

Jan. 13, 1914.

float false rumors and fabricate groundless accusations. "The very names of these people shall be forgotten while the Cause shall rise and rise to the very apogee of fame and glory. -----My greatest aspiration is to see myself on the Cross. Oh! How I long, how I long for this cup and for its ruby contents! The most hateful thing to my eyes is to die in bed. I dislike it. How I love to see myself on the cross in these last days of my life! That I may become enkindled like unto a lamp betwix the heaven and earth. There, there, my friends, I LOVE to seek myself. Oh! God willing, God willing! (And as He says these tragic words He laughs as though He were talking about the most pleasant thing in life---yet with a grim and dramatic determination ---many eyes were filled with tears and many were sobbing uncontrollably.) that that Divine day may soon come, that blessed hour may soon arrive! I am the Servant of the Blessed Perfection. In Bagdad I was a child. There and then He announced to me the Word, and I believed Him. As soon as He proclaimed to me the Word, I threw myself at His Holy Feet and implored and supplicated Him to accept this one drop of blood as a sacrifice in His Pathway. Sacrifice! How sweet is the word to my taste! There is no greater Bounty than this for me! What greater glory can I conceive than to see this neck chained for His sake, these feet fettered for His Love, this body mutilated or thrown into the depths of the sea for His Cause. If in reality we are His sincere lovers--If in reality I am His sincere Servant, then I must sacrifice my life my all at His Blessed Threshold. The Blessed Perfection has trained and educated me for more than fifty years that I may sacrifice my life for Him. Praise be to God that the Favors and Bounties of Baha' o'llah have caused the appearance of such friends as are spreaders of the Glad-Tidings and ready at every moment to sacrifice their lives. They have no idea save self-sacrifice. With heart and soul they are devoted to the Cause. Like unto the stars they shine, and like unto the sea, they wave!

He spoke about other matters, bringing in humor and laughter, and for the present casting off the veil of sadness and gloom which was thrown over us by the effect of His previous words. It was altogether a wonderful meeting, displaying more than ever the height and depth of the Master's character, and exhibiting his divine emotions under the spell of His own earnestness.

Ahmad Sohrab.

EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB.

January 17, 1914.

WORDS OF ABDUL BAHÁ.

Tonight I desire to speak to you on a most important subject, which you must engrave on the Tablets of your hearts like unto the engraving of pictures on adamantine rock, to the extent that you may never forget it, and as you travel through life will relate it to the believers of God.

It is this: The Holy, Divine Manifestations are unique and peerless. They are the arch-types of celestial and spiritual virtues in their own age and cycle. They stand on the summit of the Mount of Vision and they foreshadow the perfections of the evolving humanity.

For example: during the dispensation of His Holiness Moses-- peace be upon Him-- there was not a single human soul similar or like unto Him. He surpassed all the Holy Souls who came after Him, even the Hosts of the Israelitish prophets. In a similar manner all the people who lived during the cycle of His Holiness Christ-- may My life be a sacrifice to Him-- were under His spiritual authority. They had no will of their own. He was the Sun and the others were the lamps. He was unique and peerless, the center and the focal point of the mighty forces. Everyone else was under His shadow. He was the Orb and the others were the stars. He was also unique and peerless. Everyone caught the rays of Light from Him, and was enkindled through His Fire. In a like manner was the epoch of His Holiness the Bab-- may the life of aught else be a ransom to Him--and He was matchless and without a peer. All the rivers received their strength from that great sea.

Finally during the cycle of the Blessed Perfection-- may My life be a sacrifice to His believers-- all are beneath His shadow. All are beneath His shadow. He is the unique and peerless one, till the next Manifestation. It is however not definite that it will be 1000 years; it may be 5000, or 10,000 or 20,000 years; but it is definite that for the coming 1000 years there will appear no Manifestation, for 1000 years there shall arise no Sun. All the appearances will be beneath the shade of the Most Great Appearance; they will be as stars of guidance. All of them shall gather around this Fountain of Life; all of them will become illumined with the rays of this sun; all of them will receive a share and a portion from this great Sun; all of them will become vivified with this soul-imparting breeze and all of them will be under the down-pour of this rain. The aim is this: His Holiness the Bab gave the Glad-tidings concerning the Appearance of the Manifestation of God, and His Holiness the Blessed Perfection was the Promised One of all the nations and religions. The Bab was the Morning Star, the twilight heralding the glorious Dawn of the Sun of Reality. Now all of us are under its shadow and receive the refulgent Bestowals from it.

I am Abdul Baha and no more. I am not pleased with whomsoever praises Me with any other title. I am the Servant at the Threshold of the Blessed Perfection, and I hope that this servitude of Mine will become acceptable. Whosoever mentions any other name save this will not please Me at all. Abdul Baha and no more. No person must praise Me except by this name-- ABDUL BAHÁ.

The Blessed Perfection and the Bab are unique and peerless in this Dispensation, and until the next Manifestation. The belief, the opinion and the thoughts of all believers must revolve around this Common Center. This Oneness of belief must become fully realized so that in the future there may arise no differences. His Holiness the Bab was the Morn of Guidance. The Blessed Perfection was the Desired One of all the religions and nations, and all of us are under the Blessed Shade, non-existent and evanescent. All of us are the Servants of this Holy Threshold. All of us are the thralls-- meek, humble and lowly. All of us receive the light from that Sun of Reality. There is no other nation, no other quality, no other appealation for us save this. I AM ABDUL BAHÁ. The believers must be satisfied with this explanation so that I may be pleased with them. All of the friends must be united on this matter. Praise be to God, that up to this time, through the Favor and Providence of the Blessed Perfection, no other title or word save ABDUL BAHÁ has appeared either from My tongue or pen. I hope that all the believers will walk in My footsteps, so that I may become satisfied with all of them. Our highest aspiration must be this: that we may become confirmed to render some slight service in the Path of God. There is no greater station than this.

After the Departure of the Blessed Perfection and till the Appearance of the next Manifestation there is no other Station save the STATION of SERVITUDE, pure and absolute. Not a servitude liable to interpretation, but an unconditional and unqualified servitude. This is the real fact. Whosoever expresses any other interpretation, I will not be pleased with him. This is my advice to you. This is my counsel to you. This is my desire. This is my good pleasure. This is my last request from all the believers of God! The balsam to My wound is servitude at the Holy Threshold! My Badrat-el-Montaha is servitude at the ~~Highest~~ Holy Threshold! My highest destination is servitude at the Holy Threshold! My Supreme Paradise is servitude at the Holy Threshold! My Spiritual Temple is servitude at the Holy Threshold! The Most Shining Crown is servitude at the Holy Threshold!

What diadem is more glorious than servitude at the Holy Threshold? I hope that all of us will become assisted in this servitude. I hope each one of us will become confirmed in absolute humility and meekness at the Holy Threshold. This is the Delectable Paradise of the righteous ones! This is the ultimate desire of the believers! This is the Zenith of the hope of the favored ones!

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 19, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Our beloved teacher and brother, Ebne Asdag, the brother of Vargha, two Zoroastrian believers from Teheran, Sayad Zia, Mashadi Akbar, five women and one child, have received permission to return to their respective countries. The steamer will depart tomorrow morning carrying away these birds of the Rose garden of Sanctity. On the way they will stop in many cities, will enter many Bahai Assemblies, and will refresh many old and new hearts with the spoken Words of the Beloved, as well as give the news concerning this Holy Spot.

This morning the Beloved received the above six splendid men, and filled them with the vibrant spirit of action and a yearning to proclaim, more than ever, the Message of the Kingdom:

"You are a good party", He said. "God willing, you shall have good weather on your journey. May you expend your days in the utmost joy and fragrance. May you carry with you the divine Glad Tidings of Abha. May you ever live in the same attitude of invariable satisfaction. When a man is joyous in his heart, ~~the mean~~ ~~when~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~very~~ ~~depths~~ ~~of~~ ~~this~~ heart there is gladness, he will be invariably happy under any conditions, he will be serene under the most adverse circumstances.

Wherever you go convey my longing and greeting to all the believers of God. I am always remembering them, and implore and entreat at the Sacred Threshold in their behalf, begging for them Celestial aid and succor, so that they may arise in the service of the Cause. May the hearts be single and pure! May the intentions be sincere and noble! May the aims be the promotion of the Word of God! May we ever be ready to sacrifice our lives in this Path! May we ever forget the ego and be oblivious to self! May we ever remember one another in our prayers and supplications! Today the Cohorts of the Supreme Concurrence are drawn in battle array on the plain of the Kingdom of Abha, and are eagerly watching to see who shall step into this battle field, so that they may rush to his aid and reinforce him with new and fresh forces.

For this reason I have surrendered every thought, idea, plan and conception, and for the last three years and a half traveled over mountains and deserts, countries and cities, lands and seas, and cried out at the top of my voice, calling mankind to spiritual illumination and celestial life.

The Bestowals and Favors of the Blessed Perfection were as manifest and clear as the rays of the sun! Two years after the Departure of BAHÁ'U'LLAH I wrote a letter which contained the following verse:

"O Abbas! Attack and break through the serried ranks of the armies of the world!"

While I was traveling in the West and entering churches, synagogues, meetings and conventions, I observed that I was fighting ALONE with all these forces, and that the invisible Cohorts came continually to my assistance.*

Afterward Mr. and Mrs. Holbach came to visit the Beloved. He gave them a talk on the narrowness of the Jews, their peculiar religious prejudices, and in order to substantiate His remarks He related two stories about the bigoted Jews of Tiberias:

"The leaders of religions", He said in conclusion, "must be the means of binding the hearts together, establishing good fellowship between the members of the human family, creating a desire for Universal Peace, and emphasizing more the essential Unity of mankind.

Man must be like unto the light, so that he may illuminate the house which he enters. Man must be like unto a fruit bearing tree, giving luscious fruits to every passer-by. Man must be like a fountain, causing every thirsty one to drink from its salubrious water. Man must be like unto the purifying breeze, imparting freshness and vigor to every soul.*

In the afternoon we found the Beloved in the garden, walking through the paths that separate the flower beds. The sun would shine, then hide behind the fleecy clouds. The Beloved looked well and happy, and talked most tenderly with the different pilgrims who were gathered around Him. Abul Gasem and Aga Mohdi had come from Acca, bringing for the Beloved mandarines and oranges from the Rizwan and Fordouss. He ordered Basheer to bring us tea in the rose garden. Oh! how I wished you were here to share with us our spiritual happiness. But Mr. and Mrs. Holbach are here, and from their sympathetic Western standpoint they will present to you before long some wonderful word pictures of these immortal scenes. I have been trying to fill the gap; but now, Mrs. Holbach, with her literary talent, sensitive imagination and historical knowledge, comes to the scene, and her book will no doubt be a priceless spiritual legacy to future generations who are not as fortunate as we are to live during the days in which the Sun of Reality is shining.

Diary Jan. 19, 1914

In the evening the Beloved gave another beautiful Talk about the two years of BAHÁ'U'LLAH'S incarceration in the Barracks of Acca, the foulness of the air and water, the appearance of cholera after the departure of the BLESSED PERFECTION, and two stories concerning the greatness of the Station of the Manifestation.

In the end He said:

"Everyone who appeared in the Presence of BAHÁ'U'LLAH was changed. All the outsiders testified to His superhuman Knowledge, Divine Perspicacity, Spiritual Wisdom and Absolute Grandeur. They were attracted to Him and loved Him!"

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 20, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Very early in the morning we were up to bid our pilgrims who were going to depart a loving farewell. They were sad, of course, but who would not be sad to leave this Holy Spot. If someone brings me the word that the Beloved will send me away I will be almost beside myself with grief. For this reason I sympathize keenly with these men who adore and love the Master. In their company I descended the mountain till we reached the house of ABDUL BAHÁ. Here we waited, the pilgrims hoping to meet once more their King. Already their eyes were filled with tears. After a few minutes they were given the last and memorable privilege. Tea was served to them, but their minds and hearts were not here. They were thinking and weeping over the separation:

"Do not weep", He told them, the Lord is your comfort. The Glory of the King of Kings shall rest upon you! Abide eternally in the realm of joy and fragrance. Now return to your respective homes, impelled by these spiritual stimuli. Quicken the souls with the Power of the Holy Spirit. Do not scatter your thoughts, rather concentrate them around the Vision Splendid. Be ever conducive to unity and harmony. Do not let this opportunity slip out of your fingers. The core of Truth is Unity! Work for it. Let not your steps falter. Work for the Cause of Unity. March! Shall your intellectual and moral forces on the side of Unity. Let not doctrinal uncertainties confuse you. Pierce through the thick veils of the theological dogmas. In the Imperial Court of the Almighty there is no diversification, no class hatred, no denominational bigotries, no racial distinctions, no spiritual lepers, and no infernal prejudices. There we are all one.

In short, a Bahai is a remedy for every ailment, a balm for every wound, and a consolation for every despondent heart. To the needy he is the source of supply; to the oppressed he is the shelter and protection; to the stranger the loving companion; to the helpless the staff of strength; to the defenceless the bulwark of security; and to the deprived one the fountain of mercy. This is the cause of my joy! This is the exhortation of the BLESSED PERFECTION!

Then He kissed each one on his forehead and on his cheeks, sending him out into the world with the warmth of His love and the glow of His touch.

Then the women were ushered into His divine Presence. I was not there to hear the Beloved's Words, but their leave taking with the members of the Holy Family was heart breaking. For the last few days they have been sad and weeping often because they knew they were going to leave. How they would love to stay here all their lives. As they came out of the house I could hear their low sobs and weeping, they sobbed and wept uncontrollably. Several of the friends followed them to the steamer to see that they are comfortably quartered. Although there are even now more than 25 pilgrims in the Home, I thought to myself that at least a few days shall roll on before new ones will arrive; but hardly were we back from the steamer when a telegram was put into the hands of Mirza Mohsen, from Beirut, saying that on this very evening 12 pilgrims would land in Haifa from Russia and several provinces of Persia. Well, that did upset my calculation, didn't it?

In the afternoon the Beloved called me to follow Him. He walked through a few streets and then stopped at the humble store of a fruit vender. He enquired whether an old woman by the name "mother of Joseph Farson" lived in the neighborhood. The house was pointed out to him. He told me to wait outside, and He entered. After a few minutes He returned with two or three old women walking reverently after Him:

"I have never forgotten her, and will always remember her!" were the Words the Beloved said to them when departing.

On His return from this visit He said:

"Nearly forty years ago this woman used to come to our house and do the laundry of the BLESSED PERFECTION. She was a good woman, and I always liked her. For some years all traces of her were lost and I could not locate her. Then the other day her name came back to my memory, and I decided to find her whereabouts. Now she has grown very old and deserves every assistance."

Isn't that a wonderfully illuminating example of the heavenly faithfulness of the Beloved? Can you not imagine Him sitting beside her bed, comforting her, and leaving behind a substantial material token of the love and appreciation He feels? The Master forgets the services of no one, no matter how slight and how old. This is one out of hundreds of charitable deeds rendered by the Beloved, that in all probability will not be recorded, but is typical, full of pathos and of touching devotion.

When we

When we returned home the Persian Consul of Acca was there. The Master took him to the reception room and invited him to stop over for the night. By six o'clock the steamer anchored in the Bay of Haifa. A number of the friends were on the pier to welcome our newly arrived pilgrims. There were nine men, two boys and one woman. Amongst them is Karbalai Muran, from a town near Bakou-Bala-Khany.

Before he accepted this revelation he was well known in all those parts as a dangerous character, whose very name struck terror to the hearts of the members of the community. It may be an exaggeration, but I have heard from several persons that in his former whirlwind "desperado" life he killed about 200 people. Physically he is a giant, he is not fat but he is big, tall and powerfully built. If you put two Mr. Chase together it will be Karbalai Muran. Well, when this man embraced the Bahai Cause and learned of its lofty and spiritual principles, a most miraculous transformation occurred in his life. To my mind it was more than miraculous, we have no word for it in the dictionary. Whereas formerly he was ferocious, he became meek. He was a wolf, now he became more gentle than a lamb. He was a satan, he became a radiant angel. He walked amongst the people as a standing miracle. They looked at him, rubbed their eyes, and could not believe. Mystery of mysteries! Wonder of wonders! What divine alchemy has changed the base metal of this man into pure gold. By and by they came around and asked the cause, not from him, but from others. He did not have to open his mouth to teach the Cause. This singular and instantaneous transformation of his character was the greatest act of teaching. Then all of a sudden it dawned upon the minds of many citizens of the town what a truly marvelous miracle had transpired in their midst. They became Bahais, and today they are the most wonderful body of true, noble Bahais in all Russia. As you look in the bright face of Karbalai Muran and catch his infectious smile and a glance of his sunny disposition, you can hardly realize that here stands before you a miracle of the religion of BAHAI'OLLAH. I have heard of "conversion", "saving grace", "sanctification", etc., but I wonder whether there has ever been such a concrete, practical demonstration of the spiritual Power of religion in the rehabilitation of a human character, and the transmutation of base metal into unalloyed gold! Let the agnostics and materialists who deny the religion of God and negate the good it has rendered, study the psychology of this case!

In the evening the Master met these newly arrived pilgrims and welcomed each with His heavenly benediction. He was eager to know how the friends were. One by one He asked, and they answered. He enquired about the health of our Mirza Ali Akbar, who is now teaching in Bakou, and soon will depart for other parts of Russia. These days in Russia and India the teachers are active, very active, calling the attention of the people to Bahai Peace, Love and Unity. Soon the results will become manifest.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 22, 1914.

Dear Friends:

This was a day of affliction and grief to the Bahai world, for our great and noble teacher, Mirza Abul Fazl, departed from this earth, and the sweet singing nightingale of his pure spirit soared toward the rose garden of the Kingdom of Abha. The telegram arrived last night. It was delivered this morning, and the heart breaking news conveyed to the Beloved just as He sat down to partake of His lunch. The news saddened and grieved Him. He did not say a word, but arose from His seat without eating. He remained alone in His room till late in the afternoon, when He came out, and with Mirza Hadi went to the telegraph office to send a message of consolation to the friends in Cairo. The Pilgrims' Home was a house of mourning; many eyes were weeping and many hearts burdened with sorrow.

With the passing of Mirza Abul Fazl we have lost the strongest champion and protector of the Cause. The Bahai world in the East can single out no other man as learned and as philosophic as Mirza Abul Fazl. The Master appropriately called him "Abul Fazeel", which means "the father of sciences". There was no school of literature or history, philosophy or religion, that he was not well acquainted with. His breadth of view, his keen memory, his intellectual perspicacity, his clear vision and his unerring wisdom, are detected throughout all his invaluable writings. His works in Arabic and Persian are the standard models of perfection of diction, beauty of style and purity of thought. His books and articles ushered in another renaissance of literature in the Bahai world. No one is considered a good and learned teacher of the Cause today in the East, morally and intellectually, unless he has thoroughly appropriated the contents of his books.

When I heard this bitter news my heart was torn with anguish and regret, and I could not keep back the tears from my eyes, because, through his kind intercession at the Threshold of ABDUL BAHA I was permitted to go to America and serve him during the three or four years that he was engaged in the promotion of the Word of God in that distant country. How he fathered me, took care of me and taught me the lessons of life and truth! Without Mirza Abul Fazl, without his love and protection, where would I have been now? If I live one hundred years and praise him every second of my life I shall have done nothing adequate to express his worth. The

The American friends will mourn his loss greatly. Did they not love him? Was he not a good guide and spiritual preceptor to them? Did he not open many eyes? Did he not teach many souls? Did he not accept the hardships and tribulations of a strange country, so that he might awaken the sleepy ones, give sight to the blind, hearing to the

deaf, and understanding to the ignorant? Many hearts are happier, many lamps are enkindled, many intelligences are awakened and many souls are purified because Mirza Abul Fazl has lived in this world. Alas! Alas! That God through His Wisdom deemed it wise to take away from amongst us this bright diamond of knowledge and guidance! Although his physical presence will be greatly missed, yet his memory shall live in the hearts and minds of men for all the future centuries and cycles. His writings and works are his permanent and undying traces of Eternal Glory in the Kingdom of Abha. They will mould the ideals of the youths, stir the noble natures of the young; and his life, with its tragic events of imprisonment and exile, will be written in the book of universal history. How fortunate one must feel to have seen him and heard him speak on spiritual subjects. I can never forget our beautiful days in Ramleh and his un-failing kindness toward everyone.

