a time that the whole world is submerged in the sea of war, lamentation and tribulation you are being protected and preserved and are joyous and happy through the emanation of the Kingdom. Millions of souls are longing to attain to what you have attained and thousands of Bahais would happily give up their lives just to be in your place for one day and Alas! it is impossible for them. Were it not for the Graces of the Blessed Perfection who would have noticed us? how would

we have been confirmed to travel throughout the East and the West and herald His Holy Cause? Who would have respected and honored us ^{then} could we utter even one word in His praise and glorification? Through Him we were exalted. Now is it in accord with the spirit of loyalty, and the dictate of faithfulness to forget all these Bounties, to neglect those Favours, to cease to care for those Bestowals, to consign to oblivion His heavenly behests? No, for a thousand times No. We must be the devoted servants at His Threshold, the slaves of His Court, the spreaders of His Cause, the proclaimers of His Name throughout the world, the standard-bearers of His Regiments, the teachers of the Mysteries of His Kingdom, the deliverers of His Words and the bearers of the Glad tidings of His Revelation. If we have Him with us we are invulnerable; but if we have Him not and though the whole world is on our side we have nothing. In Him and through Him we will be confirmed to do His Will and ^{to} bring mankind nigh unto His Eternal Canopy.

Throughout this wonderful message he hardly opened his eyes. It was indeed a message out of the world of light - each word a ^{beaming} shaft of holy inspiration and it was with awe and wonder that I left His Presence, entirely forgetting that there were ^{also} my two companions and when I was out I watched the many stars twinkling and the sun still sleeping in its couch of gold and diamond.

Our two guests departed at 9. Am and the Beloved sent for me. "Come, my friend" he said "speak to me. I do not feel happy today. I did not sleep last night. I hope that God may not give you one of my sleepless, sorrowful nights, I pray that He may not give ^{it} even to one of my enemies. It is most inexplicable to me that certain souls to whom I have been kind all through their lives do arise to persecute ~~me~~ and oppress me. Any way, let us forget them. Did I not tell thee to talk to me ~~talk~~ about America and the believers."

I told him then about the President Wilson's Proclamation

for a National Day of Prayer for Peace on Sunday October fourth, and how the different Bahar Assemblies, especially New York and Washington held meetings to express their sympathy in favor of Peace. This news pleased him much and assured me that God has heard the prayer of a united nation. Then I told him of the brilliant idea of a toy ship to carry a message from the children of America to the unhappy children of Europe, and read to him extracts from an article on this subject. Its contents touched his heart and before translating his comments I will quote herein those parts I read to him: - "When daddy goes to work each morning you expect him to come home at night. You would be very sad if he did not, wouldn't you? Over in Europe where Kings rule, millions of fathers are being sent to work by the Kings - the work of war. The Kings tell them to go and fight and they have to go, even if there is no one left at home to earn money to buy food and clothing and pay the rent. Hundreds of thousands of fathers will never come home to their little boys and girls. They will be killed by the fathers of other little boys and girls who do not really hate them, but who kill because they have ordered to do so. . . . Have you stopped to think what is going to happen on Christmas day to the children of Europe whose Santa Claus fell dead on the battlefield with a bullet in his heart - the father whose kiss and cheery 'up, lazy boats, Kris Kringle has been here!' once awake them on Christ's birth day? For these bereaved children there will be no Kris Kringle. His sleigh bells will not jingle on the frosty air in the Black Forest, and the snows of the Russian steppes will be untrodden by the good Saint's galloping reindeer. Stockings will hang limp and empty in many a French cottage and the smoky chimneys of England will know him not. . . . One million Christmas tragedies - think of it! . . . Children of America, if you could help you would, wouldn't you? . . . you can be Santa Claus to these little boys and girls whose daddies died fighting for their country. You can stretch out your hands across the sea bearing messages of love and hope and sympathy

