

Home of Abdul Baha
Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria
April 22d 1915

Dear friends!

While our Beloved was walking yesterday afternoon around the Sacred Tomb of the Bab and through the flowering-garden, thinking deeply of the Mysteries of God he said: - "In past ages, every night ^{from this Mount Carmel} the voices of the invocations of the saints ascended to the Presence of the Almighty. Yonder plain has also been the habitation of many prophets. They raised the hands of supplication toward the heaven of Mercy, communed with their Maker and longed for the appearance of these Days. All that they could do was to gladden the hearts of mankind with the promises and prophecies of this Age of the Manifestation and were satisfied with the contemplation of His Uncreated, inscrutable ^{glory} Splendor. Alas! now that He has appeared with the sound of Trumpet and the hosts of angels, they are drowned in the sea of negligence and sleep."

After a few moments of silence he said: "A few nights ago I had a lovely dream the memory of which has uplifted my soul. In the world of dream I found myself in the Holy Presence of the Blessed Perfection. With a number of other friends I was standing before Him. He directed His gaze toward me and began to speak to me mercifully, compassionately. My heart felt the joy of His words and my spirit grasped the Favours of His utterances. His boundless Graces overpowered me ^{such an extent that} I knelt and kissed His Divine Feet, weeping. When I awoke I found I was still weeping, the tears rolling on my cheeks."

Speaking about his Western tour he said: "That voyage was epochal in the history of the Bahai Cause. If we were now in the Western world we could indeed serve the Cause of the Ancient Beauty. While in California the Oriental friends wrote me many letters begging me to return for the sake of the Pilgrims who had gathered in the Holyland waiting for my arrival. Thus I yielded to their repeated requests and left these active, thrabbling fields for these passive, dead ones. The eternal results of our lives in these days are our prayers and devotions offered at the Holy Tombs of Baha Olla and the Bab, in behalf of warring nations, antipathic races and clashing humanity. Let us therefore enter the Holy of Holies and pray."

commenting on the attachment of the people to material food he said: - "To what an astounding degree people are attached to their digestive organ! They are more captivated with appetizing, toothsome dishes than attracted to God, their Creator. They are deprived of all the spiritual nutriment, and strange to state, they do not feel its need. If the source of their material sustenance is somewhat ^{decreased} they are immediately agitated and their mental equilibrium disturbed. How low-minded and servile and mean are the people! To the same extent that they are ignoble and grovelling in the boiling pit of passions and self, those souls who have received a portion and a share of the Celestial outpourings are high-minded and magnanimous. The former are worried and vexed if their victuals are not quite ready for one night, the latter are serene and peaceful even if they are starved to death. The real deprivation is when man deprives himself of the Lord's supper which is the banquet of heavenly attributes and divine characteristics."

In the Tomb of the Bab he chanted with his deep-moving, soul-stirring voice the Visitation Tablet and we repeated the words after him in silence. After that he sat for one hour in the reception room, while Tablets were read and poems chanted. Descending the mountain he continued his way through the Colony and spoke with me about his probable forthcoming trip to Siberia. "If we go there this time we may rent a house for our temporary residence. I expect to take my sister also."

This morning he came out of the house and was walking in the garden. Among other things he said: - "Horticulture is one of the most fascinating arts. I love it and watch the growth of the trees and flowers as one watches the growth of the babies. If the heart of a gardener is not an artistic garden in itself he will not be able to produce a single flower. His outward garden must be a representative of his inner garden. He must study well the nature and disposition of the flowers. Then his heart will be rejoiced and his spirituality increased. As he progresses in his art he will be impressed more and more with the perfection of God's creation in producing the ever expansive varieties of plants and vegetations."

Speaking about forgiveness he said: "Forgiveness must be the natural spontaneous quality of every man. We must not break the hearts of

those with whom we are associating. God is not pleased with such an act. There are nevertheless some people who break their own hearts through their own evil deeds and sins. Having not lived in accord with the good-pleasure of the Lord ^{and} transgressing His laws and breaking His statutes they become objects of disgrace and contempt in their own eyes and that of their fellow men.

Isfandiyar prepared the landau and he rode away alone to call on Doctor Finkelshteyn, the Director of the Jewish Industrial Institute, returning about noon.

In the afternoon we had a meeting in the house of Mirza Kassein Haji and all the friends were present. The Master shone upon all with the effulgence of smiles. Several poems were chanted with great enthusiasm. Haji Mirza Haydar Ali was in his best and most jovial humor and related 6 short, concise, stories out of the mine of his personal experiences during the years of his wandering in Asia. They were funny in the extreme and made the Master laugh as I have seldom seen him laugh with such hearty abandon and self-surrender. Then with inimitable wit and ready sparkle he in turn recounted other wonderful Bahai stories, causing laughter and merriment. Strictly speaking it was a day of Happiness and joy. For more than one hour the meeting was a clear mirror reflecting the ecstasy and rapture of the spiritual Kingdom. We all thought we were in heaven, all sorrows were banished and the ideal bliss crowned. Coming out of the house he called on a sick Bahai and then asked Haji M. H. Ali and this ^{seaman} to ride with him in the landau. I had in my hand the French edition of the lectures delivered at the Universal Races Congress held in London July 1911. He asked me to read to him the lecture of Mr. M. J. Spiller on the problem of equality between the human races and then I translated to him his own letter. He said: "Noble as they were the sentiments and ideals of the Congress they produced no results. They began with words and ended with words. It seemed as though it accentuated the differences and brought ~~into~~ into relief the varieties of opinions and prejudices ^{which} culminated in this greatest war of human history."

When we reached the end of our route more than 200 children were gathered there. The Master came down and with the help of three soldiers we lined them up, giving to each ^{one} a ~~piece~~ of coin.

In the evening while we were sitting around the table of the Lord ^{and partaking} of his material food he said: "Under all circumstances man must ^{turn} his face ^{toward} God and overlook the shortcomings of others, - so that he may prosper in his affairs. There are some people who would go any length, in order to gain fame and station. For the ephemeral fame of a few days they would be willing to give up their lives and yet it eludes them. There are others who do not even dream of it, who shun it and keep out of its way but it shows its face to them and covers their grave. How can a man attain to the ethereal height of true, solid fame if he chases after the shadows of his own pleasures and lust? Will his spiritual station be equal to the one who followed none of these? No. In brief, man must be severed from all the material conditions of life like unto the disciples of His Holiness Christ. They forsake the joys and delights of the physical life and attached themselves to the Cause of their Master. They became the embodiments of spirituality and the manifestors of mercifulness."

After supper he called me to his sleeping room and asked me to translate to him a letter received ^{from} Mr. H. H. T. Hakeyan, the Persian Consul General in New York. It contained the article of Elliot Hubbard on the Cause, published in one of the papers. When I finished translating he said: - "Wait! till the end of this war. The new Ideals of Peace which I have nurtured in my mind will be promoted. God willing we shall take another journey and achieve greater victories. After this war new plans, new thoughts and new sound theories are essential. Old thoughts will be good for the scrap basket. A new table must be spread, new dishes must be cooked and new appetite must be cultivated. The seeds of new flowers must be sown, new saplings must be planted, new roads must be constructed, a new code of ethics must be discovered, new conventions for the amicable settlement of international disputes must be evolved, new lamps must be lighted, new truths must be laid bare, new capability and ability must be trained, new modes of expression must be found, new ^{new} worlds must be conquered, new relations must be established and new standards of life must be upraised." X