In the evening all the believers gathered in the Master's house. Under breath everyone was discussing the death of our venerable teacher, when Mirza Hadi brought us the word that the Beloved would receive us. We all ascended to the upper floor, and after a few minutes He came in. At first He was silent, then, while His eyes were shut, He started to speak. He would speak a few phrases, then, a flood of sad emotions sweeping over Him, He would stop a few seconds and then continue.

He said in part:

"Today a most painful news was received; its effect was agonizing, and its anguish very harrowing. Truly, I say Mirza Abul Fazl was a glorious personage. From every standpoint he was peerless. It is a rare thing to find a person perfect from every direction, but he was such a person. His Honor Aga Mirza Heydar Ali must write the biography of his (Mirza Abul Fazl's) life. Truly, I say he was in a state of the utmost severance, and adorned with the highest virtues of firmness and steadfastness. He was absolutely detached from everything. From the day that he became a believer up to the last moment of his life, he was occupied in the service of the Cause of God; either he conveyed the Message, or wrote books proving the validity of this Cause. He had not the slightest attachment to this mortal world. How erudite and learned he was. He had a marvelous knowledge of the contents of books. He was well informed as to the tenets of every religion, and had mastered the intricate laws and complicated customs of every nation, ancient and modern. He knew in detail the doctrines of every sect or party, and was a standard bearer of the Oneness of the world of humanity.

In the servitude of the Holy Threshold of BAHÁ'U'LLAH he was my partner and associate.

During the hours of grief he was the source of my consolation. From every standpoint I trusted him, and had in him the greatest amount of confidence. Whenever anyone wrote books and articles against this Cause I referred them to him for irrefutable answer. How humble and meek he was! We tried our best to persuade him to keep a servant with him, he would gently decline. He desired to serve the believers personally. Whenever the believers and the non-believers called on him, although he was sick, weak and in fever, yet he would get up and prepare tea and serve his callers with his own hand. All his anxieties revolved around this one supreme object, to make people satisfied and happy at any cost. During all the days of his life I never heard from him the word "I"; "I" said so, or "I" wrote so and so. He would say: 'this servant requested them', or 'this servant begged the believers'. He never made a display of his knowledge, nor wished to impress upon the mind of any person that he knew such and such a subject, or had locked in his mind such and such information. He was evanescent and lived in the state of nothingness. He was self-sacrificing at the Holy Threshold. No one inhaled from him the odor of superiority. Now the consummate Wisdom of God hath so deemed it wise to take him away from amongst us. The only way left to us is patience. How often one man has been equal to one thousand.

In short, you who are the believers of God, ascend the mountain with contrite hearts, and gather together and chant in his behalf communes and prayers, so that God may exalt more than ever his station in the spiritual world. I will likewise engage tonight in supplication at the Divine Threshold in his behalf.

Then He asked Foroughi to chant a prayer, which he did with great emotion. In the midst of great silence the Master left the room, his heart heavy-laden with pain and sorrow over the appalling tragedy.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 25, 1914.

Dear Friends:

"Abul Fati passed away from this life", was the text of a cablegram signed by the Beloved and dispatched to the principal Bahai Assemblies in the Orient and Washington.

No one can measure the loss we have sustained by his departure, only the Master knows. We judge everything from our human standpoint and cannot see things in the Divine perspective. We are surrounded by the cumulative strata of human prejudices and ancient preconceptions, and the range of our vision is obstructed by the barriers of time and space; but the Lord is living in an Eternal Present and the Everlasting Now. He is the True Appraiser of the worth and value of each soul. He keeps the life of all the creatures in His Mighty Grasp and rules the universe through the influence of His Unchangeable Laws.

After dictating the above cables He came out of His room and started to walk in the garden. One by one a large number of pilgrims joined Him. Now He was walking in the court, and again amongst the rose beds. A young man by the name of Mirza Lotfullah, who has been here for a month, was going to leave in the afternoon for Aleppo, so the Master addressed him, saying:

"Now that thou hast decided to live in Aleppo, thou must act, speak and conduct thyself with such holiness, sanctity, purity and exactitude as to attract to the Cause everyone who comes in contact with thee; that everyone may testify that here lives in our midst an upright and virtuous man; that he has turned his face toward God; that he is spiritual, celestial and divine. A person through his own actions and deeds makes himself loved or disliked by the people; or through his own unselfish conduct and behavior, refined morality and selfless intention, trustworthiness and rectitude he suffers himself to become favored and beloved at the Threshold of God.

There is a young man of Jewish origin in the college of Beirut by the name of Mirza Habbibollah Khodabakh, who has fulfilled these requirements. Formerly he was not known, but now everyone knows him through his sanctity, purity of life, sincerity of aim, and the beauty of his holiness, and he is favored and near the Court of the Almighty, and loved and respected by all. From whomever you inquire of him the utmost satisfaction and pleasure is expressed concerning him.

Therefore, it is now proven that we are ourselves the means of our degradation and exaltation; that people are attracted to us or repelled by us according to the attributes and deeds emanating from us. In short, I hope that thou mayst live in such wise in Aleppo that all the inhabitants may exclaim: "this man is not a Bahai in a nominal way, but in a real manner; that he is a Bahai in deed and not in words alone". For this reason His Holiness BAHÁ'U'LLAH hath said: "My sorrow is not occasioned by my enemies, but by those souls who attribute themselves to me, but whose deeds and actions are conducive to the degradation of the Cause."

Early in the morning we held a meeting of prayer in the Tomb in memory of Abul Fazl, and everyone offered supplication at the Threshold of the Almighty. I heard also that the Master was praying until long past midnight, and He was up very early chanting Communes in His own room, His voice reaching to the ears of the members of the Holy Family.

There are two persons in this Cause towards whom the Master has shown extraordinary signs of love and spiritual attachment. One was Mirza Abul Fazl, the other is Haji Mirza Heydar Ali, two great apostles and heralds of the Kingdom of Abha, one already gone, the other yet living to bear witness of the working of the Spirit.

While the Beloved was walking in the rose garden He passed by Haji Mullah Abou Taleb, the very old man with stooped shoulders and long beard. He looked at him, then at others, and smiled:

"Haji Mullah Abou Taleb is my friend", He said: "He looked just as old forty years ago when he came to this Blessed Spot for the first time. Now he has come never to return. Are you well and happy? How can you descend and ascend the Mountain every day?"

Then He came very near to him and looked at his thin and probably soiled overcoat.

"Hast thou not received thy new overcoat? I have brought one for thee. I will send it up for thee. Man must keep his clothes always clean and spotless."

He answered: "I am not particular about my outward clothes, but the robe of the virtue of God is necessary for us."

Mary

Immediately the face of the Beloved lightened up:

"Thou art right, the believers of God must ever strive to clothe their spiritual bodies with the garment of the Virtue of God, the robe of the Fear of God, and the venture of the Love of God. These robes will never become threadbare. They will never be out of fashion. Their market values do not fluctuate. They are always negotiable and ever on demand. They are the means of the adornment of the temple of man and woman. But

But the outward raiment must be also clean and immaculate, so that the outer may be a faint expression of the inner. Cleanliness is one of the fundamental laws of this religion."

Then He ordered Basheer to bring out a few chairs, and He sat in the sun near a rose bush - Himself a shining Sun and an imperishable Rose. To my delight He called me and asked me to bring to Him Mr. Ralston's and Mr. Ives' letters. I did it with great happiness. He was made joyful to hear from these two splendid souls in the far America, and revealed for each a wonderful Tablet. At this time three Turkish officers entered the garden to pay a visit to the Beloved, and we were sent away by Him.

At noon He went to the Mosque, thus to associate with these narrow sectarians and dogmatists, and infuse into their shriveled bodies the essence of the Love of God and the fire of human Brotherhood. He stands today among us the greatest link of spiritual unity and affiliation between the people of the East and of the West. Slowly and surely He is bringing to the front these moral and ethereal forces which shall revolutionize the present order of society, making effective these concrete laws for the economic reorganization of the human commonwealth. He is building the future palace of Universal Peace and International comity.

Ahmad Sokrab.

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 24, 1914.

Dear Friends:

As I was walking toward the Master's house I saw Him coming out of the home of Mirza Momeen. He looked well and strong, full of spiritual energy and ideal happiness. He had visited Haji Khorassani, who has been living in Haifa during the past three months. As He passed by He told me to wait till He returned, and walked away. For an hour or two I strolled about the garden and watched the laborers who have been boring through rocks in one side of the garden. This has been their work for the last few days. Many a time the Master Himself would come and direct them how to place the drills. While He was standing there the thought came to my mind that He is the Divine Driller. Just as these men were making holes in the hard rocks with their drill press and by the force of powder causing them to break into many pieces, likewise, ABDUL BAHA, by the divine urge of the spirit, is daily boring through the hard hearts of humanity, suffering them to become the seats of love and amity. As long as the surface of the heart is rocky there will appear no sign of vegetation, but when the solid substance is pulverized and the seeds of Wisdom and Knowledge planted, therein there shall appear the anemones of affection and the hyacinths of tenderness. This divine Driller is never fatigued, and has undertaken this work without the expectation of any reward. Hast thou not seen how the hearts are softened under the influence of His penetrative spirit; how the souls are expanded beneath the influx of His all comprehending power; how the minds are developed by perusing His clear spiritual Teachings? Truly, it is a divine privilege to see Him working at His task, transmuting the metals of animal passions into the gold of mystic and radiant qualities. All of us can learn the secret of His work if we divest ourselves of our own prejudices.

After an hour Mr. and Mrs. Holback came, and on His return the Beloved called them into His own room. He gave them a talk on Bahai love and how the friends are commanded by the BLESSED PERFECTION to love all mankind:

"The Bahais show their genuine affection toward all the people in obedience to the commandments of BAHAI'U'LLAH. They have no other motive."

Then He recited two of the latest events of how He came to the assistance and succor of two persons who had done much to undermine this Cause and stigmatize His character:

" We do not look at the evil deeds of the people. We do not consider the race, the religion, or nationality. We do our utmost to help everyone. The inhabitants of these parts know this, and, therefore, whenever they are in difficulties, or have had business reverses, they come to us, and we will never send them away unaided or deprived. This is the quality of the Bahais! This is the conduct of the believers! This is the Path of the Kingdom of God!"

In the afternoon there was a very large meeting in the house of the Beloved. The central hall, which is very large, was used for this purpose. All around the believers were sitting on chairs. In the center there was a large table decorated with flowers and laden with juicy oranges. Two large samovars with tea things were set on another table. Khosro, Basheer and Esmail Aga were dispensing tea generously. Round and round the tea cups went, the believers drinking their fragrant contents. The different headgears and various colored oriental garments of these representative Bahais were most picturesque. Who is not stirred to the very depths of his heart once he looks at such a marvelous scene of unity and good fellowship between so many different religions and races? Indeed, the significance of this fact is a fresh and new wonder to me every time I present myself in one of these unique meetings, the like of which cannot be seen anywhere except on Mount Carmel.

While Mirza Moneer was chanting the Tablets, suddenly a door was opened and the Master entered the hall. Everyone was up on his feet. When He sat He gave them permission to take their seats. Hossein Effendi, one of His grandsons, was sitting most politely next to Him. He is only a little boy of four or five years.

After a few minutes of silence the Beloved began to speak:

"The calamitous death of his holiness, Abul Fazi is of such vast proportion that no matter how I strive to console myself I do not succeed. How good it is that man during his existence may conduct himself in such a manner that when he passes away the hearts of the believers will be attracted toward him so as to cherish his memory forever and ever. While I was living in Ramleh, whenever I felt depressed or sad I called on him, and soon afterward I was in a happier frame of mind. He was most sincere, most straightforward. He had not the least hypocrisy or deceit in his nature. He has left behind wonderful literary traces, which are unequalled and peerless. All his works and writings go to prove the validity of this Blessed Cause. His tongue and his pen, his thoughts and ideals, were all engaged in estab-

lishing the authenticity of this glorious Movement. He had so arranged the program of his daily work that from morning till noon he was occupied with his writing and did not receive any person, but in the afternoon he welcomed anyone who cared to call on him.

Generally the Western women have many questions to ask, often most trying to one's patience. Mirza, knowing this characteristic of theirs from experience because he lived in those parts for several years, once tried in a very ineffectual manner, when a number called on him in the morning, not to receive them. They knocked at the door but they did not receive any answer. Somehow they felt that Mirza was in the room, and so persisted in their loud knocking. Finally, when he realized that they were not going away he called out to them in English: 'Abul Fazl not here! Abul Fazl not here.!' The situation was so funny to the ladies that they burst out into loud laughter, and Mirza, hearing them laugh, started to laugh himself.

His face was radiant, his heart luminous, and his mind enlightened. The Wisdom of God is inscrutable and unsearchable. One remains awe struck at the majesty of His Comprehension. Although these souls are like divine antidotes, yet in His profound Knowledge He deems it advisable to take them away. It is self evident that this was his highest aspiration and the ultimate degree of existence. This death was everlasting life and the most eminent Bestowal. There is no greater Bounty destined for man than this freedom from the mortal world; but from a natural standpoint those who had associated with him and loved him and are left behind feel sad and grief stricken.

He was a serious, earnest man. He was cordial and affectionate. There was nothing trifling or trivial about him. He impressed everyone who came in contact with him with his simple nobility and true kingship. His presence and words were invigorating. If he expressed publicly his love for some particular person, in his heart he loved him more; if he eulogized him, in his heart he praised him more; if he was attracted to him, in his heart he was more deeply attracted to him. He was fervent and zealous. If he was displeased with a person he could not hold conversation with him. The very thought of him would make him shake.

Once one of the Pashas in Egypt expressed a desire to meet him because he had heard his name and fame. He declined most emphatically to receive him. The man who had come specially to arrange the interview at last asked him: 'Mirza, what is the reason that you do not receive the Pasha?' He answered: 'I do not like him. No doubt this desire on his part to meet me is not based on earnestness, sincerity, and the search after Truth, because

if he were sincere God would have deposited in my heart his love. In short, let it be what it may, as I cannot receive him with love and sincerity it is much better for me not to meet him."

He was not attached to anything in this world. He was severed, detached, celestial, divine and spiritual.
....."

The translation of the telegram sent by the Master to the believers in Egypt was as follows:

"Verily, in this most great calamity the eyes wept, tears and the hearts burned. Perfect resignation is incumbent upon you in this supreme hour of stupendous trial."

The feast of the afternoon was given by our Jewish Bahai pilgrims from Hamadan. They were most happy to be thus privileged to give this delightful feast in the house of the Beloved.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 25, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The almond trees are aglow with white and pink blossoms. How beautiful they are in this season of the year on the Mountain of God. The first thing that greets me every morning as I look out of my window are the blooming almond trees, some as white as snow, others blushing under a faint color of rose and pink. As I descend the Mountain I see more of them clad in their pure innocent creational robes. In one particular garden the trees with their delicate white children have pushed their heads beyond the limits set for them, and form a beautiful arch of triumph over the road through which we pass daily, and under which arch I always stop or sit a few minutes, musing. How unrealizable are the Favors of God in thus displaying all around us the iridescent splendors of nature, and placing in our hearts the youthful hope and dreams of divine springtime.

This morning about fifteen of the pilgrims left for Acca, headed by Mirza Jalal, to visit the Holy Tomb of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, and when they returned in the evening they were happy and peaceful. They had worshipped at the Divine Threshold and prayed in behalf of their brothers and sisters in Persia. When I looked into their faces I felt the glow of their enthusiasm and their willing self sacrifice. These are true Bahais, every day of their lives is a glorious anthem, a celestial epic, inimitable, surpassingly excellent and spiritually dedicated to the service of their fellowmen.

The Rose of the Kingdom was walking this morning through the beds of the garden, a number of the pilgrims were standing in His Presence at a distance. He stopped before a rose bush with large pink roses, its petals containing the shining drops of an early shower. He stooped and inhaled its fragrance:

"How sweet and delicious it is," He said as He looked into our eyes, thus conveying to us the inarticulate message of the flowers.

One of the believers asked Him to bless the business undertaking of a distant friend:

He said:

"In all our affairs we must use common sense, God has bestowed upon all of us reason that we might use it in our daily work and not hide it in the drawer. A sagacious man will wade through the stream only when it is fordable. A person who does not make use of his intelligence in the translation of his natural and spiritual affairs is like a man who purposely shuts his eyes while walking; the results may be a fall into the ditch, or in

other words he may meet a business misfortune. A commercial career is a means by which a person does not become a burden on the back of the state, and through a system of exchange of commodities gains his living

Wealth is similar unto sandhills in the desert. It is a mathematical impossibility to keep them firmly established in one locality. Today you see the sandhills gathered here; ~~at midnight there they are dispersed~~ ~~in the storm, and tomorrow~~ all the hills are transplanted miles and miles away. The hills of wealth are likewise a subject to such sudden and instantaneous transferences, leaving one in a complete wreck and showering her gifts for the time being on a new favorite son. Wealth is capricious, wayward, fickle and whimsical, and loves to disport in a cold blooded manner with her long train of suitors. A business man must be satisfied with a limited amount of success. If he goes beyond the danger mark he will bring upon himself either complete ruin or invite the displeasure of the public for his greed and rapacity, which is equally ruinous, if not to his fortune, to his character.

A rill with a steady flow of water and contentment constitute inexhaustible wealth. Years and years ago there lived a Bahai by the name of Ostad Esmael. His home consisted of a grotto there on the slope of Mount Carmel. He had a little box in which he kept needles, pins, thimbles, threads, combs, etc. He would leave his grotto every morning and come to town. In various houses he had a few customers who bought from him his rather inconspicuous wares. As soon as he observed that he had cleared a piastrez (about seven cents) profit on his sales, he would stop doing any more business. Then, returning to his delightful grotto he would place the kettle on the fire, prepare his tea and drink one cup after another while enjoying the matchless panorama spreading its green watery wings before his vision. Supremely contented, he lived from day to day and never coveted more than a piastrez for his sustenance, and God provided it for him. How satisfied, at ease, and comfortable he was! This, in the face of the fact that he was a wealthy man in Persia before he was banished out of the country. He was an architect in the service of Farrokh Khan, a governor of one of the provinces of Persia. Little by little it was rumored around that Ostad Esmael is a Bahai, and the Mullahs did their best to arrest and do away with him. When the governor heard about this secret plan he sent for him and said: 'I cannot protect thee any longer. The wolves are after thee and thy life is in danger. Thou must leave the city without delay.' Then he hurriedly left the city and arrived in Bagdad after a long and arduous journey across the desert and mountains. When he came to us he did not possess a cent but he had a radiant heart, an illumined mind, and an enkindled spirit. He always expressed the highest gratitude to his enemies

in thus driving him away from his native town to his Beloved, the Blessed Perfection. He was overflowing with exhilaration. He had a faithful wife to whom he was very much attached. After some time his wife's brother came to Bagdad, and under the false pretense of taking his sister to Persia so that she might see her parents and relatives, he took her away from Ostad Esmael. When they reached Kermanshahan she was taken before a Mohammedan Mullah, and they pleaded that her husband being a Bahai, she could not be considered as his legal wife. The prejudiced, ignorant Mullah granted her an unconditional divorce on the spot, and later gave her in marriage to a rough, uncouth muleteer. When this cruel news reached Ostad Esmael he was dismayed with disappointment, but he did not show it in his appearance. All that he said was: 'I thought this wife of mine was a believer, and now I can account my great love for her to the above reason; however, it appears from her conduct and consent to leave and marry another that she was not a believer. Even now, if she returns to me I shall not accept her.' Such was his faith. Faith is the highest station in the world of humanity and conducive to eternal prosperity and success. In short, when the BLESSED PERFECTION was exiled from Bagdad Ostad Esmael was left behind. Then at the time of our next exile from Adrianople to Acca Ostad Esmael and a number of others were exiled from Bagdad to Moussel. From the latter place he walked to Acca. Although it took him a long time, yet the hope of seeing BAHA'O'LLAH again spurred him on and on. Hungry, sore footed, thinly clad and laden with years, he arrived behind the iron gate of Acca. He wanted to enter but the guards drove him away as a suspicious character. Now this was just at the time when we were incarcerated in the Military Barracks, and none amongst us was permitted to leave the premises without the guards following us everywhere. When I heard about him I sent someone by night to bring him in, which he did with compunction and precaution. I kept him in the Barracks for a long time. "

Just at this juncture four Turkish officials entered the house, and the Master, interrupting his interesting narrative, went forward to greet them. They were his guests at lunch time, and he kept them interested by relating to them the story of his American tour. After lunch a Mohammedan Judge came to see him.