to the children of a war-ridden continent - messages from fortunate America to unfortunate Europe. Don't you want to help? Of course you do! Listen! Let each little boy and each little girl be a Kris Kringle. Isn't that a fine thought? Wouldn't you love to be that great saint? Wouldn't you love to put your gifts in a sleigh and take the reins in your hands and drive the reindeers over the roofs of the houses, slipping down the chimneys and leaving your gifts for those who badly need them? Can you do it? Of course you can. You can help load the sleigh and you can shut your eyes and feel the reins in your fingers and drive the reindeer up and down the lanes of England, lined with thatch-roofed cottages, through the vineyards of France, and the stultile fields of ~~Russia~~ Belgium, across the white-mantled stretches of Russia, up and down the highway of Germany, over the hills of Austria and along the frozen Danube to the Servian peasant's hut, stopping to leave a surprise - for your little brother and sister whose father is dead. You may live to be a hundred years old, you may travel all over the world and see its wonders and delights but never will you have such a journey as that. England and France and Germany intend to salute the boat that is carrying your gifts - not to stop it. Your ship will be a ship of Good-will. It will be Santa Claus' ship. And all the countries at war will dip their flags to it as such. just think what a grand sight the ship will make that carries your gift to Europe. Can't you picture it, laden with the thousands upon thousands of presents from the children of America? It will be officered and manned by the fathers of little boys and girls who will take every care that it safely reaches the countries which are sunk in the want of war. Everybody who sees it know what it is; for it will fly two flags. One will be your flag, the flag you love, the beautiful stars and stripes. The other, too will be your flag. It will be a white flag. On its snowy surface will be a single golden star, the 'Star of Hope'. The motto on that flag will be the single word 'Inasmuch'. (Inasmuch ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. St Matt. XXV. 40) "

The Master said: "Only in America such brilliant ideas are born. This will be a most effective token of America's attitude in the matter of brotherhood and the rising generations of the several countries will not forget this unique lesson of Charity and solidarity. America is big and their ideas are also big and all-inclusive. I wish there was more than one ship carrying such joy-bringing gifts to the children of Europe. This is indeed a marvellous manifestation of goodwill and I wish the writer of the article heavenly blessing. Its appeal is natural and spontaneous and moves the hearts of the readers. Good luck to the ship and the Flag of Hope. Probably by this time it has reached its destination and the gifts are on their thousands ways. I love also to think of the little girls and little boys receiving these surprises and the little boys and the little girls in America who have made sacrifices to make possible this never-to-be-forgotten event in the history of mankind. Hail to them from the Holy Land, the birthplace of Christ! They have made the hearts of Christ very happy. He is pleased with them. A rare opportunity was offered to them and I hope they have availed themselves to fill the ship to its very deck. . . . The ~~center~~ ^{axis around which the} consolation of the hearts revolves is the Faith in God. If the father of a youth who believes in God is killed in the war - he will say to himself I have God for my father, whose Fatherhood is eternal. He is the Comforter of the broken-hearted ones. The miraculous power of Faith will cheer them up and heal their wounds. How difficult indeed is for these souls who are left behind to comfort themselves. Are the Kings and the emperors their comforters? Can they console themselves because they have shed their blood for their task masters, or for a piece of earth they have been ~~deceived~~ led to believe as their 'country', the defence of which is 'patriotic'? Those who are left behind are sadly disillusioned but there will be neither hope nor courage to go on with their work while they are surrounded with so much misery.

If they had shed their blood for a very great Cause, it would at least console their remnants, but now it is all for greed, selfishness, national pride, commercial motives etc. What greater happiness for man than to sacrifice his life in the Path of his Maker! "

From nine A.M. I was with the Master till past eleven P.M. Many people called on him and with every one he talked most wonderfully. In the morning a delegation of 4 Christian gentlemen called and they were with him for more than one hour speaking about current events and how many cities in Syria are in the grasp of famine. In the afternoon Mirza Sayad Houssein Afnan was in the Presence. The Master was walking and discoursing on the wonders of the Cause. He gave him a pomegranate and my share was a mandarine. He came near, looked into my eyes, smiled and smote on my left cheek. "This mandarine kisses thy hand" he said "For the present thou art with me here in Acca. Thou hast been with me now for a long time. God willing we will be together in all the spiritual worlds of the Blessed Perfection. Praise be to God that we are together. Those souls who are together at this Holy Threshold in this world are undoubtedly together in the Divine world. Whether here or elsewhere there will be no separation." This heavenly blessing on his own part made me still more unworthy to stand at His Court and the tears of joy and thankfulness filled my eyes. What else can one do but to sacrifice his life in His Path! He is my Manifest Light and Divine Guide.

In the evening he called the believers into his room and related three historical events which transpired during the life of Baha Ollah in Persia, Bagdad and Acca.

During the last few days we have had always some one at the table but tonight we were alone. We are eating now in a small room ^{next} to his. We sit on the floor. "Come" the Blessed One said "tonight there is no one but me and thee. Is not this ideal? Come, my son, we will eat together with the utmost joy and fragrance. "