

Home of Baha-ollah

Acca. Syria

December 27th 1914

Dear friends!

just as the supply of "free goods" such as air, sunlight and water, according to the economist theory is unlimited and human wants are abundantly satisfied at all times - so also the sources of the pure air of the garden of Akbar, the rays of the Sun of Reality and the Water of the Knowledge of God are ⁱⁿ withheld nor will they ever be diminished. They are made accessible to men with almost no exertion on their part. They are not like "economic goods" for the acquisition of which we must make an effort, give our personal services or offer some material objects which have been the products of our faculties. Of the "free goods" of God there exist such superabundance, that no lack of them is ever felt. Only when people prefer the close, compressed room of dogmatism, the dark jail of bigotry and the sandy Shara of national and religious prejudices, some of them feel the lack of these "divine utilities" and cry for support and guidance. Through their ignorance and superstitious they have misled simple men into the waterless wilderness of metaphysical speculations, into the gloomy subterranean of ecclesiastical jargons and into the airless, fetid prisons of musty theology. Thus they have become dull, spiritless, yellow, emaciated, gaunt and reduced to the shadows of their former selves. The Baha'is who have been taught to soar in the exhilarating air of human brotherhood, back in the sunlight of economic solidarity and drink from the fountain of social inter-dependence must be ready at all time to assist their spiritual brothers and sisters, - ^{that} they may ^{also} come out of their former unsalutary habitations and be joined to the rank of those ^{who} are set free from the chains and fetters of narrow-mindedness. We have not received these celestial gifts through any merit on our part, but ^{by} ^{the} ^{mercy} of Baha-ollah through His own Mercy has chosen us. The air of His Teachings, the sunlight of His Principles, and the Water of His Law were and are intended for all mankind. How foolish on the part of some short-sighted people who in the smallness of their small world who aim to organize a

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a monopoly out of these "spiritual commodities", thus to obtain the exclusive privilege of dealing in, the sole power of regulating the price and manipulating the whole trade. These men and women are the spiritual monopolists and trust mongers and through "friendly agreement" or combinations of identical narrow ideas and dogmatic inclinations they would like to, the giant formation of corporations in religion and morality, provided they may be the only stockholders receiving trust certificates and proportionate dividends annually. How vain is their attempt and how foolish their thoughts! God's truth can never be monopolized nor His universal Outpouring be divided into gold-edged certificates to be given to a privileged few, though they may boast of their private ownership or public control. We Bahais believe that none is deprived of the Bounties of God, that every soul according to his natural or acquired ability receives a share of the Favors of the Merciful and a portion of the Bread descended from heaven. His love is all-embracing and His Kindness all-inclusive. He sustains and trains and feeds all His children. He does not turn away from us but in our blindness we are running away from Him. He is not a cruel taskmaster but a Kind and Benevolent Father. He has planted the seed of His natural religion in the soil of the heart of every man, causing the sun of His Clemency to shine upon it, the Breeze of His Providence waft over it and the water of His watchful solicitude to irrigate it. The azure heaven of His eternal affection is outstretched above all, the stars of His tenderness are shining over all and the earth of His care is spread beneath all. Let us ^{not} commit the mistake of sounding the depth of His Love by the plummet of our understanding or measure the height of His affection by the telescope of our intelligence. If we gauge the depth of the sea of His Truth for a hundred thousand years we will be unable to compass beyond one short span and if we survey the boundless immensity of His creation for millions of years we will be still incapable to report the details of ~~one~~ of its tiniest sections. Let us then know that the map of His Love is not bounded by any latitude and longitude nor is it divided by meridian or equatorial lines. It has neither East nor west, south or north. It is an eternal here and an ever lasting now.

When I arose this morning I heard the Beloved has ordered the carriage to be ready. I wondered where will he be bound to, for he did not tell me anything ^{last} night, nevertheless I prepared myself for the unexpected and went to the other house waiting for him to come down. By and by he appeared and descended the stairs. "I have promised to go with one of the officials to the garden of Ferdauss" he said. "He likes to look over some of the rooms for his family, in case the worse happens to Aera. Doest thou like to accompany us?" I was of course too glad to avail myself of this delightful opportunity. For more than one hour we had to wait for the arrival of the official and the minutes were filled by a lovely description of the days of the Blessed Perfection when he lived in the present house and the wonderfully sacred hours the glorious Son spent with His glorious Father. It is indeed one of the sublime stories of our age! It is already repeated in many forms by the past generation, it can be repeated in diverse forms by the present generations and generations yet unborn will find its repetition never wearisome, always entrancing, thought-purifying and soul-edifying.

Our official arrived with many excuses for his lateness and the Master ^{waved} them aside as unnecessary and welcomed him with true Oriental politeness. Then we rode in the carriage and were in the garden after 10 or 15 minutes. For the last 3 days an oppressive sirocco has been blowing, forbidding almost anyone to go out. Notwithstanding this the Beloved in order to fulfill his promise ^{ventured} out. While he was showing him the rooms, I took a spin around the garden. Tea was prepared by our Zoroastrian farmers who did not expect the Master's coming and then we returned home. Till noon I was in his holy Presence and after my lunch with him he went to his room to take his siesta.

In the evening he asked for the believers and his talk was on the wiles and seductions of the "rebellious Self"; charming in appearance but poisonous in reality. One of the spiritual men has said that my greatest enemy was my ego. It neutralizes even the labors of the prophets. A person may be educated and trained for years by the holy man, but suddenly 'self' takes possession of his heart and leads him through the thorny paths of moral and spiritual degradation. Thus all the education of the holy man availed nothing. In many other ways he illustrated the fact that spiritual instruction without personal capability will not yield permanent results.