In the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Holbach came up the Mountain to the Pilgrims' Home, and had another talk with Mirza Heydar Ali. Aga Mohammed Hassan brought out his treasures, consisting of four books, each one being a series of original Tablets by BAHA'O'LLAH and ABDUL BAHÁ. I had never seen, nor expect to see such wonderful, rich heavenly collection of the Holy Writs.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 26, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Let me whisper into your ears a charming story that I shall ever treasure in the hall of my dreams and the secret chamber of my heart. It was related to me late tonight by the Angel of the Mountain of God, Mirza Heydar Ali. Quietly he opened my door to my room and entered.

"I have a message for thee," he announced. "From whom?" I asked. "From the Holy Mother, or, in other words, the blessed wife of the Beloved." "Oh! I am most honored indeed," what might the nature of this message be?" I questioned him. "She sends you her Bahai greeting and salutation. She called me yesterday, and said: 'tell Mirza Ahmad Sohrab that up to this time I could not recall the history of his family in Esphahan' (she is a native of Esphahan), 'but now, having thought it over carefully, I remember very distinctly that I taught his grandmother. We used to have a devotional weekly meeting for women, where many of us gathered together and read Tablets and Communes. In one of these meetings his grandmother was present and listened with eagerness to every word. The spiritual wine was so strong that it intoxicated her, and the Power of the Words was such that she fell unconscious on the floor. When we brought her back to her wakeful condition she asked: Who is the author of these Writings which were read? Then I told her about the history of the Cause and its claims, and immediately she became a believer. Ever afterward I associated and conversed with her all the time. Now, for the sake of this ancient friendship he must let us know, any time, of anything he desires or wishes for, and it will be attended to without delay.'"

If someone had given me all the riches in the world I could not be any happier. Just think! to have the blessed wife of ABDUL BAHA as the teacher of your grandmother. Oh, I wept tears of joy. No wonder her grandson loved her always tenderly, so wistfully. It has been always the greatest grief of my life that I could not look into her gentle face on the eve of her departure a few years ago. How happy she would have become were she living today to see her grandson working at the Spiritual Threshold of the King of Kings, whose blessed consort taught her the knowledge of this Revelation in her girlhood. This was indeed the most gorgeous gift that the blessed wife could send me, for as far as I am concerned I yearn for nothing else but the good pleasure of ABDUL BAHA. One loving glance from Him is more appreciated than all the material presents of the world. This is the priceless jewel of the Kingdom of Abha, the light that sets aglow every heart, and the tree that produces much fruits. Now I ever pray that I may become worthy of the aspirations of my grandmother, for she gave up her rest and comfort to train and educate

me during the period of my childhood. My intense attachment to her was responded by her in equal ratio. She was a noble woman.

Today our four Jewish pilgrims departed for Jerusalem. They will stay there a few days and then return to their native city in Persia. At one time there were so many Jewish Bahais in the Pilgrims Home that ten of them slept in the room where I sleep. I can testify to their intense love and devotion to the Cause. Their sincerity is unquestioned, and their beautiful lives exemplary. The Master loves them exceedingly and has showered His blessings upon them repeatedly. I had also grown to love and admire their genuine qualities, and it was very difficult to see them depart, but their luminous faces and their fiery faith will never be erased from the tablet of my heart.

Another believer by the name Mohammed arrived today from Kerman. He was weeping like a child when his feet touched the ground of the garden of the Beloved. He knelt and praised the Lord. He has been four months on the way stopping about 23 days in Bombay, where he met Doctor and Mrs. Getsinger.

About two hours in the first part of the morning the Master spent in the garden talking with the believers, and caressing two children belonging to one of the pilgrims. He asked Mirza Hadi to go into the house and bring for them some bonbons. He kept both of them on His lap for a long time speaking with them tender words of light and love.

In the afternoon Mirza Heydar Ali descended the Mountain, and in the house of Aga Bayad Yahya Mr. and Mrs. Holbach listened to the continuation of his narrative with great interest, and to the rich events of his life. While I was translating, the Beloved sent for me and gave me about sixty agate stones of the Greatest Name to be sent to a number of believers in America and Germany.

In the evening all the believers gathered in the blessed home, and the Master delivered an eloquent talk on the lack of the spirituality of a section of mankind and the materialistic ideas which are sweeping over the earth. Towards the end He spoke again on His own station and the station of servitude at the Threshold of the Almighty.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Pilgrims' Home, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 27, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The Words of the Beloved are the delicate Narcissus and the fragrant Daffodils. I would like, therefore, to present to this morning two bouquets comprising these two lovely flowers, thus you may perfume your minds and hearts with their agreeable aroma. The first heavenly bouquet is sent to Mr. Howard Ives of New York City:

"HE IS GOD"

O thou my heavenly son!

Thy letter was received. It was a rose garden from which the sweet Fragrances of the Love of God were inhaled. It indicated that you have held a meeting with the utmost joy and fragrance. Your aim is the diffusion of the Light of Guidance, the recuscitation of the dead hearts, the promotion of the Oneness of the world of humanity, and the elucidation of Truth. Unquestionably, you will become confirmed therein and assisted by the Invisible Powers.

I have prayed in thy behalf, so that thou mayst become the minister of the Temple of the Kingdom, and the herald of the Lord of Hosts; that thou mayst build a monastery in Heaven and lay the foundation of a Covenant in the Universe of the Placeless; in all the affairs thou mayst become inspired by the Breaths of the Holy Spirit; and that thou mayst become illumined so that the eyes of all the ministers be dazzled by thy brilliancy, and all of them may long to attain to thy station. Thou art always in my memory, I will never forget the days of our meeting. Endeavor as much as thou canst so that thou mayst master the Principles of BAHAI'U'LLAH, promulgate them all over that continent, create love and unity between the believers, guide the people, awaken the heedless ones and resurrect the dead.

Upon thee be Baha El Abha!

(signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

The second bouquet is forwarded to a believer in California:

"HE IS GOD"

O thou my beloved son of the Kingdom!

Thy letter was received. Its contents were conducive to the realization of the susceptibilities of the

Kingdom and the means of happiness, for it indicated thy advancement toward the Kingdom of God. Praise be to God! that thou art progressing and becoming more illumined day by day, art released from the thoughts of this ephemeral world, and art ~~waiting~~ ^{ready} to receive a goodly portion and a share from the Bestowals of the Abha Kingdom. This resolution is the magnet for attracting Divine Confirmations and inviting the Breaths of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, I hope that thou mayst make extraordinary and universal progress in the Cause of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, become ignited like unto a candle and shed radiance on all that region. Do thou not look upon thine own capacity, nay, rather, behold the Bounties of the Kingdom of Abha, for His Great Bestowal changes the weak plant into a blessed tree, the limited drop into the limitless ocean, the seed into a harvest, and one individual the representative of an assembly. For thee I desire an exalted station, so that thou mayst become the star of the everlasting horizon, and day by day be drawn nearer unto God. . . .

(signed) Abdul Baha Abbas."

This is the birthday of his imperial majesty Emperor William of Germany, and therefore the German colony is celebrating it with much demonstration. German flags and buntings are afloat from every housetop and in front of every door. This morning the Master sent me to pay a visit in His behalf on Mr. and Mrs. Holbach. When I arrived at the hotel I observed the people there having a feast. There were a number of young girls who were singing German songs, and the German consul in full uniform was there. The ceremony was very pretty, and the children sang **very** well.

On my return I found out that the believers had been in the Presence of the Master for about half an hour, and that He had delivered for their benefit an informal Talk on the spirituality of the life of the people of the Kingdom. They were all most happy, but regretful that I had not been there to write down for them His life imparting Words. At eleven o'clock Mr. and Mrs. Holbach came to see Him. As He was paying a call on the German consul to congratulate him on the birthday of the Emperor, they waited a few moments till He returned. Mrs. Holbach told Him about an old German who lives with his blind wife near the Carmelite monastery. He was for three years in Teheran in the service of the German Minister. As he was thinly clothed she desired the Master to send him an overcoat:

"All right!" He was up on His feet immediately and entered the house, coming back with an overcoat. "This will warm him for the time."

Then He spoke about a Roman Catholic priest in Acca who has been opposing the Cause and calumniating those who stand for it. "But the other day I heard you contributed a sum to the Roman Catholic Institution here!" Mrs. Holbach declared.

"Well, we were commanded by BAHÁ'U'LLAH to assist all the communities without the exclusion of anyone. We do not consider their deeds and actions but we never lose sight of the fact that mankind are the children of God and their wants must be relieved without the distinction of race or religion."

Then He spoke about Mullah Abou Taleb, and how he was robbed a few years ago and beaten into unconsciousness while he was living in his own cottage on the Mountain, very remote from any habitation:

"After that incident I told him to leave his cottage and live in the Pilgrims' Home, which he has done since that time."

Then the near approach of the organization of a world conference of the Christian Sects in one of the capitals of Europe or in America, was presented to Him.

He said:

"The conference of the Religions of the world will yield a more important result. The organizers must think of this."

Before Mrs. Holbach entered the room one of our pilgrims begged her to intercede for them so that they might go in and see the Master while she was there. She fulfilled her promise, and the Master told her to go and bring them. When they came in the old men were weeping tears of joy and gratitude. Pointing to our newly arrived pilgrims from Ierman, He said:

"The believers in Kerman have suffered much and many of them were martyred. The inhabitants of that province are very intelligent and quick witted, and its soil is very productive. The greatest enemy of this Cause, Haji Karim Khan, lived in that city, but now his tree is uprooted. At one time about three million Persians were his followers in Persia as well as in India; but now except the name nothing has been left behind to tell the tale."

Then pointing to our Turkish believers from the province of Azerbayejan, He said:

"These are not like the Turks in these parts. They are very pure and simple hearted, sincere and devoted. Consider the influence of the Word of God, that, although men of totally different temperament, religion, culture and ideas live in the Pilgrims' Home, never do we hear even a faint whisper of ill feeling against each other. They are welded together by the alchemy of Truth. If you take ten bars of iron and tie them together no matter how closely, they will not become one; but, when a metallurgist comes on the scene he takes the ten bars, melts them in the furnace and casts them in one mould. Only through this fiery process will their atoms flow and commingle with each other, becoming united and inseparable. This is the work that BAHÁ'U'LLAH has done and is doing. He has not tied together the iron bars, the religions of the world, with the rope of indulgent tolerance or ordinary amenities of human necessity which are liable to break at any time; but with the Fire of the Love of God He has melted them first, and then casting them in One mould of Spiritual Brotherhood, He has rendered the most marvellous services to the world of humanity.

BAHÁ'U'LLAH is this Divine Metallurgist, and those who have the deep insight and look around the world witness daily the workings of the Principle of Fusion."

"This is indeed the Manifestation of the Spirit of Christ," said Mrs. Holbach, as she arose to bid goodby to the Beloved of the world.

In the evening a number of the friends were privileged to sit in His Presence. I will translate His loving Talk in another letter. Enough to say that we were sailing on the sea of His sterling kindness, and finally anchored safely in the haven of Peace and Assurance.

At last my "Nest" is ready, and I shall fly toward it tomorrow morning. In fact, it has been ready for several days, but my wings were not strong enough, and I have been putting off the flight every day. Tomorrow, yes, I shall spread my wings if God wills.

Ahmad Sohrab.

"Bahai Nest," Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 28, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Divine Solitude! The very sound of it is sweet to my ears. I can now concentrate my thoughts and hold silent communion with nature and its Creator. Away from the din and noise I will be able to follow the stream of my work and serve the Beloved uninterruptedly. By this I do not mean that I will become a hermit or a speechless unsociable monk. Far from it. I will associate with the friends and the pilgrims as much as I have been doing, but I will have from now on a "Nest" belonging to myself, and a few hours of seclusion and privacy. For the last three or four years I have been put in contact with so many people of the East and the West that I hailed this opportunity to be alone for at least a part of the time. How quiet and peaceful is this charming place in contrast with the happy, care free comradeship of the Pilgrims' Home. My single room overlooks the best part of Haifa, nestled in the lap of the Mountain; then the wide channel of the placid, marmorial (today) sea; beyond it the white city of Acca; then the plain; and at last the blue range of the mountains. From a window which opens on the opposite side I see the green Mount of God towering above my head. On my left hand I can see from another window the blessed Tomb of the BAB, and on my right hand, almost parallel, is the Pilgrims' Home. My writing table is placed in the center of the room, and while I am writing just at this moment I look up and down at those fairy scenes of exquisite beauty and loveliness.

Moreover, I do see so clearly every time I look up from my paper, the house of the Beloved, wherein the inimitable parts of His divine life are acted daily and hourly. The Beloved could not give me a more enchanting place, even in Paradise. Here indeed is my heaven. I want nothing else in this world but service at His divine Threshold, to become the dust of the feet of His friends. Oh, I never believed I could be so fortunate and happy, even the kings do not have such a tiny, lovely "Nest" as ABDUL BAHÁ has prepared for me. It is built high, high on the slope of the mountain. People work for years, toil daily, till with the sweat of their brows and the labor of their hands they build a small, insignificant monstrosity and fill it with all kinds of useless furniture; but here I am and without any labor on my part I have a lovely room, airy, nice, matchless, perched on a rock. Here I shall live a simple, contented life, wishing but the good pleasure of the Beloved, aspiring to no higher station, because there is no higher station, otherwise I would surely have aspired), save the station of servitude at His Threshold; and climbing step by step the difficult yet sure path of renunciation and self forgetfulness. Some day we may meet

each other and talk together on the particulars of this real life, but until that day comes let us open the windows of our hearts, break the cage of our minds and suffer the birds of thoughts and the nightingales of spiritual ideals to become free; thus may they fly through the immeasurable space from city to city, country to country, world to world, star to star, and sun to sun, cheering the despondent hearts with their musical lays and creating a new tumult in the sphere of human and angelic intellects through their seraphic songs and celestial anthems.

Today the Master was very busy receiving outsiders. There was quite a long stream of them, especially traveling correspondents representing a newspaper in Egypt. After talking with him for more than half an hour He asked me to give him a number of newspapers containing articles on the Cause. In front of the house there was sitting a young man, a tall and handsome Arab, the ankle of whose foot was dislocated through an accident. He was suffering with pain, waiting for the coming of the Master. He told us his pathetic story; how at first he was in the German hospital, but they sent him out after a few days because he could not pay; how a friend paid for him and sent him to the English hospital, and how when his time was up yesterday they forced him to leave the premises, for he was without cash. They have sent him away, while they well know his foot was not yet well. He wanted the Master's assistance to go back to the hospital.

There was no meeting tonight, for the activities of the day have tired the Beloved. His health is steadily improving, and he feels marvelously well in comparison to Ramleh. We do not need to go far to find the origin of this happy event, for all the members of the Holy Family and the Greatest Holy Leaf are looking with solicitude and tender care after the preservation of the physical health of the Master, by surrounding Him with tokens of the love of the Bahai world and the expressions of their attachment to Him.

This is my first night in my Bahai Nest, and as I write these words I feel the quiet charm and divine spell of solitude for which I was longing. What else can I do but to raise my voice in praising and thanking the Giver of all Gifts in thus answering the prayers of my inmost heart.

It is said a man longed to attain to the pinnacle of human greatness. One day he was talking with his friend. "I am going to enter the army as a private," he said. "And afterwards?" "I will be promoted to a higher position." "Then?" "I will become a Colonel." "Then?" "Of course, a lieutenant." "Then?" "A General." "Then?" "I will be a Cabinet Minister." "What is thy highest ambition?" "Oh, after filling these positions I would like to be the king." "What afterwards?" The man was astonished, and answered: "nothing, of course." "Well, well, I am already that 'nothing' without going through all these grades and stations."

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, January 29, 1914.
Haifa, Syria,

Dear Friends:

"Truly I say how unfaithful and unloyal it seems that after the Departure of the Blessed Perfection one should utter even a word conveying the least meaning of title, station, position or superiority. Praise be to God! that He has opened before our faces every door of Bounty and Glory. It avails us less than nothing to put forward any claim. The gates of celestial paradises are thrown ajar for our sake, and the banquets of rejoicing are prepared by Him. He hath conferred upon us every Bounty and has left nothing unsaid or undone. How childish it is on our part to hold fast to such showy emptiness.

What was the end of those who spoke presumptuously in the Name of the Lord, and the many who claimed to be the Manifestation of God? Bayazeed Bastani, the celebrated Sufi, cried out: "I do not see in my coat aught else save God!" What did he gain by such a fantastic claim? What result was the issue save eternal perdition? A host of Sufis and Illuminati put forward like claims. What did they gain? They worked themselves up into a condition of trance through severe discipline and then they burst out into vain and pompous claims. What was the outcome of such frothy pretensions?

How many people are today living in different parts of the world who claim to be Gods, or parts or sparks of God! These people have made very cheap the claim to the Station of Divinity. Such idiotic baseless claims belong to the shallow brained and the fools.

While in reality the glorious diadem of the world of humanity in this age is SERVITUDE. Until the lapse of 1000 years all the holy and inspired souls who come into the light of day are under the shadow of BAHA'U'LLAH. There must lurk no other thought or ideal behind the mind, nor any word or utterance be declared by the tongue save Servitude at the Threshold of BAHU, O. LLAH. This is the cause of everlasting Glory! This is conducive to prosperity and success, this is the means of the exaltation of character; this is the reason of eternal joy!

After the martyrdom of His Holiness the BAB there appeared twenty-five persons who claimed to be the fulfillment of "Him Whom God would Manifest." It appeared to them at first a safe mode for the exaggeration of their egos. No matter toward which direction one turned his attention he would come across a man who claimed to be the Manifestation of God. For example, one of them would say:

'Last night at 12 o'clock I was illuminated.' There was a man by the name of Sayyad Ali Olov; another a candy seller in Teheran; Another a young man in Shiraz; another a Sheik Ismael in Esphahan; another an Ali Deyyan in Baghdad. Others were Mirza Gougha from Kermanshahan; Mirza Ibrihim, a baker who lived near our house in Bagdad; Haji Mirza Nousse; Mollah Ahmad Naragi; Haji Mullah Hashem; and a Mirza Mahram, hasheesh smoker of Esphahan, etc. All these men, and many others, claimed to be the 'Manifestation of Him Whom God would Manifest.' But when the Blessed Perfection appeared all of them repented and confessed their false claims. Such is the Authority of the Holy Spirit when It becomes Manifest with Divine Power and irresistible Majesty.

We must arise to serve sincerely at the Holy Threshold and forget all other stations. We must serve. We must work. We must strive. We must spread the Principles of the Cause. With a pure heart, illumined thought and merciful ideals we must display indomitable courage and unswerving allegiance in the promotion of the Religion of Absolute Reality. This is Divine Sovereignty! All other titles and stations shall not avail.*

Today we had the privilege of seeing the Beloved several times. As He came in from one of His calls He turned to me and said:

'See! How Ismael! Aga has turned the desert into a blooming garden. Is he not a magician? Is he not wonderful?'

Gladly and painstakingly he works all day, lays the orange and lemon trees there, plants the seeds here. When the Beloved left Haifa for America the present lovely garden did not exist, but now it is a dear spot of calm beauty through the joyful labor of Ismael Aga.

In the evening we had a large meeting. The Beloved was in His best mood of triumph and happiness. He gave a long and glorious Talk, enunciating seven of the Principles of the Blessed Perfection, and explained the manner in which He gave His lectures in the West, because He said the Proofs which the Oriental teachers are or were spreading the Cause could not have any weight with an Occidental skeptical, often irreligious audience. They desired to hear rational and logical proofs and not traditional or scriptural proofs. Therefore, He had to raise the standard of teaching to the mark demanded by the people of Europe and America, and thus enumerate the humanitarian teachings of the Movement, the benefit of which could not be denied even by a materialist.

He said that He is beginning to recover from His fatigue, that He is sleeping well and His health has improved greatly. He praised the accommodations afforded by the American railroad, its fast and express trains, and how the long distances are covered with the highest speed. He contrasted His journey from Boston to California to the rather arduous journey from Bagdad to Samson at the time BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH was exiled from the former city. It took them sixty stages with caravan; the roads were often infested with robbers, they could get no food for the animals, and the highways were sometimes extremely muddy and again passed through narrow defiles and high mountains. It was indeed indescribably difficult, but now it is comparatively easy to travel around the world and serve the Cause.

Then He said:

"God has prepared for us all the convenient ways of voyage, so that we may travel far and wide and spread the Cause. The American civilization has done much toward the progress and upbuilding of the world. God has turned His special Glances toward America, and has encircled that continent with His particular Favors. Day by day it is progressing. Truly, I say it is worthy of this blessed Cause. Indeed it merits to be the herald of this Glad Tidings. There must needs be many Persian teachers in America who have mastered well the intricacies of the English language. If a number of Persian teachers who are endowed with eloquent tongues knew the English language and traveled to those parts they could attract many souls to the Cause. For example, if Mirza Abul Fazl had known English his influence in the West would have been a hundredfold."

The Persian pilgrims were most happy to hear from His own lips the exposition of those divine Principles which were given by Him in the churches and meetings of America and Europe.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
January 30, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Six more of the beloved pilgrims from Caucasus and Azarbayejan left today, thus reducing to ten the number of guests at the Home. Amongst them were two old men and four young men. They have been staying quite a long time, two of them nearly 50 days, adding daily to their treasures of Teachings and Talks. Mirza Jalal Ahmad Off kept a beautiful diary, recording the events of the days most succinctly and always embodying the Addresses, the remarks of the Master. Last night the pilgrims had a lovely conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Holbach in the garden of the Beloved. They were most impressed by and elated over the meeting of our Western Bahá'ís and will carry back to their homes pleasant memories of these unique and spiritual days.

As they were going to embark at 4 o'clock p. m. the Beloved sent for them early. While we were sitting in His Presence a Turkish gentleman came in and engaged Him in a lively conversation. First He talked about the Suffragettes of London, and then the Suffragists of America. The Master was witty and full of humor, and as He talked in Turkish our departing pilgrims enjoyed every word He said. Tea was served twice and when this stranger left the Beloved was going to speak to us, when word was brought in that the Judge of the Court of Haifa, who has been promoted to the Court of Damascus, desired to meet the Master. He entered the room, and for another half hour we were all silent listeners, enjoying of course more than any description I can give, the quick motions, the laugh and the versatility of the Beloved in talking with this famous judge about the fine and infinite details of Mohammedan laws and jurisprudence, with perfect ease and real eloquence. At times the Master makes one supremely happy, because He irradiates happiness unconsciously to all those who are around him. When at last this judge left us, the Master had time to talk to His departing pilgrims. All of them were weeping and unhappy over the departure. After a few minutes of silence which filled the room, with His quiet majestic spirit, He said:

"Praise be to God! that you have come to this divine spot and have visited the Holy Threshold of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, and were privileged to visit the Blessed Tomb of His Holiness the BAB. When you arrived here my physical health was not strong. The long journey had exhausted the vitality of my nerves and limbs and I was very much fatigued. But through the Bounty and Favor of the Blessed Perfection I am feeling well. Whereas formerly I had insomnia, now I can sleep better. Having rested for awhile, I shall ere long

be occupied and will correspond with all the friends.

Now that you are returning to your respective homes you must be like unto ignited candles and set aglow the hearts of all the believers, now like unto a company of tuneful birds you must sing every melody. I have done my part, I have sung my songs and have played almost every tune. Now it is your turn. For awhile I must sit silent, ever straining my ears to hear your anthems of praise. I love to listen to your spiritual symphonies and divine harmonies, ever flying upward and filling the world with soothing music of peace and consolation. God willing, you will fulfill my eager expectations. Oh! I am sure you will not disappoint me. The Confirmations of the Kingdom shall descend upon you, and the Supreme Reinforcement shall surround you. Rest ye assured, let your hearts abide in peace. I ever expect to receive cheering news from you. May you become the cause of the happiness of the hearts of the believers. May all the friends become glad, rejoiced and grateful through your meeting and write me that these pilgrims who passed through our cities were so enkindled, so attracted, so eloquent and so willing to serve their fellowmen!

In short, God willing, may every one of you as you leave this Holy Land become a herald of the Cause, a harbinger of the establishment of the Kingdom. May each one of you shine upon each city through which you pass, as a radiant star. This is the Day wherein whomsoever arises to spread the Cause of God, the Cohorts of the Supreme Concurrence will assist him. Today the magnet of spiritual Confirmation is teaching the Cause. Although the Threshold of the Blessed Perfection was my heart, my spirit and the happiness of my soul, yet, notwithstanding this, I left everything and traveled round the world proclaiming at the top of my voice the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom of Abha. No affair today is as confirmed as that of the promulgation of the Principles of this Cause. As much as they can the believers of God must occupy their time in conveying the Message.

Teach the Cause, this is a matter that succeeds, succeeds most miraculously. Praise be to God! You are beneath the protection of the Blessed Perfection, you are environed by His Bestowals. What favor do you yearn greater than this? When a number of souls are beneath the protecting wings of an important personage they consider themselves very fortunate; now Praise be to God! you are beneath the protection and preservation of the Blessed Perfection. Therefore, how great must be your happiness! As you go out of this room dedicate your lives to teaching the Cause; gird up the loins of endeavor and put forward extraordinary energy.

When a Cause is confirmed it is evident and manifest from its signs. For example, we say this earth is confirmed. Why? Because, as a result of the downpour of rains and the shining of the sun it is covered with green plants and flowers. Again I say, teach the Cause! Do not tarry! Fill the goblet of every seeker with the Wine of the Love of God!"

How hard they wept as the final Words of blessing were uttered by the Beloved. He embraced each one in His wonderful arms and kissed them on both their cheeks. He would not permit them to kneel before Him. A large number followed them to the harbor and there was a very warm leave taking.

In the evening the Master was invited to the house of the Mufti. He was giving an official dinner in honor of the Governor General (Wali) of Damascus, who has just arrived. The Motassarraf of Acca, the Gasernagani of Haifa and a number of other Turkish officials were present. The Master attended the dinner all alone, so none of us can report, even in outline, His conversation with these important personages.

In the morning He was out in the garden walking and admiring the flowers when three Effendi arrived. Chairs were offered them and they sat down. Under the warmth of the rays of the sun the Beloved talked on local affairs, about the things they are familiar with. Then He entered the house and delivered into my hands a heavy envelope containing letters from our American friends. Those who are devoted to the Cause think not of themselves, but ever strive to win the good pleasure of the Lord of Love. They will sacrifice their lives in order to gain His approval. Detached and severed from all else they will walk in the path of service they have chosen and carry their cross willingly, conscious of the fact that the law of justice and truth shall finally prevail.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, January 31, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The pure air on the Mountain of God is filled with the delicate fragrance of almond blossoms. Many a large tree is so completely clothed with this white garment of nature that the trunk and the branches are hardly visible. I often stand a long time before one of these white or pink trees admiring the handiwork of the Divine Creator. Just outside of my "nest" there are several such wonderful trees, and many varieties of wild flowers have carpeted the fields. All around my nest these yellow, red, pink and white and violet flowers have grown in great abundance, and my joy in looking at them knows no bound. In a day or two I am going to decorate my room with big branches of the almond blossoms, and fill a few jars with these charming wild flowers. I do not believe there is any man or woman alive who does not love flowers. Flowers convey to us the unspoken message of innocent love and pure affection. Their language is spiritual and only understood by those who love and tenderly care for them. Flowers are the delicately shaded stars of the fields and the gardens. Just as there are countless stars scintillating this very night in yon blue vault, diffusing their radiance through the immeasurable space, likewise these lovely flowers are embellishing the mountain, purifying the heart of the beholder and raising his mundane thoughts to the sphere of beauty. Never was there a more perfect landscape gardener than God Himself. Flowers are the thoughts of God, with this difference of course, that the natural flowers perish, but the Divine Ideas are indescructible. The more refined, cultured and purified the nature, the greater still will be the love for flowers. The language of flowers is universal, and is understood by high and low, rich and poor, learned and ignorant.

When I descended the Mountain this morning I heard the Master was out but that He had sent for me. Mr. and Mrs. Holbach had already had an interview with Him and were waiting in the reception room to see me. For more than an hour we talked uninterruptedly on matters which would further the progress of the Cause and make the Teachings more accessible to the public. At the end of that time the Governor General of Syria was announced, and we had to retire from the room. With the Governor was his staff. After a few minutes the Master arrived, and He entertained these people for about half an hour. When the Governor left ABDUL BAHÁ called me in and spoke for a few minutes to an Arab lawyer who was present. As this lawyer had composed a poem a few weeks ago the Master put in his hand a small piece of paper containing a few pieces of gold, and being very tired He went into the anteroom.

In the afternoon while I was sitting in front of my table writing I could look down and see ABDUL BAHÁ so plainly coming out of the house. A number of believers were standing in the garden as He entered the landau with Foroughi and his son and was driven away. On His return, as this was the night of the meeting, He excused Himself for not being able to be present. He was again invited by Khaleel Pasha to a dinner given in honor of the Governor General and the officials of the town.

The other day I received a note from Mr. Atwood of Ramleh containing a letter written by Rev. C. J. Street M. A., L. L. D., of Sheffield, England. He is a Unitarian minister, and for the months of October and November, 1913, he has been giving a number of lectures on the great religions of the world, including the Bahai Movement. Part of his letter may be of interest to our friends. He says:

"Particularly I was interested in your personal allusion to Abdul Baha, for whom I have a very high admiration. Recently I have been giving a series of Sunday evening addresses on 'Faiths of the world', and the last I spoke of was Bahaism, the study of which is a great joy to me. I have high hopes of the good which this beautiful faith is going to do for the world. Miss Matthew, of whom you wrote, was much disappointed because I did not find it necessary to give up my Unitarian faith to become a Bahai, but I told her we were both preaching the same truth. . . . I am glad you see so much of Abdul Baha, and think it is a great privilege you enjoy. Some day his name will be enrolled among the greatest of honored names, perhaps even higher than Baha'U'llah, whom he himself venerates and extols. Nothing would please me better than to receive a Tablet from him, but that is probably too much to expect, and I have always been too modest to write and ask him for a message. But if you have an opportunity give him my love and profound esteem, and tell him I proclaim him from a Unitarian Christian pulpit one of the greatest prophets of mankind."

Several letters from Mrs. Stannard outline the splendid Bahai work she has done in Karachi. Her lectures at the Theistic League Conference were published in their entirety in the daily press, and much publicity work is being accomplished. She is now back in Bombay. Mrs. Gotsinger's letters announce her recovery from a severe attack of illness, and her departure for Surat. In a letter just received Mrs. Stannard says:

"I shall go off to Calcutta next month and do some preparatory work there. Also I have been asked to go to Madras. The enclosed printed article will enable you to see the sort of prospects for the great Bahai opportunities coming up next year. If the Master thinks He would come

to India by then, there will be hosts of people to meet Him, and He would be the crowning glory of the World's Conference. Doctor Sunderland told me efforts would be made to get very important people to come to speak at these three Congresses. . . . The Karachi visit has been most useful and brought me in contact with many nice people. . . . The Brahmo-Somaj are very kind to us, and will be always the best help in India. Rev. Promotho Sen of Calcutta says he wishes I was there now, as they are having a big time for anniversary Festival of their religion."

Our English friends are no doubt very happy to have such an active worker in the field of labor. Our prayers follow her no matter where she goes. May she become confirmed with more and more glorious services in the Kingdom of Abha.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 1, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The original source and fountain head of the Bahai Movement today is ABDUL BAHÁ. The rainfall of His abundant Teachings extends from East to West, and the clouds of His Mercy are responsible for the great downpours of the Holy Spirit. As far as He is concerned, in the scheme of His life there is no conservation of energy, for the descent of spiritual showers is uninterrupted. The waters of His advices and counsels which are gathered here and there will never be evaporated to return to the atmosphere, but will continue to irrigate the thirsty grounds of the hearts. When the water falls from the heaven of His divine Will, it will flow through the river of every life, causing vegetation and growth on its banks, and clothing the stature of nature with a new garment of beauty. The world receives a new stimulus, and creation takes up life anew. A wondrous transformation becomes visible, thus causing the spiritual progress of man from degree to degree.

This morning the Beloved dictated a significant message to the Christian Commonwealth on the possibility of the organization of a World Congress of Religions instead of the various sects of Christianity. The results of the former will be limitless in scope, while that of the latter are limited. It was a long wonderful message, which will no doubt appear in its columns. Mrs. Holbach, who was the channel through which this message was sent, was delighted with its pregnant contents, and unquestionably it will agitate public opinion in favor of such a great Assemblage of the Representatives of all the Religions of the World.

Then bidding farewell to them the Master left the house to call on a number of citizens. He was out for an hour or two, and when we returned we were in the garden. He turned toward me and said:

"How art thou? Art thou feeling well? I heard that the other day thou wert indisposed, thou must take care of thyself, lest thou mayest catch cold. Take care of thyself. Thou hast much work ahead, this is not the time for sickness."

Before noon the members of the Holy Family called on the members of the family of the Governor General of Damascus, and in the evening the Beloved entertained him and a number of his staff and officials of the town. There were 12 men sitting around the table, and the range of subjects discussed was varied and infinite. After dinner, they came into the reception room and stayed until midnight. They were charmed with His explanations and interesting talk.

It is marvellous to see how humble these great and influential men of the Turkish Empire are in His Presence, drinking the Water of His Knowledge, and listening to His Words of Wisdom. The impression that they carry away from here will be most beneficial to the Cause, for they are the moulders of public opinion, and the great channels of the official life of the country.

The following is the message to the Christian Commonwealth:

"I have read in a recent number of the Christian Commonwealth that there will be held a World Conference of Faith and Order, at which delegates of all Christian denominations shall be present. This news gave me great joy and satisfaction, inasmuch as every movement which tends to bring about even the partial unity of humanity is praiseworthy and commendable. However, were it possible to bring about those ideal forces which shall make the realization of a World Conference of Religions, it shall yield immensely greater results to the human race. For every particular Movement is derived from human policies and conventions; on the other hand, every Divine Movement is an effulgence of the Holy Spirit of the Almighty. Consequently, it is more profitable if the scholars and thinkers of this great century, the wise men and philosophers of our time, undertake the organization of an Universal Congress of the Religions of the World, to bring about the fraternity and solidarity of the various Faiths of mankind. This is the greatest need, the most pressing and urgent need of the day. For this Century is the Century of Light; this Cycle is the Cycle of Service; this period is the period of Reality.

Thus through the wise deliberation of such an august Assemblage the Religions of the World may abandon all those doctrines which are mere dogmas and traditions, and retain only what is absolute and fundamental. In this manner they shall discover that the object of all the past religions has been no other than the inculcation of Reality, and Absolute Reality is never susceptible of multiplicity or disunion. The middle ages were the ages of obscurity. Those who investigated groped in the darkness of doubt and hesitation, and the nations held blindly to traditions which were easily proved false. Praise be to God

Praise be to God! For in this Cycle the great Sun of Reality has dawned, flooding the horizon of the world with its radiant light. Consequently, it is most necessary to bring about such a representative gathering that it may strive with might and main to lay the foundation of the Oneness of the world of humanity, to relinquish the traditions and dogmas, and promulgate the fundamental Prin-

principles and cardinal doctrines of the Great Religions of the World. The Cardinal Principle of the Religion of God is Love. Divine Love causes the promulgation of Divine Order; Divine Order is no other than the consolidation of all the mighty beneficial forces of the world of humanity, Justice, Brotherhood, diffusion of Reality, the fostering of culture, and altruistic philanthropy.

All the members of the world of humanity are the sheep of God. God is the Universal Shepherd. He showers His kindness upon all. This is the Divine Order. Unquestionably it is greater and more comprehensive than the policy of man.

I am exceedingly pleased with the broad policy initiated and maintained by the Christian Commonwealth, for that liberal organ is free from all prejudice. The editor of the paper is the promoter of the Principle of the Oneness of the World of Humanity.*

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 2, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The most glorious news that is sent out in these days from the Mountain of God to the Bahai world is the enjoyment of perfect health by the Beloved of the world. The believers must indeed rejoice to receive this joy imparting news; for when the heart enjoys sound health all the members, limbs and organs of the body perform their respective functions and distinct duties without any interference.

The Presence of ABDUL BAHÁ in this world is the most precious asset of the Bahai Movement. Through His example and instructions the believers can accomplish the world's work set upon their shoulders by the Blessed Perfection. He is the mainspring of their inspiration and activities. Without His aid and assistance they can accomplish nothing. Consequently, when He is well and enjoys good health all the Bahais respond to it unconsciously, and enthused with His tremendous vitality and moral force they battle against the host of darkness, and instruct mankind in the lessons of brotherhood. As He has often stated, His spiritual health is not subject to change, that everlastingly He is in the same invariable condition; but we know by experience that whenever He is not feeling well He is unable to attend physically to the dispatching of the voluminous correspondence, as well as of other affairs of the Cause. Therefore, let us all be exceedingly happy in these days for the Master's health is good, and the sun of His countenance is shining with majesty without any dark cloud of bodily ailments preventing its radiant glory. From early morning till late at night He is up and about, doing good wherever He is and shedding sunshine wherever He goes. He does not rest for one moment, nor does He seek any tranquility for one second. The perpetual motion which is no other but the Divine Energy sustains Him under all conditions.

Three of us descended the Mountain very early and were strolling around the house when the Master was seen coming from the other end of the street. He asked us to enter and go to the reception room. Basheer served us tea, and then after a few minutes the Master walked in with that graceful ease and calm dignity peculiar to Himself. He called me by my name and said:

"Many letters are being received. What must we do with them?"

Outwardly I did not say anything, but in my heart I said: "The only way is to answer them."

Then He got up from His seat and shut the window through which a cold stream of air was coming in.
When He sat again He said:

"We are sorely in need of many teachers, but all the believers of God must be teachers of the Cause.

Teaching the Cause is not only through the tongue. It is through deeds, conduct, a good disposition, happiness of nature, kindness, sympathy, good fellowship, trustworthiness, holiness, sanctity, virtue, purity of ideals, and lastly, speech.

Everyone of the believers of God must, at the very least, teach one new soul in a year. Then the Cause will advance very rapidly. He may select one kindred soul, show him love and affection, associate with him with real interest, and little by little deliver to him the Message of the Kingdom. This is the means of the happiness of the believers of God! This is conducive to the Confirmation of the friends of the True One! This is the source of their nearness to the Throne of the Almighty! This is the way through which the world and the inhabitants thereof are enlightened!"

During the day we met Him again two or three times, now taking a long walk through the avenues of the German Colony, and again driving in the landeau, and then distributing money amongst the poor.

We had a beautiful meeting in the evening. As the Beloved entered the room He had a large envelope in His hand containing many letters. I was sitting near the Threshold. He called me, and when I stood in His Presence He gave me two letters to translate to the assembled friends. I was going to take my own seat when He commanded me to take an empty seat on His right hand. I hesitated at first, but He renewed His command. One of the letters was from Mrs. Stannard in India, the other from Mr. Ralston of California; the two extreme points of the East and the West meeting in the Holy Land in the Presence of the Lord. The translation of the contents of the letters gave Him, as well as the believers, much joy. He eulogized greatly the noble character of Mr. Ralston, and the gentleness and sweet quietness of Mrs. Ralston combined with a nature full of purpose;

"Now, Praise be to God! Mr. Ralston has arisen to spread the Message of the Kingdom of Abha, and ere long He shall receive universal confirmation. He has a sterling character, and a strong unwavering will," He said-

After a minute of silence, He renewed His remarks:

"The cohorts of the Kingdom of Abha are engaged in uninterrupted fighting. They are gaining victory after victory. God willing, Mrs. Stannard shall win many signal triumphs in India. Once the Principles of the Bahai Movement are known in India, it will spread all over that vast continent like wildfire. . . . Mrs. Stannard has dedicated her life to the Cause, she knows neither rest nor comfort. She does not sit tranquilly for one moment. Although she has a steady income, yet out of that she gives to the poor and needy. She entertains no other idea save the service of the Kingdom and the promotion of the Cause. She is assisted by the Confirmations of God. There are certain persons whose ambitions are lofty, they are not satisfied with petty services and small things. They do not soil their wings with water and clay. Their highest aim is to adorn their inner beings with the infinite perfections of the celestial world. Thus the most cherished desire of Mrs. Stannard is to spend the remaining years of her life in the spread of the Cause and service to humanity.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 3, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The stream of the pilgrims is flowing from every part of the East toward the blessed Mountain of God, a thousand times more blessed nowadays because on its white pinnacle shines the most precious Gem of the Kingdom of Abha. They come, Oh! they come from far and near, and they bring their priceless treasures, i. e., pure hearts and clean minds filled with precious jewels of Love and Service, of Wisdom and Understanding, of Concord and of Peace. Never was there a more united and harmonious band of pilgrims than these Bahais, who started from the various parts of the world on the holy pilgrimage; Christians and Mohammedans, Jews, Zoroastrians and Hindus, impelled by the call of the Spirit, leave their homes with one supreme object in their minds. Unconscious of each other, unknown to each other, day after day they are drawn nearer and nearer to the objective point. Why do they undergo the hardships of these journeys? Why do they accept the vicissitudes of the trip? Do they come to visit a fane? Are they interested in the old remains of an ancient or submerged civilization? Do they travel for the sake of recreation?

The Bahai pilgrims are not actuated by any of these material things. Their aims are higher and their motives exalted. They come to visit the true Shekinah, the visible Majesty of the Divine Spirit, the Fountain of the Water of Life Eternal, and the Bread descended from Heaven. How great is their good fortune, and how unique is their privilege. For their thirst is allayed with this Water, and their hunger satisfied with this Bread. Here in the Presence of ABDUL BAHÁ they find that spiritual rest for which their hearts have been craving, and are bathed in the sea of divine beatitude. Filled with this serene spirit while emptied of all the ephemeral desires and worldly wishes, they go forth again into the world to fight the good fight of Truth and Righteousness. Love, the great symphony of the Universe, will become the dominant note of their actions; and sympathy, the deep undertone in the orchestra of life, will modulate the measures and sounds of their music. The heavens of their hearts will become illumined by a sudden blaze of ethereal songs, and the radiant waves of jubilant anthems will environ them with the Breaths of the Holy Spirit. As spiritual guides they will lead back wandering humanity to its original starting point, and as the inextinguishable flame of Reality, they will enkindle the fire of celestial integrity and moral rectitude. Theirs is of course a heavenly reward. While there are many who are called, they are the ones who are chosen. The result of their work cannot be measured by any human criterion. As they are not working on the earth plane, as they are not striving for any material success, their outward circumstances may not impress the every day

man, who measures life according to the standard of dollars and cents.

Today six pilgrims arrived from Salezovar, Kashan, Teheran, Yazd and Ashkabad. The steamer arrived about sunset, and after an hour of delay in the Custom House they were at last standing in the Presence of the Beloved. Tears of joy flowed from their eyes, and one could not help being moved by this mystic scene of Oriental devotion and love. What were their feelings their thoughts and their emotions during these few moments of their first visit to their Lord? For days and days they had journeyed so that they might look into the glorious countenance of the Master, and hear His welcome and greeting:

"Marhaba! Marhaba! Khosh Amedeed! Khosh Amedeed!"

In the morning a number of outsiders called on Him, then my turn came. He dictated two cables to Mrs. Getsinger and Mrs. Stannard, expressing happiness over the receipt of their good news, and then dictated a few Tablets. At noon, instead of going up to the Pilgrims' Home we ate our lunch in the house of the Beloved. The pilgrims were given permission today to go to Acca and visit the Holy Tomb of the Blessed Perfection, but early in the morning He called a few of them into His room, and said:

"In my behalf you will go and visit the blessed Tomb of His Holiness BAHÁ'U'LLAH. I have great love for the believers of Mamagan, because

Firstly - they are earnest believers;
Secondly - they are firm and steadfast;
Thirdly - they are loyal and faithful; and
Fourthly - because Mollah Mohammed Namagani sentenced the Báb to death God has brought out such wonderful believers from that town who are the cause of my happiness.

Likewise, the believers of Meelan are very dear to me, because they are tried and tested. Similarly, the friends of Mayan Bosh, Maraghab and Banab are in reality most zealous in faith. The believers of Meelan have suffered much.

During the first years of our stay in Bagdad BAHÁ'U'LLAH suddenly departed for the mountains of Suleymanieh. At that time we did not know His whereabouts at all, and so it happened that there was no one to teach the Cause or muster the scattered Bahai forces. The fire of search was almost extinguished and the interest of the public waned. There was no one to assuage the fear of the few, or attract the hearts of the many. The Voice of Divine Authority was hushed, and the thunders and lightnings of spiritual revelations did not roll and flash across the heavenly track. Mirza Yahya, who claimed to be the vice-regent of the Báb,

always fearing his own shadow, was concealing himself in a thousand hiding places. Completely disguised and under the assumed name of Haji Ali, he traveled like a Darveesh between Bagdad and Balsorah. In order to hide his identity from the public he had hung on a string a few red and yellow Arabian slippers, which he sold to the people while walking through the streets and Bazaars.

"At this juncture two young men from Meslan came to Bagdad. They were enkindled believers and they brought cheer and happiness to our despondent and sorrowing hearts. It was then a long time that we had no news from the Blessed Perfection. The Fire of Spirituality and activity was put out of every soul. The hearts were bewildered and the spirits drooped. No amount of exertion whatever could in the least stir to courage or self sacrifice the spirits of the few remaining fearful Bahais. At that time I was very young. These two new believers from Meslan came and knocked at the door. I went and opened it. I observed they were two young men from Meslan. Their faces wereluminous, their eyes radiant; they were shining like unto two suns. I asked them to come in. . . . After awhile they asked about the Cause. I told them that the Cause was extinct, there was no Cause. They asked about Mirza Yahya. I told them he was concealed and no one knew his whereabouts. They asked about BAHA'O'LLAH. I told them I did not know where He was. As soon as they heard this sad news they looked at each other and began to weep and weep. For nearly one hour they sat down on the floor and wept bitter tears of regret and disappointment. I tried to console them, but I could not succeed. My own heart was sad when I realized the chaotic condition of the Cause, and the absence of any life. When they arose from their seats, without any remarks they left the house. They did not leave any address, and I never heard from them afterwards. How different it is now! The Banner of the Cause of BAHA'O'LLAH is waving over all the regions. The Power of the Most Great Name is felt by all the nations of the world. The Glad Tidings of the Kingdom are proclaimed to all the religions of the world. The Potency of the Holy Spirit is moving the hearts of men, and the fearless teachers of the Cause are spreading the Gospel of Salvation both in the East and in the West."

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 5, 1914.

Dear friends:

Spiritual democracy, coupled with the nobility of character, the simplicity of life and the inborn courtesy, are the unwritten laws of the Pilgrims' Home. Irrespective of their stations in their several countries, here the pilgrims live as brothers and equals, always trying to outdo one another in mutual service, humility and meekness. Most remarkable of all is their utter selflessness and the entire subordination of their personal wishes to the Will of the Beloved. I have often admired the perfect order and harmony which reign amongst the constantly changing inmates of the Pilgrims' Home, without any visible authority except that of the Spirit. The educated and the simple, the rich and the poor, the Moslems and the Jews, the high and the low, manifest a rare geniality of nature and calmness of temper. One never hears a faint whisper of discord, and never looks into a frowning or scowling face. Divine Love is the rule of their association; celestial forgiveness the principle of their fellowship; the cause of God and its promotion is the subject of their discussion; the meeting of the Beloved is the sole object of their long journey; the preservation of His Words and advices is the cherished ambition of their faith; the beautification of their individual lives is their highest aspiration; the diffusion of the Fragrances of the Ideal Anemones and supermundane realities is their supreme desire; and the upraising of the Flag of Universal Peace is their one great aim. They have found the purpose of their lives. To them "creation" is not a spiritless, huge, aimless, evolving phenomena; nay, rather it is the visible garment of the Invisible, through which the Spirit of Life and Love is shaping the ultimate destiny of the human race. These pilgrims have placed themselves in the path of this Creative Force. They have learned beyond any shadow of doubt that their goal is the far, far realm of Light.

The Beloved was out very early this morning. When we descended the Mountain we saw Him coming from the opposite direction with His Aba drawn over His head. He entered the garden, and for about half an hour walked in the sunshine. As all the pilgrims had been given permission to go to Acca and visit the Holy Threshold of BAHÁ'U'LLAH there was no one to disturb His solitude and peace. After His walk He entered the house, and we did not see Him the rest of the day.

The pilgrims arrived in the evening from Acca, every one richer in spiritual experience and the illumination of the soul. They have indeed caught many rays of this

ever deepening and ever widening life of the spirit, and with their hearts untroubled, their minds purified, they entered the garden of the Master. Oh! how beautiful each one of them looked as he walked with the others in the rose garden, discoursing on the glorious realities of life, while the white beams of the moon illumined the space. How fascinating are these divine moonlight nights, The charm and the rapture of these evenings are always new, mystic and enchanting. One night is more captivating than another. Often I climb the mountain all alone, the spirit of calmness and undying beauty surrounding me. This is the Mountain of God I say to myself. How I have longed and craved for the day to visit this Holy Spot, and here I am now, walking in these wonderful moonlight nights, in this invigorating air, with the radiant stars glittering, and the sea, blue and silvery, shimmering under the soft, bewitching rays of the moon. Oh! I so wished I were endowed with a rich power of expression, to portray in words to you not only the inner feelings of appreciation, but the pictorial beauty and the ravishing grace of these unparalleled nights. These are the happiest and the most beautiful nights of my life, for my cherished dreams are realized. Alone I walked for hours in the moonlight, thinking, ever thinking. As in a swift breeze my thoughts are caught up sometimes and borne away on a wing of light to return after a few minutes, frightened, bewildered, like a flock of birds astray. The gentle sighing of the wind in the tops of the cedars and the pines; the sweet murmur of the sea, as the blue Mediterranean laps the shores of the Mountain of God; the silence, the mystery and the beauty of the night, and the suggestions of grandeur and power poured forth by the moonlight as it bathes the Mountain in a flood of glory, stir to unusual depths the mind, and reveal the wonders of the Ideal Love in the chambers of the heart. I have been watching night after night the thin golden crescent of the new moon waxing larger and larger, and rising higher and higher, now floating through a pale amber sky, again traveling through the blue starry heavens, and ever inspiring the hearts with gentle and sweet ideals. Oh! I wish the pen of a poet were mine to describe to you in these pages the influence of these nights over my whole being. I walk as though in a trance, in a dream, in a fairyland. Are all these scenes of glory and beauty real or vanishing? How can cold words express the living fire which is burning in my heart? How can any attempt succeed in describing the ecstasy and wonder of the spirit? Here is joy, unalloyed, pure, unadulterated. How heavenly fair it is to sit on a great boulder on the fragrant moonlight night, on the slope of Mount Carmel, watch the calm, quiet, peaceful scene of the Mediterranean Bay, and listen to the evening breeze singing in the pines and whispering through the more distant blossoming almond trees. You will sit down quietly

for half an hour, now shutting your eyes and again opening them to feast on this unusual and alluring amphitheatre of nature built by the Hand of God. Then, suddenly the spell of silence, which had cast its power over you, is broken, and to your ears come the harmonious notes and songs of the pilgrims; sweet, white notes, gentle, lovely melodies, hurrying, drifting, lingering, calling and bringing healing and comfort. They are light and airy, bright and clear as the sparkling dew on the rosy petals of the flowers, joy-giving and pure. Their anthems of praise and thanksgiving at this time seem to be no other than heaven sent melodies. etherealized in the faint light of the moon. Then you feel very strongly that everything is right, peaceful and sweet. Then you turn back your steps happily toward your Nest, the new birds singing, the new ideas germinating, new joy bursting and new stars glittering. The love light of humanity can no longer be held back and veiled, its rays must go forth, its potency must be felt. Before you there is no shadow of darkness, it is the starlit path of love, the love for all mankind, and its shafts of light reach to heaven and penetrate the seven strata of the earth. How many believers would gladly give up everything to spend a few days and nights on Mount Carmel, close to the heart of the world, the Center of the Unity of the human race. How good and gracious is our Lord to me, letting me stay near Him, for I have had nothing to give up, and yet I am here. How weak and needy I am. How poor and unprepared I am. How can the musician ever play upon a broken flute? How can a broken winged bird ever soar toward the blue heights? Oh! the agony of the hours of regret, brooding over the past failures, and weeping over one's own inabilities. How I long to serve the believers of God, but I do not see any doors open. In the Presence of the Beloved our so called services are nothing but half articulated pretexts. Am I never going to be assisted to serve at least the friends of God? Will you not pray for me? Will you not beg of the True One to confirm me? I know, Oh, I know I am not worthy, but will you not help me with your silent, earnest prayers to attain to this greatest desire of my heart? God will answer your supplications because your heart is pure, your aim is unselfish. Your face is shining and your lips are praising the Creator. The time is so short and the opportunities of unselfish service are so many. Do pray for me. Will you?

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Feb. 7th 1914.

Dear friends:

This was the day of the Anniversary of the birth of His Holiness Mohammed, the Arabian Prophet, and as a result a general holiday was declared. Many stores were closed and people resorted in groups to the Mosque to pray. Now and then the guns of the military barrack boomed forth their salutes.

It may not be out of place if I quote a few sayings of the Arabian Prophet on "learning and knowledge", which will show more than any dissertation on the subject His commandments to the faithful to ever equip themselves with the findings of knowledge and the deductions of science.

He says:

"He dieth not who giveth life to learning."

"Whosoeth honereth the learned honoreth me."

"Learn to know thyself, O Ali."

"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."

"Philosophy is the stray camel of the faithful (Muslim); take hold of it wherever you come across it."

"The calamity of knowledge is forgetfulness, and to lose knowledge is this, to speak of it to the unworthy."

"Who are the learned? Those who practice what they know."

"One learned man is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers."

"To seek knowledge is a Divine Commandment for every Muslim."

"That person who shall pursue the path of knowledge God will direct him to the path of Paradise."

"He who knoweth his own self knoweth God."

"Acquire knowledge; it enableth its possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lighteth the way to heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when friendless, it guideth us to happiness, it sustaineth us in misery, it is an ornament amongst friends, and an armor against enemies."

"The knowledge from which no benefit is derived is like a treasure from which no charity is bestowed in the Way of the Lord."

"Wish not for death any one of you, neither the doer of good works, for peradventure, he may increase them by an increase of life; nor the offender, for perhaps he may obtain the forgiveness of God by repentance. Wish not nor supplicate for death before its time cometh, for verily, when you die hope is out and the ambition for reward, and verily, the increase of a believer's life increaseth his good works."

We were most fortunate this morning to meet the Master for a few minutes in the garden of His home. He came out and sat in the sun. His face expressed thought and contemplation, His beautiful white locks had fallen down His back, and His white beard and commanding brow intensifies His patriarchal authority and gentleness.

Mr. and Mrs. Holbach came in, bringing with them

the Christian Commonwealth of January 28th, containing an interesting article from Mrs. Holbach's pen on the life and Teachings of the Beloved on Mount Carmel. Then she read quotations from a letter just received from her daughter in England, in which she expressed her love for the Cause.

"Thy daughter", the Master said, "shall make extraordinary progress."

At this juncture two Arabian friends entered the garden, and as there was a stiff breeze blowing, ABDUL BAHÁ took them to the reception room and we were left to our own devices.

Haji Khorassani, who has been in Haifa since our arrival, gave a tea in the afternoon in the large room adjoining the Holy Tomb of the Báb. All the pilgrims and believers were present, as well as some of our American sisters. Our dear brother Foroughi and his son spoke, and in turn chanted Tablets. Everyone thought the Master would come up, but they were doomed to disappointment. Haji Khorassani will leave tomorrow evening for Haifa with two other pilgrims, Mirza Ahmad of the City of Beerjan and Mirza Rajab Ali, a physician from Salezevar. The former, my namesake, is a tall young man with a clear musical voice, and who during his nineteen days stay in the Pilgrims' Home filled our hearts with the joy of his songs and the sweet chanting of the Divine Tablets. He is a wonderful Bahá to whom I have become very much attached. When he leaves tomorrow I shall miss him. His brother, Sheikh Mohammed Ali, now living in Ashkaba, is a famous teacher and writer in the Cause.

Our American sisters, Mrs. vonLillienthal, Mrs. Beede, Mrs. Wise, Mrs. Sprague and Miss Hiscock, are back from Damascus and Tiberias, and again are submerged in the sea of the spiritual presence of ABDUL BAHÁ. Our dear sister, Mrs. Hoagg, lives with one of the holy daughters of the Beloved. She is learning Persian and in turn teaching English to the members of the Holy Family. She enjoys her Eastern life most thoroughly, and I advise the believers in America to waylay her when she returns to Uncle Sam, so that she may relate to them her charming experiences.

More of the pilgrims have been given permission to return to their respective homes within the next three or four days. Amongst them Foroughi, his son, and Mulla Mohammed their servant. It is probably more than three months that they have been living close to the heart of the Beloved. All of us, especially myself, who had not the privilege of seeing Foroughi before, have grown to love him,

and we always listen with interest and profit to his discourses and chanting of Tablets. New pilgrims are on their several ways and soon they will arrive. Aga Mohammed Hassan tells me that from now on the pilgrims will not stay longer than nine days. Nine days pass all too quickly in the vicinity of the Beloved, but from a spiritual standpoint each day is a year. The believers of God come and go, but to an observer, before they leave a great psychological change has taken place in their hearts. They are born again and baptized with the Water of the Knowledge of God, the Fire of the Love of God, and the Spirit of Divine Revelation. The Prometheus of this Age has placed in their hands the torch of the Oneness of the human race, and deposited in their hearts the flame of the Brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. Now they go forth with serene confidence into every dark corner of the Eastern world, carrying with them light and wisdom. Now they have a mission to perform, their lives are not idle dreams, but the Confirmation of a New dedication has descended upon them. They are the swift angels of the Lord. With their white wings of inspiration they will soar over many countries and leave behind many blessings. They blow through the trumpet and the dead will arise out of their tombs of negligence. They are the heralds ushering in the golden era of Peace. They are the harbingers of the coming of the Divine Springtime, the messengers of the millenium, the forerunners of the time of social justice and equity, and the standard bearers of the army of God.

In the evening the Beloved summoned all the believers into His Presence, and delivered a spiritual Talk which shall be translated elsewhere.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Feb. 8, 1914.

Dear Friends:

It was one o'clock p. m. and I was sitting behind my table, writing. My mind was busy weaving the fabric of new ever changing thoughts. Then all of a sudden my hand was stopped as though by an invisible power. I tried to shake off the impression, but even my mind could not think clearly. I raised my head and my gaze traveled over many a lovely blossoming tree, beyond the house of the beloved, over the red roofed cottages of the German colony, past the placid and calm bay of the Mediterranean, to where the ancient city of Acca is built, across the open plain and over the purple hilltops. Then my gaze turned heavenward and lo! and behold, there was a most wonderful rainbow, the rainbow of the Covenant, the symbol of the Testament of God, stretched over the city of Acca. It was composed of many colors, violet, rose yellow, green, deep purple, bright rose and a light shade of faint green. The most interesting thing about the rainbow was that its semi-circle was only large enough to arch the city of Acca. It stayed in the heaven for more than one minute, each color distinct in its line, and then little by little it vanished away.

Five out of the ever increasing and decreasing band of our pilgrims departed today; one for Egypt, two via Egypt for Salezevar and Tajan, and two via Damascus and Aleppo for Shah Abad and Khalaj Abad. During the day the Master met them several times, and on each occasion he spoke at length. To those who were going to Egypt

To those who were going to Egypt He said:

*On my behalf you will go and visit the tomb of our beloved Mirza Abul Fazl. All the days of his life were spent in the service of the Cause of God. His will and desire were devoted to the promotion of the Message of the Kingdom. He did not think of worldly comfort and tranquillity. He never tried to protect his life. He was not attached to the ephemeral objects of this contingent world. All his thoughts, ideals, conceptions and aims were centered around the service of the world of the Merciful. Praise be to God! that his intellectual and spiritual life was very fruitful. All his books contain incontrovertible proofs and evidences concerning this impregnable Cause. Sanctified and holy, divine and spiritual, he ascended from this mortal world to the realm of Light. The disinterested actions and free hearted deeds of a person proclaim with the sound of a trumpet his loyalty and sincerity in the Cause. He is in no need of self justification. He lived above and beyond the criticisms of petty and dwarfed assailers of his integrity and purity of his motives.

Their censures did not touch him. The innate nobility of his soul is not tarnished; the glories of his work are not beclouded; the rivers of his spiritual ideality, creative power and imaginative faculty is not dried up; the sea of his sympathy and increasing hopefulness and direct activity in the cause is not calmed down. With deep insight, holy vision and fresh inspiration, he will cause the complete retreat of all his old enemies; and with new zest, unflinching courage and undisturbed spirit he will apply himself to new victories, new channels of service, broader fields of labor, higher planes of triumphs, and the solution of vaster and more intricate problems by the magic wand of his determination. Thus he changes every stumbling block placed in his path to dishearten him from further progress, into a stepping stone; advances with confident steps ever riding higher and higher, never looking backward, but always forward; setting aside imperturbably all the seeming difficulties and finally planting his feet on the summit of the Mountain of Success, Beatitude and undiminished Glory.

Such a man was Mirza Abul Fazl. On such an unshakable rock every person must lay the foundation of the palace of his life, so that the howling of the winds, the fury of the storms, and the onslaught of the wild elements may not in the least shake it.

The life of Mirza Fazl was God controlled and God propelled. Not for one second did he set his own will above the Will of God. He effaced self and lived eternally in God. For this reason the Journal Noghattam, printed in Cairo, although its editor is a Christian and is not pleased to see this Cause making headway in the West, yet in an one of the current issues of the week a wonderful significant article appears, eulogizing the priceless character of Mirza Abul Fazl, mourning his loss as a great calamity, calling upon the young men to emulate him in their search after the realities of life, and praising most unsparingly his intellectual attainment, and literary, philosophic and historical culture.. People observe how the rays of the attributes of sincerity and loyalty illumine the character, causing man to become as a glorious star, yet they chase after the shimmering, faint light of the ignis-fatuous of their own chimeras and selfish ideas, and deprive themselves of the wondrous Lights of the Spirit.*

In the morning a young Englishman who has been traveling in India and is now visiting the various memorable sites of the Holy Land on his way to Egypt, called on the Beloved. Four years ago before his departure for India, this man had heard about the Cause. He desired to know something about the Principles of the Revelation.

The floodgates of the spiritual Utterances of the Master were unlocked, and for more than an hour and a half

He spoke, enumerating the various humanitarian teachings, and finally giving a detailed exposition of the economic plan of BAHÁ'ÍLLAH which will right all the social inequalities and give to each member of the body politic his allotted share of comfort and well being.

In the afternoon He sent for the departing pilgrims and most graciously took them on a long walk. It was Sunday, and there were many Carmelite monks and nuns going and coming. The boys and girls studying in the various religious institutions were having a joyous picnic under the fragrant blossoming almond trees in the field. Many of them, knowing the Master, stopped and respectfully saluted Him. Doubtless many of these monks are waiting for the coming of the Messiah. Most of them are sincere in their expectation, and yet what would they do with a man if he should go to them boldly and say: "your promised Lord is indeed here! The King of Kings hath appeared! The Divine Jerusalem hath descended from Heaven! Open your eyes and unstop your ears!"

The Master pointed out to us with his holy fingers the nunnery, a large building at the foot of Mount Carmel. He related the story of their initiation and acceptance into the Order:

"Most of these girls come from Europe and dedicate their lives entirely to prayer and worship. They are known as the brides of Christ. Once they enter that building they are not allowed to come out. They do not speak with anyone, and their food is served by an attendant. The rooms in which they live are cell like and very dark. Although this custom does not exist in the Religion of God yet it demonstrates the superlative degree of severance. Were this law sanctioned by Divine authority the spiritual effect on the world would have been tremendous. Man must live beneath the shade of the commandments of the Religion of God, and at the same time soar in such a pure atmosphere of holiness and severance. It is not necessary for him or her to take the vows of a monk or a real nun, but his or her detachment from the things of the world must be like unto theirs.. They must breathe the air of severance, and be burned with the fire of Attraction."

To the believers who were going to pass through Bagdad He said:

"Announce to the friends in Bagdad the Most Great Glad Tidings of ABDUL BAHÁ. Associate with them with the utmost of kindness and deliver unto them my joy everlasting. Make them feel the warmth of your love and affection. Likewise, gladden the hearts of the believers of other

cities through which you pass. Suffer them to come into the joy of the Lord when they meet you. Tell them that ABDUL BAHÁ ever thinks of them. Wistfully and tenderly He looks after their spiritual protection."

Then He spoke about other things; now about His strenuous trip through the West, and again describing in a somewhat humorous manner the art of elocution and oratory as is played over the vast audiences in the Occident by silver tongued and spectacular orators who seem to cast spells on their audiences(or as He called them 'sword swallows'.).

Then He enjoined on our departing pilgrims to give His greetings to individual Bahai teachers whose names He mentioned. The farewell scene was, as has always been, very affecting, and the eyes were wet with tears. The Beloved would not let them fall at His holy feet, but He kissed them and embraced them in His heavenly arms.

The Master sent a Tablet to the believers in Cairo, telling them to take good care of the writings of Mirza Abul Fazl.

We followed our dear pilgrims to the pier, and when we returned we felt the great void left by their absence.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai West, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 9, 1914.

Dear friends:

I am sitting in the rose garden of the Beloved that surrounds His house. Several of the pilgrims are walking here and there, admiring the flowers. The weather is most delightful and the fragrance of the white roses, red roses and pink roses reach the nostrils. Esmael Aga, the faithful gardener, is planting new shrubs. Although the sun is brightly shining yet one would like to bask under its warm rays. The air is filled with a peace and quietness that passeth understanding. The Mount of God, clothed with verdant robe, is looming above my head. No doubt there are many of the friends in various parts of the West who would love to be here and see with their own eyes the many holy and prophetic scenes daily enacted in this blessed land. I pray that this may be made possible for them, and that while the Sun of the Covenant is shining, they may obtain this priceless privilege.

Just when I finished the last page the Master came out of the house and beckoned me to follow Him. He handed me a cablegram just received from Teheran to read to Him, which I did. Then I translated a petition from George J. Augur of Honolulu, and while He was walking through the streets He dictated for him a beautiful Tablet. He continued in His walk till He reached a vacant lot at the foot of the Mountain of God. Here we sat on a piece of rock and started to read an Arabic newspaper. While the Master was thus engaged two Arabs, who were apparently debating on some deep questions, as their vigorous gestures showed, passed by. They stopped, looked at the Beloved, and murmured a few words to each other. From their mien I guessed that they had agreed to have the Master as an Arbitrator and abide His decision. They came forward and asked their questions. His answer pleased them both, and they went away quite happy.

The gist of His Talk was the following:

*Reason works through the instrumentality of the five senses. The faculty of hearing is more important than the faculty of seeing:

Firstly, because it is revealed in the Koran: 'God, He is the Hearer and the Seer!' We observe that in this Verse the word 'Hearer' precedes the word 'Seer'.

Secondly, 'sight' is a faculty possessed by animals as well as by men for perceiving only external objects in a direct line, the impressions of which are imprinted on the retina of the eyes; while 'hearing' is the faculty or the sense by which sound is registered from every direction, right, left, front, back.

Thirdly, God has not so far sent a deaf Prophet, but amongst the Prophets there were a few who were blind.

Fourthly, hearing is a gift through which we are enabled to listen to the thoughts of the Masters of the

bygone ages, and thus enrich our lives by the fruits of their Wisdom.

Fifthly, the foundation of faith is based upon the faculty of hearing. A deaf man is not responsible, because only a hearing man can listen to the Words of God and comprehend their meanings. - - -

Sight is physical, insight is ideal. There are many people who have the power of sight but they lack insight. Insight perceives and unfolds the spiritual susceptibilities of consciousness. It discerns the realities of phenomena. Sight is the faculty used for observing things, but it is not the apprehender of things. Insight becomes cognizant of the real state of things, and piercing through the veil of appearances it goes to the very heart of a given object. - -

The throne of reason is the brain. Reason is a monarch over the body and the five senses. Reason does not belong to the category of the senses. It is a faculty superior to them. Animals have the five senses but they do not have the reasoning or intellectual faculty as fully developed in man. But the Universal Emperor over the entire body is the spirit. It is the spirit that rules and controls all the functions of the body. - - -

It is revealed in the Koran: 'They have ears but they do not hear, eyes but they do not see, hearts but they do not comprehend.' In other words, they have ears but are deaf to the Call of God, they have eyes but they are blind to the Beauty of the Beloved, they have hearts but they are not aware of the mysteries of the Kingdom. - - - "

In this manner the Master taught these two Arabs on the road and I just saved for you parts of His Talk to show you how these pearls of Wisdom are given away freely and without price. He spoke with them with the same gentleness of spirit and courtesy and patience as though He were addressing an audience composed of thousands of eager listeners.

This morning the Russian steamer bound for Constantinople carried on its deck seven more of our pilgrims; Foroughi, his son, servant, and four Israelitish Bahais. As the Master, with His white beard and cream overcoat, stood on the steps of the house pronouncing upon them the last benedictions, He made a most wonderful, striking picture, never to be forgotten. His divine countenance and glowing Words are indelibly printed upon the tablets of memory. There are about twelve more pilgrims left behind, and if I am not mistaken these also will be departing soon.

In the afternoon the Master sent up Khosro after me, and I hurried down the Mountain as soon as possible. When I arrived the Master was sitting in the garden. Mirza Heydar Ali and a number of believers were in His Presence.

The landeau was ready, waiting for Him at the door. He asked me to ride with Him in the landeau because He had several letters and wanted them to be translated. Since our arrival in Haifa I have always carried in my heart the hidden wish of riding with the Beloved in the landeau, but up to this hour no opportunity was offered me. We were driven by Isfandeyar through the streets of German colony till we were quite out of the town in the open fields. Several times on the way the Master expressed His delight at the charming beauty of the scenery. A few letters received from India detailing the progress of the Cause were read to Him. The news that the debt of the Orient-Occident Unity for the publication of the Bahai literature was paid gave Him much pleasure. When the names of those who have so generously contributed to take this burden from the shoulders of the Society were mentioned to Him,

He said:

"Bravo! Well done! Very good! They have rendered an excellent service. Truly I say, they are the embodiment of loyalty and faithfulness."

Now that the ~~Society is freed from~~ the cumbersome obligation, it is hoped that the officials will widen the sphere of its usefulness, increase its efficiency, and the members and the friends will do their utmost to interest others in its objects and aims. A society with such a broad platform can accomplish much substantial work in bringing nearer together the East and the West in the ties of mutual helpfulness.

The Beloved did not leave the landeau, but after half an hour's stop in the road we returned. On our way back I told Him about the Panama Exposition in San Francisco. He thought the occasion is very important, and that the Bahais must avail themselves of this exceptional opportunity to spread the Cause of God and promulgate the Word of God.

Speaking about some particular person,

He said:

"We do not interfere with the affairs of anyone. We are at peace with all. We do not pick up quarrels with any soul. We do not speak against any individual. We do not say to anyone: 'Come to us or go away from us'. Whosoever desires to join his forces with us, he is welcome. Our forces are, however, brotherhood, peace, simplicity, and straightforwardness."

When we reached home the pilgrims were there. He asked them to go with Him into the reception room, and here again He spoke for them more than an hour. The believers were overjoyed with His kindness, and their spirits transported into the heaven of gladness through His exhortations, and advices. Their eyes were luminous and their hearts joyous when they left His Presence.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 10, 1914.

Dear friends:

The translation of the Tablet of Rev. G. J. Street may be a good introduction for the opening of today's activities:

HE IS GOD!

O thou respected heavenly Doctor:

Praise be to God! that the Call of the Kingdom reached thy ears, and thou didst become informed with the Principles of His Holiness BAHÁ'U'LLAH. Unquestionably day by day thou wilt add to thy knowledge of this subject. If possible thou mayst ask from London or America the translation of some of the Tablets of His Holiness BAHÁ'U'LLAH, such as the Tablets of the Words, Tajallevat, the Glad Tidings, the Iahrakat, and some of the addresses of this Servant, the collection and perusal of which will add to your information. Thus thou mayst cry out in all the churches that these Teachings are Heavenly Teachings, this Call is the Call of the Kingdom, and this Potency is through the Confirmation of the Holy Spirit.

Today all the inhabitants of the world are submerged in the darkness of dogmas and religious, sectarian, racial and political prejudices. Peradventure, God willing, thou mayst become a brilliant star and cause the disappearance of these darkensses from those parts, so that the Light of Divine Love may illumine those regions and the Flag of the Oneness of the world of humanity be upraised.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

(signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

In another Tablet revealed for Mrs. Isabel Fraser,
He says:

HE IS GOD!

O thou beloved maid servant of God!

Thy letter was received. Its contents imparted the utmost rejoicing, for it contained the good news of the unity and accord of the believers of God, their association and fellowship in the congregation of the elect, their enkindlement with the Fire of the Love of God, their advancement toward the Kingdom of God, and their firmness in the Divine Covenant and Testament.

I shall never forget thee. I remember thee always, and desire for thee heavenly illumination and Bahai spirituality. I hope that in Chicago thou mayst become

the cause of the promotion of the Word of God and the promulgation of the Religion of God. - - -

Convey the most wonderful greeting of Abha to all the believers and the maid servants of the Merciful.

Upon thee be Baha El Abha!

(signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

About noon the Beloved called me to His Presence. He dictated a cablegram to be sent to America, told me to sit down, and then spoke about the healthy air of Mount Carmel:

"The climate up the mountain is very bracing and invigorating, it ensures men a long life and vigorous constitution.

I was going to devote part of my time to answering letters, but the many hindrances that have crept in have prevented me from doing so, but it is good that thou art writing the news, thus the believers may be informed of what is going on here, thou art spending much effort in this direction."

For nearly ten minutes He was silent, and I did not intrude on His quiet contemplation.

In the afternoon He went out to His Khalvat Gha to rest. Later on the landeau was sent for so that He might take a ride. Then Mr. and Mrs. Holbach came in, and Mirza Heydar Ali unfolded another chapter of his book, his rich and most interesting life. His talks on the problems of the Cause, and his interpretation of the lives of the various individuals connected with the Movement are very illuminating. It is a great pleasure to me to translate his words. The recital of his wonderful story cannot be brought within the scope of these letters, as our dear sister will give it to the world in her own way.

When the Master returned a number of the believers and pilgrims were in the garden. He joined them, and enquired about the health of each. He sat down on a chair and then spoke these Words of truth and light:

"When the believers gather in a meeting and are engaged in the meeting of God, my heart is there, my spirit is there, although my body may be a thousand miles away. - - - Praise be to God! that the friends are gathering together in the Tomb of the BAB, and occupying their time with the worship of God, and obtaining the most holy sanctification. This is one of the most eminent, divine bestowals. Those hearts which are illumined with the Light of Reality, and those breasts which are dilated with the

Fragrances of the Love of God find themselves in the Supreme Paradise, and get a foretaste of the heavenly beatitudes as soon as they enter the Holy Tomb of the BAB. They will obtain the most great happiness, inhale the celestial Fragrances, and become characterized with lordly spirituality. When a person enters a rose garden, if his nostril is open he will inhale the sweet fragrances of the flowers, but if the nostril be infected with cold he is deprived of the delicate scent of roses although he may live in the garden for many days. During our stay in Adrianople Aga Jamal and Mirza Ali Akbar Boroujerdy and his brother arrived from a long journey. After a day all the three received permission to go into the Presence of the Blessed Perfection. When they came out BAHÁ'U'LLAH said that Mirza Ali Akbar was completely changed, that the present Mirza Ali Akbar was not the old one, he was recreated, that within the short space of five minutes he had made marvellous progress.

The stations of the believers of God are not now duly appreciated, their importance will be revealed in the future. After the crucifixion of Christ the few Apostles who were left behind were thrown into a state of utter consternation and agitation. Peter, who was the chief of the Apostles, denied his Lord thrice. Notwithstanding this, his lofty station and degree were revealed to the Christian nations in later ages. Now the hands of the highest artists have fashioned his statues with pure marble and have placed in his hands the keys of Heaven and hell.

But the believers of the Blessed Perfection during his lifetime cried out 'Ya Baha El Abha!' while under the sword. The glorious stations of these martyrs are not known today, they will appear later on. Outwardly the disciples of Christ were very much derided and laughed to scorn in their days, their honor today is as high as their humiliation in their lifetime was low. All the Pharisees and high priests ridiculed them in their temples and synagogues. The power and majesty of the Cause have not yet become apparent amongst the people. Out of the mountainous waves of this most great sea only a small ripple has become manifest, but ere long the potency and might of the Cause of God shall environ the East and the West and shall cause a great astonishment amongst the inhabitants of the world.

In all the former ages the Prophets and Messengers of God were ridiculed and persecuted, and there are many verses in the Koran indicating this fact. But in this blessed Cause no one has been able to satirize the personality of BAHÁ'U'LLAH or repudiate the Principles of the Movement. Again in those bygone Dispensations only the followers praised the Manifestations, and commended the Teachings. Not a single outsider gave a

favorable testimony; but in this great Bahai Cycle every nation and community have applauded and extolled the Cause. Although they do not believe in the Divine Station of His Holiness BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH, yet they testify to His Power, His Dominion, His Authority, His Might, and His Glory. Today in whichever circle the name of the Blessed Perfection is mentioned, they say: 'He was a great man, and a noble personage.'

Bahai West, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 11, 1914

Dear friends:

O Thou Mighty Spirit that art brooding over many waters!

I am Thy humble servant, use me according to Thy Will.

O Bliss! The heavens of the Cause are stretching to declare the Majesty of the Lord.

O Triumph! The glorious Sun of Righteousness is dawning to banish away the darkness of ignorance and prejudice.

O Joy! The full moon of Revelation is rising to flood the regions of the hearts with its silver rays.

O Delight! The stars of inspiration are twinkling to illumine the souls of men.

O Rapture! The Angels of Light are descending to enlighten the minds of humanity.

O Gladness! The prayers of creatures are ascending to the Throne of God.

O Shout! The orchards of perfections are growing to distribute the seeds of sanctity.

O Truth! The trees of arts and sciences are blossoming to produce the luscious fruits of the Holy Spirit.

O Rejoice! The flowers of love and affection are blooming to perfume the nostrils of the children of the Merciful.

O Felicity! The birds of Thanksgiving are singing to spiritualize the hearts of the servants of the Almighty.

O Happiness! The oceans of Bestowals are waving to adorn the shores with the pearls of wisdom.

O Victory! The rivers of Truth are flowing to irrigate the parched ground of mankind.

O Ecstasy! The bride of Universal Peace is appearing to establish amity amongst the nations of the world.

O Exultation! The Eyes of Providence are gazing down to uplift the fallen and cheer the despondent.

O Life! The Mountain of God is dancing because the Spirit of the Comforter dwells on it.

O Glad Tidings! The gloom of the weary night is vanishing, for the orbs of uprightness are streaming down their soft rays.

O Transport! The fire of yearning is blazing to burn away all the veils of superstitions.

O Heaven! The Power of the Kingdom is revealing the unknown mysteries of nature.

O Blessedness! The holy souls in every country are announcing the coming of the era of celestial brotherhood.

A Jewish pilgrim from Tabor arrived. He is middle aged, his name is Mirza Moussa. About noon the Beloved of the world received him and showered upon him much kindness. He was weeping with joy, the joy of seeing his King and Lord.

The Master said:

"The souls who have capacity are like unto the prepared candles, as soon as they come in touch with the match there will be an instantaneous ignition. The unprepared souls are like unto steel and iron. They become heated and red, but they do not give light.

The hearts that are endowed with pure hearts and great capabilities, as soon as they hear the call of God they will acknowledge its truthfulness. There have been many souls who have often expressed or longed that they might have the privilege of living during the lifetime of one of the Servants of God. Now, praise be to God! that you are living in these blessed days, and are existing in an Age of Light, in the Cycle of the Revelation of Divine Mysteries.

Mayst thou ever be encircled with spiritual confirmation and assistance. Mayst thou ever remain firm in the Covenant and Testament. Mayst thou withstand the blowing of the winds of tests like unto a strong edifice."

Lately I have been spending almost all the hours of my days in the house of the Beloved, taking my lunch and sometimes my dinner there, and going up the Mountain long after sunset to work and sleep in my own ideal little nest. Our lunch is sent from "Androun", and my companions at table are Esmael Aga, Khosro, Basheer, Isfandeyar, and sometimes Mirza Mahmoud or others. All of them are most faithful to the Master, each person attending wholeheartedly to duties assigned to him. Those who serve at this Divine Court are not prompted by any material rewards. They infuse their great or small services the spirit of the atmosphere of loyalty and sincerity. If there is any person in this wide world who serves Abdul Baha with the smallest or least idea of any material reward, he is just as far from the spirit of this Movement as the earth is remote from Sirius. Here is the Court of a Spiritual Kingdom and, therefore, His gifts and bestowals are spiritual. He is not a worldly monarch so that he might appropriate wages and salaries for this servant or that. At this Divine Threshold we must divest our minds from all such paltry and unbecoming thoughts. Whosoever desires to sacrifice his life and devote his time to the service of the Cause, let him come. No other plan will be crowned with success, I assure you.

In the afternoon the Master called me again into his room and dictated a long Tablet in Turkish. Just as he was going to dictate another, Mirza Mohsen announced the arrival of the Mofiti. The Beloved engaged him in conversation, and when some documents were signed he left the house.

We did not have any meeting today, so we climbed up the Mountain rather early. After an hour the word was brought that the Beloved wanted me again. Without much delay I descended the Mountain and enjoyed a quiet hour in His Divine Presence. He told me to stay and have dinner. When I left the house His love was more than ever in my heart. The moon was full and glorious, the Mountain of Carmel was fascinatingly beautiful, my heart swelled in thanksgiving, and from my lips flowed the words in the first part of this letter.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai West, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 12, 1914.

Dear friends:

Of late it has been observed in certain quarters that there is an unconscious tendency to dogmatize the Bahai Teachings, trying to ascribe limits to this limitless Cause, endeavoring to measure this Ocean of Truth, which is unfathomable, exerting vainly to enumerate the countless stars of this Heaven of Spiritual Grace and Mercy, and daring to survey with cribbed instruments of their human minds the wide expanse of the Kingdom of Abha, and assign to it various boundaries. What a shortsightedness this is. The Bahai Cause is Universal and not local. It is all inclusive and not exclusive. The very word "exclusively" savors of dogmatic spirit, narrowness of mind, limitation of the outlook, which are wholly odious and unpleasant to a Bahai. The Spirit of the Word of God cannot be monopolized. If we can monopolize the fresh air that we breathe, then we may be able to form a trust of the Spirit of the Word of God. Deep down in the core of the heart of every Bahai there must be a reverent Universality and a great love for everything noble and true in the past religions of the world. What right have we to disregard them? The good in every religion is always good, because other Revelations have appeared with more suitable laws applicable to the time and the country in which they lived. God has not placed into my hands, or thy hands, the keys of His Mighty Cause. Most graphically the Lord describes the foolhardy presumptions of such egotistic spiritual geographer in the following sublime Words in the Book of Job:

"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Where-upon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? --- Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the day-spring to know his place; --- Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?"

In the Bahai Cause religious prejudices must be entirely abandoned. Let us always be on the alert lest we may become little by little imbued with a "Bahai prejudice." I do not say that such a thing is possible, or will ever come to pass; but it is better to be on our guardlest we may become "proud" of our own humility. A Bahai is always thirsty for the Water of Reality, and hungry for the Bread of Life. If he drinks the seven seas of the world his lips are yet dry. The Holy Scriptures of all the religions are his Universal Bible. Through the Lights of the Teachings

of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, and the explanations of the Center of the Covenant, he diligently studies and reads other scriptures. In the Bahai meetings the sacred books of all the nations are perused according to the customs of the country and the spirit of the occasion. All the Prophets of the past ages are the members of one vast spiritual brotherhood. From the standpoint of this celestial intimacy there is not the slightest distinction between them, and therefore a Bahai loves all dispassionately and exerts himself to humbly walk in their footsteps and characterizes himself with their several sublime teachings. A Bahai opens the windows of his heart, letting the rays stream down through them, no matter from what horizon. He associates with all mankind with joy and fragrance, and scatters to the four winds the ashes of exclusion and mental and spiritual restraints.

When we descended the Mountain this morning and stood in the Presence of our Beloved in the garden while He was walking to and fro with firm feet,

He spoke as follows:

"The Bible and the holy Books of other religions must always be studied and be read in the Bahai meetings. This study will widen the circle of one's information and acquaint him with the wonderful prophecies fulfilled today. A Bahai publication must never contain anything which may cause provocation, or injure the feelings of anyone or displease any soul. It must contain such matters as would be conducive to the happiness, hopefulness, advancement, guidance and illumination of the readers. Its field must be universal, its sympathy must be universal, its ideals must be universal. Its contents must establish fellowship between the hearts of all the religionists, and must not voice anything which might wound the feelings of others. The reading and study of the Holy Books are essential, so that man may become informed with the Glad Tidings. We must follow the Will and Commands of the Blessed Perfection, and not the promptings of our own hearts. We must consort with all mankind with love and amity. If we possess a Word of Truth we will deliver it to the people; if they accept it the aim is attained, if they reject we leave them to themselves and pray for them. We have to do this, however, most kindly, without the least sign of ill feeling and opposition. We will not engage in disputes and altercations. We must affiliate with all the religions and sects, speak to them from their own standpoint, and show to them in practice that we love their books, we read their scriptures, and we honor and respect the Founders of their religions. A Bahai teacher must keep these facts always before his mind, lest in the course of his lecture he may make a dogmatic assertion which may arouse their combative prejudicial spirit in their listeners."

In connection with the above remarks He wrote the following with His own blessed hand to one of our Western teachers:

"Through whichever country thou goest speak thou with moderation. Call the people to the Oneness of the world of humanity, the dawn of the Sun of Reality from the horizon of Persia, and the Servitude of ABDUL BAHÁ, and then explain the Center of the Covenant, and no more."

Before noon the pilgrims met ABDUL BAHÁ two or three times, therefore they were most happy. The Master showered upon them many blessings. A word to them from Him is more than sufficient. In the afternoon the mother of the former president of the German bank in Haifa, with two girls, one English and the other German, who are traveling through the Holy Land, called on the Beloved. Mirza Mohsen and Mirza Hadi received them in the reception room, and they were served with tea. After awhile the Master came in bidding them a hearty welcome. After a few preliminary remarks

He said:

"The air here at Mount Carmel is fragrant, and its earth is sweet. The panorama of sea and land is very unique; its sun is all-glorious, its moon is all-beautiful, and its stars are all-sparkling.

This is the Holy Land, the land which gave birth to all the Prophets, such as Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, David, Solomon, Moses, Isaiah, Zechariah, and last of all Christ. Elijah lived on Mount Carmel. You must love this land very much, because all these holy happenings have transpired here,

Syria is a most wonderful country, it is a world in miniature. All the trees of the hot climate, such as date-palm, oranges, mandarines, etc., as well as the trees of the cold climate, such as walnuts, pines, etc., are found in Syria. Siberia is famed for its hot weather, while Mount Lebanon is a cool summer resort. ---.

Moreover, the Lights of the Sun of Divinity have shone forth from this dayspring, and the splendors of the Orb of Reality were diffused from this Horizon."

Then He spoke about Stuttgart and its beautiful geographic situation, and the physical strength of its men and the sturdy qualities of their characters. They left the Master most pleased with their interview; and expressing a desire to see the Holy Family, they were taken by Mirza Hadi. Later on the Angel of Mount Carmel and Mr. and Mrs. Holbach came in. They had come to listen to the continuation of Mirza Hayder Ali's delightful and instructive story.

The Master asked them to sit down for a few minutes, then

He said:

"Some of the materialists have always endeavored to refute the wholesome influence exerted by the power of religion over the members of a community. In order to prove their statements they have clung to a very fallacious and untenable theory called 'the law of correspondence.'"

By the 'law of correspondence' they mean this in a nut shell:

On one hand the students read the Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, the Verses of the Koran, the gentle exhortations of Buddha, the pure ideas of Zoroaster, and the moral teachings of Confucius, and they find them lofty, stimulating and inspiring; and on the other hand they find that the lives and actions of millions of people who call themselves followers of these great world Prophets do not 'correspond' with those exalted advices, and as ~~therefore they conclude that the teachers were false and impostors.~~ their teachings have not greatly refined the character of man, therefore the teachers were false and impostors.

The average intelligent Westerner of today is not a Christian; he is a secular churchman. Parrot-like he may respect the teachings as laid down by Christ in the Gospels, but he will not be ready to live up to these commandments. Christ says: "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also!" But now European Christians are armed to the teeth, ready to cut each other's throats at the slightest provocation.

Again, Christ repeats the old law: "thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgment." Now does this correspond with the murderous butchery of Mohammedans and Christians in the late war between Turkey and the Balkan Allies, who in turn fell upon each other as soon as they put their so called common enemy hors de combat?

Again Christ says: "Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God." Now does this agree with the intrigues of politicians, the machinations of the diplomatists behind the closed doors of their

chancelleries, and the constant incitement of jingo press with their pseudo-patriotism, and the continent of Europe becoming one vast dangerous arsenal for the combustion of which only one spark is necessary to start a world consuming conflagration?

If Christ was the Son of God and performed so many miracles, even as to quickening the dead, why after 2000 years is it that his followers do not even practice these simple Teachings of His? These are only a few of the arguments put forward by the materialists and agnostics; basing therefor their evidence upon the non-correspondence of the actions of the followers of these Prophets with the sayings of the Prophets themselves, they go to the point of denying that there was anything divine and spiritual in the lives of ~~these founders of these religions~~ ~~these religions~~, and they will find that o

The mistake committed by these agnostics is nevertheless plain. It is this:

It is unjust and unfair to the wonderful Nazarene to ever compare the deeds and actions of these Christians with His Celestial Teachings. They must compare His Teachings with His own life, and the lives of those who truly walked in his footsteps, and they will find that one is the embodiment of the other."

In the evening we had a large meeting in which the Beloved spoke on "How to be a Bahai." It was a most helpful talk. He related a story of the life of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, and toward the end H

He said:

"Know ye a Bahai by his deeds, and not his words."

Ahmad Sphrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
February 14, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Right below the terraced garden in front of the Tomb of the Báb, on the slope of Mount Carmel, one's eyes are feasted daily on a wonderful picture of blossoming almond trees. Some of the trees are just one glorious mass of white or pink blossoms. With the trees that surround the Tomb and in adjoining grounds there are about one hundred. Their blossoms are the symbols of the purity and innocence of the lives of those divine martyrs who sacrificed everything so that today we may live peacefully and enjoy the fruits of their heroic deaths.

When this morning the Master came out of His room He walked toward the garden, and for several minutes He looked down over the matchless scene of the blossoms. Then standing in front of the door of the Tomb, without entering inside, He offered a silent prayer. From here we walked toward the Pilgrim's Home. Entering the reception room He took a seat near the window.

Then He began to speak:

"The view from the Pilgrim's Home is very attractive, especially that it faces the Blessed Tomb of BAHÁ'U'LLAH. In the future the distance between Acca and Haifa will be built up, and the two cities will join and clasp hands, becoming the two terminal sections of one mighty metropolis. As I look now over the scene I see so clearly that it will become one of the first emporiums of the world. This great semi-circular arm of the Mediterranean will be transformed into the finest harbor, wherein the ships of all the nations will seek shelter and refuge. The great vessels of all peoples will come to this Port, bringing on their decks thousands and thousands of men and women from every part of the globe.

The Mountain and the plain will be dotted with most modern buildings and palaces. Industries will be established and institutions of various philanthropic nature will be found. The flowers of civilization and culture of all nations will be brought here to blend their fragrances together and blaze the way for the brotherhood of man. Wonderful gardens, orchards, groves and parks will be laid on all sides. At night the great city will be lighted by electricity. The entire harbor from Acca to Haifa will be one path of illumination. Powerful searchlights will be placed on both sides of Mount Carmel to guide the steamers.

Mount Carmel itself, from top to bottom, will be submerged in a sea of lights. A person standing on the summit of Mount Carmel, and the passengers on the steamers

coming to it, will look upon the most sublime and majestic spectacle of the whole world!

From every part of the Mountain the symphony of 'Ya Baha El Abha!' will be raised, and before the day breaks soul entrancing music accompanied by melodious voices will be uplifted toward the Throne of the Almighty.

Indeed God's ways are mysterious and unsearchable. What outward relation exists between Shiraz and Teheran, Bagdad and Constantinople, Adrianople and Acca and Haifa! God worked patiently, step by step, through these various cities according to His own definite Eternal Plan, so that the prophecies and predictions as foretold by the Prophets might be fulfilled. This golden thread of promise concerning the Messianic Millennium runs through the Bible, and it was so destined that God in His own good time would cause its appearance. Not even a single word will be left meaningless or unfulfilled.*

Then He spoke about the return of the Jews to their promised Holy Land, and that it is being fulfilled all the time. He descended the Mountain in a carriage, and after a few minutes we followed Him. Mr. and Mrs. Holbach and Miss Miscock were there, and the Master spoke with them for a few minutes, and then went into His house. About 11:30 He came out and took a walk all alone.

In the evening we had a meeting and all the believers found their way into the Presence of the Ruler of the Hearts.

In the first part of His talk He dwelt on the great significance of the Mashrak-el-Azkar built in Russia, and then He spoke on "thankfulness".

He said:

"A thankful person is thankful under all circumstances. A complaining soul complains even if he lives in Paradise. - - - If we are not thankful, then who can be thankful? Are we not encircled with the Bounties of God? Are we not enveloped by the Bestowals of the Blessed Perfection? Was He not lighted up a luminous lamp in our home? - - - Consider how each one of us is surrounded by His Favors! How much divine Grace descends upon us! How often our hearts respond to His Call! - - - If we are not pleased, then who is there to be pleased? Different groups of mankind, for the sake of a piece of earth which they designate as their 'beloved country!', and in order to protect the body politic which they call a nation, are ready to sacrifice their lives so that no one may encroach on their rights. - - -"

Now that we have been trained under the shade of the Tree of the education of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, what will be the measure of our service, and how are we going to render to Him due thanksgiving? Verbal thanksgiving is fruitless. Thanksgiving is rendered in two effective ways:

Firstly: it is through the realization of spiritual susceptibilities, which illumine the courts of the hearts with the bright stars of happiness and rejoice it by the Glad Tidings of the Merciful, and are exhilarated with the Wine of the True One.

Secondly: it is through deeds, i. e., to live in accord with the good pleasure of the Lord, adorn our being with His heavenly attributes, and try to alleviate the suffering and misery of humankind. If man does not do these things, but praises God and offers Him a hundred thousand thanksgivings every second, there will not be the slightest result, but it will be like words without any significance, a body without spirit, and a glass without light. Consequently, we must be very happy, very glad, very pleased, very contented and very joyful, because we are submerged in the ocean of the Bestowals of BAHÁ'U'LLAH. - - -

A thoughtful man enjoys the gifts and the blessings of God. For example, there is a time when we realize the great blessings of the Almighty in the powers of the sight, hearing, the heart or the intellect, and then we are filled with thanksgiving for these wonderful heavenly bestowals; but if we use them indifferently there is no difference between man and animal. Just think what Divine Bestowals are the world quickening sun, the breezes of the early morn, the flowers of the field, and everything that is young and bright, radiant and hopeful. Let us ever be mindful of these starry visions. They will help us in our upward journey. They are not dreams to be dissolved by the wand of destiny, or ground into powder by the wheels of fate. They are the adamantine rocks upon which the foundation of our lives are laid. The more we are mindful of the Bounties of the Blessed Perfection, and aware of the Favors of the Supreme Manifestation, the greater will be the capacity of our enjoyment and the loftier the station of our blessedness.*

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 15, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The contents of a Tablet lately revealed from the tongue of the Master of the Covenant to one of our American friends unfolds in a simple manner three cardinal principles of the Bahai Cause:

First and foremost to go on and spread the Teachings by every means;

Second, to associate and consort with other religions and sects;

Third, the importance of unity amongst the believers of God.

The Tablet is as follows:

“HE IS GOD!”

O thou my son of the Kingdom!

Your letter dated December 20th was duly received. Praise be to God! It was an indication of firmness and steadfastness in the Cause of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, and the promotion of the Call of the Kingdom of BAHÁ'U'LLAH.

(First,) The believers must hold fast to all the means, so that day by day the Lights of the Guidance of God may enlighten all parts, and the souls may become quickened through Eternal Life.

(Second,) Thou hast written that a minister has asked Mr. _____ to hold, from time to time, the Bahai meetings in his church. This is very acceptable. Peradventure, through your effort this minister will be changed, be attracted to the Light of the Kingdom, attain to another state, seek another power and become the minister of the heavenly monastery, and a herald of the Appearance of the Lord of Hosts.

(Third,) A number of the friends are sending the good news of the unity of the believers and the maid servants of the Merciful. It is my hope that this Glad Tidings may increase day by day, and their harmony and accord may reach to such a degree that the heart of ABDUL BAHÁ may obtain joy and fragrance; for today there is left for him no other heartfelt happiness save the spiritual susceptibilities of the believers of God.

Convey the wonderful Abha greeting to each and all.

Upon thee be Baha El Abha!

(signed) Abdul Baha Abbas."

Today four of our American sisters departed from Haifa. Mrs. Sprague and Mrs. Wise will visit Jerusalem and then return to this Holy Spot to meet the Beloved before

they start for the United States. Mrs. von Lillienthal and Mrs. Beede will proceed from Jerusalem to Jaffa, Alexandria and Italy. Wherever they go they have the heartfelt prayers of their brothers and sisters. The memory of these precious days spent on Mount Carmel in the neighborhood of the Beloved will neither be forgotten by them nor by us. To us they were the golden links of that mighty spiritual chain which is connecting the inhabitants of the East and the West into the never-to-be-broken bond of divine brotherhood. They are urged forward by a common Ideal, impelled by a spiritual force and inspired by the Words of ABDUL BAHÁ. The Hand of God will ever protect them. They are the true maid servants of the Blessed Perfection, their aim is to spread the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom, and their highest desire is to win the good pleasure of the Lord of mankind. Miss Hiccock also left for Egypt. She was very happy to be again breathing the spiritual atmosphere of the Presence of the Master.

Later on in the day the Governor General of Damascus, with a number of military officers and judges, called on the Beloved. They were in the Presence for half an hour. While they were in the house their many carriages were waiting for them in front of the gate, thus attracting the curiosity of the passers-by, and wondered and inquired who were the important personages in the house of Abbas Effendi.

In the afternoon the President of the American College in Beirut, Mr. Bliss, accompanied by a number of oriental students and Dr. Coles of the English hospital, called on the Master. Mrs. Bliss was also in the party. The President expressed the highest satisfaction and pleasure with the conduct and diligence of the Persian Bahai students. The Master in turn praised the College and its broad spirit of Universal Brotherhood:

"I consider all the students as my own sons, and am always solicitous after their comfort and happiness", the President said.

"Intellectual and spiritual relationship", the Master said, "is greater and higher than physical relationship. Christ did not have any sons, but He had many disciples."

"The adherents of the various religions and nationalities of the East who throng the halls of our College associate and commingle with each other with the utmost spirit of fraternity and fellowship," the President said in the Arabic language.

"This is what it ought to be," the Beloved answered. "In this age the college which is dominated by a denominational spirit is an anomaly and is engaged in a losing fight. It cannot long withstand the victorious forces of liberalism in education. The Universities and Colleges of the world must hold fast to three cardinal principles:

First, whole hearted service to the cause of education, the unfolding of the mysteries of nature, the extension of the boundaries of Pure Science, the elimination of the causes of ignorance and social evils, a standard universal system of instruction, and the diffusion of the lights of knowledge and reality.

Second, service to the cause of the students, inspiring them with the sublimest ideals of ethical refinement, teaching them altruism, inculcating in their lives the beauty of holiness and the excellency of virtue, and animating them with the excellences and perfections of the Religion of God.

Third, service to the Oneness of the world of humanity, so that each student may consciously realize that he is a brother to all mankind, irrespective of religion or race. The thoughts of Universal Peace must be instilled in the minds of all the scholars, in order that they may become the armies of Peace, the real servants of the body politic, the world. God is the Father of all. Mankind are His children. This globe is one home. Nations are the members of one family. The mothers in their homes, the teachers in the school, the professors in the college, the Presidents in the universities, must teach these Ideals to the young from the cradle up to the age of manhood."

After this meeting the Master went out to take a drive in the landeau. The Greatest Holy Leaf was also in the carriage with Hossein Effendi and Moneeah Effendi, the two little grandsons of the Beloved. The great spiritual love that exists between ABDUL BAHÁ and His holy sister is indescribably deep and beautiful. Their tender attachment is joy inspiring and blissful. One can never write much about the Greatest Holy Leaf, except that she is a glorious diadem on the brow of womanhood, a brilliant jewel in the crown of the New Woman of the 20th century.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai West, Haifa, Feb. 16, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Nine pilgrims arrived today, four men, four women and one boy, from Yazd, Nayreez and Bombay. One of the pilgrims has brought his daughter with him to enter the girls' college in Beirut, where already more than half a dozen Bahai girls are studying. This is a distinct departure on the part of these Persians, who are extremely reluctant to leave the beaten track as regards the education of the girls, and it would have been impossible to make them feel the supreme importance of this fact were it not for the repeated commands of ABDUL BAHÁ. The girls are more than anxious to study and widen the scope of their opportunities, but they are so hedged in on all sides by petty social conventions and withering customs, and stunting restrictions, that it is very hard for an outsider to realize the meaning and import of each. A number of the progressive women put the whole blame on men, arguing with much earnestness that the men have ever been and are yet the main cause of the backward condition of their sex in the Orient. They further state that the real era of woman's progress will commence in the East when the stubborn men will give up for all time their assumed superiority, offering to women their own inalienable rights of social equality so long withheld, and willingly consort with them as their equals and partners in life. The women are fast revolting against their cramped and confined life, they long for broader fields of activity. They hate to sit around the house all day and do nothing but dress, attend to household duties and make the servants behave themselves. They love to come out and breathe the fresh air of true emancipation; they yearn to break into a thousand pieces the handcuffs of blind customs and the chains of social inequalities. I know nothing about it, but I feel in my inmost heart that a silent and portentous storm of revolution is brewing behind the harems of the East, and once it is set loose its force will be so irresistible and its velocity so sweeping that no power on earth can stand before it. In the course of conversation on this most important subject, I mean interesting subject, a friend told me:

"I think the time is soon coming when the Eastern women must take into their own hands the cause of their rights and freedom. It may take, oh such a long time before the ~~men~~ will come around and deal with this subject intelligently, but the women will find a short cut to it."

For my part I wish to see all the Eastern girls well educated, and all their latent intellectual and spiritual forces budding out into perfect womanhood. Are they not your sisters as well as mine? The consummation devoutly to be wished is to see them untrammelled and free, soaring towards the heights of human and divine perfections and working with men, shoulder to shoulder, in the upliftment

of humanity of the plane of regeneration. The stage is set and the curtain will be raised soon. Will you and I be among the actors or the spectators? Time only can tell this. But no matter what part is assigned to us at that particular hour, let us hope we will fulfill our duty faithfully and single-mindedly.

While with the afternoon steamer nine pilgrims arrived, with the morning steamer five left for Marv, Russia, via Constantinople. The Beloved saw them before their departure. While the tea was served and the eyes were wet, the Master, among other things, spoke to them as follows:

"In those ancient days Marv was a large and populous city, and I hope that these latter days it may reach to its former grandeur. The believers in that city must not let crystallization of feelings take place. They must associate with other sects and be most kind to all. The teaching must be done in the spirit of amity, and the friends must speak in such a manner as to attract the hearts and not to frighten them away. Truly I say, the believers in those parts are the essences of faith and the impersonations of sincerity. They have no other aim in their hearts and souls save love toward the friends of the Merciful. My heart is very much attached to them. God shall undoubtedly confirm and assist them. I am most pleased with them. They have conducted themselves most nobly. They have been conducive to the honor of the Cause of God and the promotion of the Word of God. In the Court of the Blessed Perfection they are most favored. May they be drawn nearer day by day unto the Kingdom of Abha, become more attracted, more enkindled, purer and holier. I will supplicate at the Threshold of BAHÁ'U'LLAH to protect and guard you under all circumstances."

When the newly arrived pilgrims were ushered into His holy Presence they thought they had at last attained the Paradise. After welcoming them, and asking several questions about their journey,

He said:

"From the very beginning of the history of the Cause the city of Nayreez was moved and stirred by the Spirit of God. The believers in Nayreez are the true pioneers or the children of the martyrs. Today in this Divine Path they have suffered every ordeal, persecution, tests and

martyrdom, and yet they stood firm and steadfast. Today the Confirmations of the Kingdom descend upon those souls who arise to teach the Cause of God. The gardener is proud of and pleased with that rose whose sweet fragrance is diffused all around, and whose delicate scent cheers and comforts the hearts. The teachers of the Cause are like unto open roses. They must disperse to all parts the delicate perfume of the Principles of the Divine Religion."

Amongst the new pilgrims is Haji Mohammed Taher, from Yazd. Thirty-two years ago he had visited Acoo, and during nine months stay visited the Blessed Perfection. Now he returns to meet the Son. He has brought along manuscripts of a large book written by him, containing the accounts of all the martyrs in Yazd from the appearance of the Báb up to a few years ago. The book will be presented to the Master. I have no doubt it is a most dramatic document, and I hope to get it from the Beloved to read, and in case the time permits, to translate portions of the same. In the afternoon I found the Master in the rose garden talking with the son of the former Mofti and another gentleman. The talk was varied, humoristic and lively:

"A cheerful countenance lends consolation to the beholder"

was one of the epigrammatic sayings of the Master. Another one was:

"Everyone in this world plays on his own pipe, but we play on the Pipe of God."

Mirza Hayder Ali in the course of his narrative to Mr. and Mrs. Holbach said:

"There are four holy books in this world:
The first is the visible creation, Nature or Universe.
The second is Man.
The third is the Manifestation of God, and the
Fourth the Sacred Bibles of the religions."

In the evening I was summoned into the Presence of the Beloved. Several bablegrams received from various parts of the world were read to him, and their answers were postponed

until tomorrow.

A number of believers, finding the pots of their patience boiling over, have come over from Acca to refresh their hearts by meeting the Desire of all nations. Kerbela Baram, who with two others left for Medina ten days ago, returned tonight, and the Master greeted them enthusiastically and warmly. They have been to Medina to visit the Holy Tomb of the Prophet Mohammed. Thus the subject of the Beloved's Talk tonight revolved around the basic idea that the Bahais do heartily believe in all the Prophets of the past, that they are ready to sacrifice their lives and for and all of them, that when the Blessed Perfection mentioned the very Name of Christ all the listeners were moved by a great spiritual emotion.

Before the meeting Mr. and Mrs. Holbach visited Him, and He spoke about Gen. Gordon and his expedition to Soudan:

"He was impelled by human and disinterested motives, and there were many people who loved him."

M. A. Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 17, 1914.

Dear Friends:

"I declare unto you the tidings of great joy!" was said to me by one of the pilgrims who arrived this evening. Two are from Mashad and one from Bokhara. "The Bahai Cause is making miraculous advances all over Persia, especially in the Province of Khovassan. Lately we have been fortunate to have in our midst three wonderful teachers, who are devoting all their time and energy to the promotion of the Word of God, and they have attracted the hearts of innumerable persons to the Kingdom of Light. The inhabitants of our country have been so long like a flock of sheep without the protecting staff of the Shepherd, the ravenous wolves having left their lairs in the mountains rushed toward the plain, and finding the unprotected conditions of these innocent creatures, tore them to pieces. Their nights of agony and despair were very dark, and their cries and lamentations piercing and heart harrowing. Wolves in sheep's clothing strutted abroad and the people, deceived by appearances, turned to them for protection, only to be attacked and torn to pieces. Distracted, dismayed, surrounded by the foreboding powers of destruction, they did not know what to do. Indeed they were walking in the valley of the shadow of death, and the darkness of hopelessness enveloped them with its ominous wings. From the depths of their hearts welled up a torrent of prayers and entreaties toward the throne of their Deliverer, but there came back no answer. They thought the Hands of the Lord were tied, and His Ears deaf. Those were fearful nights and days, the days black as nights, nay, nay, blacker! The air was filled with sorrow and pain. Oh! is there no one to take us out of this land of darkness and death? Are we fore-doomed to spend our lives in this impenetrable gloom with not even a gleam of light? O Thou God of nations! wilt Thou never come to our succor, hast Thou no pity on us, is the Fire of Thy wrath so all consuming, hast Thou so completely turned Thy Face from us? Oh! those long weary nights, the souls afflicted with spiritual palsy, lying immovable on their miserable cots, the eyes open, staring and roving aimlessly through the dense blackness, while the blacker thoughts of death and annihilation hovered like black eagles over the heads, waiting for their victims, and the despairing hearts were pumping wearily at their task. Our thoughts and feelings had become so strangely familiar with these scenes of misery and illness that for a long time we have had to give up hope that there should ever be for us a morn, and that the darkness of our valley would ever be dispelled by the rising of a glorious sun. But lo! From afar off the sweet heavenly music is reaching to our expectant ears and coming nearer and nearer; the long night of hopelessness is vanishing and the luminous heralds of the Day of Hope are running to and fro through the land, cheering the drooping spirits, and promising the end of all these miseries.

The angels of the Glory of the Lord, with their spiritual trumpets are reviving the dead. The Sun of Reality is rising, the forces of darkness are put to flight, the wolves are changed into sheep, the satans into angels, the gloom into light. The Principles of the Bahai Cause are imparting new hope, and new stimuli to the people, the powers of transgressions and iniquities are defeated. Again the people are reminded that their Lord is the Hearer and the Seer. He hears the prayers of His servants, and He sees the oppressions of the tyrants. He has come to their succor in their hour of need and has delivered them from the claws of wolves. The Bahais are now the Cohorts of Salvation; their Lord is their shield and the Confirmations of the Holy Spirit their armor. Day and night they are engaged in awakening the people of Persia. What is rest and comfort in comparison with the fulfillment of this divine mission? I have heard much about the services of our believers in America. Will you tell me how they are, what are they doing? How do they teach the Cause? Do they appreciate the wonders of this Truth, are they ready to sacrifice their lives for it? Are there new souls who accept this Glad Tidings? Are they loving and kind to their neighbors and hospitable towards the strangers in their midst? Are their faces luminous with the light of the Love of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, and their hearts the caskets containing the jewels of the Kingdom? Will you send to them my Bahai greeting? I often think of them, and wish so much I could attend one of their meetings. Their very name is an inspiration to us. We all know how good they are, how beloved they are in the estimation of ABDUL BAKA, how unselfish is their aim, and how zealous they are in the promotion of the Cause of God.*

Many of the pilgrims ask me similar questions and desire to hear the news of the activities of our brothers and sisters not only in America, but in European centers.

In the morning we descended the Mountain, but were not blessed with a meeting of the Beloved. A Moham-medan Mullah returning from Medina called on the Beloved and had a long spiritual talk with Him. He was from Galpaygan, the town in which Mirza Abul Fazl was born. It turned out later on that he was a relative of his, and therefore we were delighted to see him.

In the afternoon a number of Turkish officials called on the Master. He spoke with them on the evils of war and its baneful influence, and on the morals of the nation. The article which was published in the Islamic Review was read to them aloud by ~~himself~~ himself. Many others called on Him and listened to His Words of Wisdom and Knowledge.

In the evening the newly arrived pilgrims attained the supreme joy of His presence.

He spoke to them as follows:

"When the Blessed Perfection and His family were exiled from Persia, all along our way from Teheran to Bagdad we did not find a believer, only a handful of despondent friends were in Bagdad. All the people firmly believed that with the exile of BABA'O'LLAH the fire of this Cause would become extinct. Were they not wrong in their reckonings? How many houses were pillaged, how many people were exiled, how many were thrown into prison, how many thousands were killed! And yet they did not succeed in their fiendish work of extermination, for this Cause is constantly reinforced by the Cohorts of the Supreme Concourse, and no army, no matter how invulnerable, can defeat the phalanxes of the Kingdom!

About thirty years ago no one had heard the name of the Bahai Cause in Ashkabad; but now the dome of the first Mashrak el Azkar, like a radiant jewel, glitters under the rays of the sun! - - - Praise be to God! that it has become evident and known to all that the Bahais are free from any intrigues and seditions. They confer life and not death! - - - The people of Persia looked on the Bahais as the enemies of their religion, possessions and life, and consequently they considered one of their holiest duties the extermination of this sect.

Well do I remember when still a child and in Teheran, one day I entered a mosque and saw a fanatical Mullah haranguing the crowd:

"O people, if you love God, kill the Bahais; if you wish the descent of the blessing of the Almighty upon you, kill the Bahis; and if you want to protect your hearths and possessions, your wives and families, kill the Bahis!" So ingrained was the enmity of the Mohammedans against this wronged community. - - -

On the other hand, BABA'O'LLAH compelled the Bahis to non-resistance, and taught them day and night to adorn themselves with the qualities of holiness and sanctity, and commanded them to be meek and holy.

He said:

"It is better for you to be killed than to kill!" He exhorted them to be faithful, be kind toward all the nations, deal with sincerity with all the people, characterize themselves with mercy, benevolence, clemency and charity, and exert themselves at all times to serve the world of humanity. Overlooking outward differences they must gaze toward the horizon of the Central Unity of mankind. Humanity is one tree; the people are the branches, the leaves and the blossoms. - - - Praise be to God! it has become established to all the nations and all the peoples that the Bahais are the essence of sanctity, the advocates of Universal Peace, the upholders of the religions and the standard bearers of the sacredness of human life; that they are upright and righteous, patient and forbearing, long suffering and humble. They are guides to the misguided, as the beacon lights to

the wanderers, as dressing to every wound, and as honey of love to the poison of hatred. If the people curse them, they ask God to bless their enemies. They have no other aim, no other intention save service to the world of humanity.

Praise be to God! that the believers in Yazd demonstrated great firmness and steadfastness, and while they were persecuted on all sides they raised the cry of "Ya Baha El Abha!" Many people expected that the foundation of the Cause would be shaken if these souls retired from the field of activity, but God upraised other workers to take their places.

Others became proud and haughty because they had received so many Tablets from BAHÁ'U'LLAH, or they were favored by Him during His lifetime. But in this Cause there is no relationship save the relationship of service and self sacrifice. The Will of God exalts one through pure Mercy and not because the recipient is worthy. I consider myself weaker than a mosquito, but the Confirmations of the Blessed Perfection are descending uninterruptedly. Some heedless souls, forgetting this point, consider they are somebody, and filled with deceit and ego become dictatorial and overbearing. Such people deprive themselves not only of the bounties of God, but little by little the friends lose their confidence and trust in them.

Today the field of service in the Cause is open to all. Everyone has a chance to try his mettle. I am encouraging all to arise and serve the Cause. I went out myself and called mankind to the Kingdom of Abha. Let everyone do the same, and God will assist him. --- *

Ahmad Sohrab.

because I knew how the Bahais all over the world are waiting to receive the inspiration of His Words. He was going to start then and there, when the door opened and a number of Effendi were announced. After an hour, Mr. and Mrs. Holbach called, and the Master welcomed them with happiness and health beaming from his face. The news that Mr. Carnegie has given two millions of dollars to establish unity amongst the sects of Christianity, was hailed as one of the greatest signs of the times:

"Mr. Carnegie's aims", the Beloved said, "are altruistic, and his intentions revolved around the Principles of service to the Oneness of the world of humanity."

Prof. Cheyne of Oxford, England, had forwarded to Mrs. Holbach a book which is published in Rome in French and Italian, containing "Confessions of faith" by 76 well known thinkers of the West, including the Professor himself. In his article he mentions this Movement.

Before I left his Holy Presence He asked me to stay tonight in the house; probably if He is equal to it He will dictate a few Tablets. I was more than glad to comply with His wish and sleep under the roof of His blessed home. Although I stayed He did not send for me, because He was too tired to do so. In the evening a number of the pilgrims gathered downstairs and talked together about the Cause. Those who have just arrived from Ashkabad and Bakou gave me an interesting account of the large, overflowing memorial meeting held in honor of Mirza Abul Fazl after the receipt of the Beloved's cablegram. In the latter city our dear brother, Mirza Ali Akbar, was the principal speaker, giving a graphic history of the life of him whose loss is mourned by all the Bahais in the Orient. In Ashkabad the Persian Consul attended the meeting and gave a dramatic address on Unity. He said: "Out of the storm and stress of time the Bahais have extricated themselves victorious. This have they been able to achieve through their notable power of cohesion and union. Today the Bahais are the means of our glorification abroad. We point out to it with pride and honor. All the other parties, both religious and secular, which were formed in Persia for the last one hundred years have been flat failures, but the Party of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, because it is confirmed with the Divine Power, has succeeded. Therefore, in the school of Unity the Bahais must be our teachers. Let them go forward with perfect confidence, and pave for us the highway of national and international Unity. Let them inspire our hearts by their matchless example of Unity. We are eager to learn of them the secret of this mighty Elixir."

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Feb. 19, 1914.

Dear friends:

The thought that I am living and sleeping in the 'Home of Truth' where Truth is lived and Truth is taught makes my happiness not only complete, but with nothing more to wish for. The fountain and the primal source of Truth is the heart of ABDUL BAHÁ. From its unknown heights innumerable rivers of Teaching issue forth to fill the cups of those who are standing along the banks of these rivers and are thirsty for the Water of Truth.

While I slept last night under the roof of the Beloved, I spent a few wakeful hours thinking of you and praying that a day may come that you may also visit this 'Home of Truth', wherein the outer temple of the Invisible Reality lives and walks amongst the creatures. I long to share with you every form of happiness that I experience in these blessed days. I do not think it is ever possible to write down everything, because the spiritual feelings and emotions are indescribable. Often forgetting that I am writing these letters to the 'friends', I express my ideas as though I am corresponding with one individual friend; and the highest ideal of ~~Universal~~ Unity will not be realized until the time when the 'friends' lose entirely the sense of their collectivity and separateness and become as one 'friend', and when each soul may see in this 'plural friend' the embodiment of his noblest ideals and dreams. Then there will be no place left in our hearts for any stranger of the enemy. Mankind will be our friend. The individuals will represent to us the various units of this universal friend-humanity. Let us do our utmost day by day to enlarge the circle of this 'friendship', to make it the corner stone of our daily prayers and to inscribe our names on the scroll of this silent yet ever increasing band of friendship; so, my true and noble friend, no matter where thou art, whether in America or Europe, or Asia or Africa or Australia, hail to thee! Thou art my brother, thou art my sister, our business in this world is to make it a 'Home of Truth', a Paradise of cheerfulness, a garden of joy and an abode of Peace. Individually we can do very little, collectively we are able to do a whole lot. Let the golden bands of human sympathy unite our hearts; let the unseen links of the spiritual susceptibilities bind together our souls. We may never see each other, but let us be strong in hope, faith and charity, and strive to establish the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in Heaven. Each one of us in his own way can help along the good and mighty cause, but let there not be found in the orchestra of our lives a jarring note. Ah! in the long run, if we have patience, we shall see with our own eyes the results of our silent communion and devout prayers. On this our new resolution I wish all my friends good luck.

Long before the sun was up I was awake, and while Esmael Aga was preparing tea I was walking in the garden of the Master, inhaling the sweet, fresh aroma which permeated the air. It was a glorious, early morning, and everything seemed so quiet and lovely. After an hour I was summoned into the Presence of the Beloved. When I entered the room, He was talking with Mirza Hadi with much animation. While walking from one end of the room to another, and emphasizing every word He uttered,

He said:

'From my childhood I have spoken about the Revelation, and delivered the Message of the Kingdom. I was oh! very, very young and yet I taught the Cause and invited the souls to the Feast of the Lord. While we were living in Bagdad one of the most noble men of Persia came there. He called on the Blessed Perfection, and as he used to come and see us very often I became very attached to him. I grew to love him very much, and as he was not a believer I spoke with him on the Cause. I used to tell him:

'My friend! the aim of this life is not the acquirement of wealth, honor and glory, nor the display of the animal attributes, such as eating, sleeping and chasing worldly pleasures. Such aimless and insipid pursuits do not befit man, who is endowed with divine effulgence and radiant longings. The object of this life is the life of the spirit, the manifestation of the fear of God, the attainment of the Knowledge of God, the acquisition of the Love of God, and attaining the good-pleasure of the Lord of mankind. If man characterize himself with these godlike attributes he will become freed from all the ties of this mortal world, the Light of God will shine in his heart, he will hear the voice of the heavenly angels, he will be surrounded by the Confirmations of the Holy Spirit, he will become an irradiating center of the perfect Names and Qualities of the Merciful, and a light through which the darkness of the world of humanity is dispelled.'

On repeated occasions I spoke with him on these spiritual subjects. After some time he left Bagdad and went to Persia. From there we received the news that he had become a good believer, and he continued to serve the Cause till the end of his life.

At another time there was a learned and well known man in Bagdad whose relatives had become believers, but no matter how often they discussed with him on this Cause they could not convince him of its validity. Thinking that I might be able to satisfy him they invited him one day to our house. They brought him at a time when I had just got up from sleep and was at my toilet. One of them came to me and said: 'We have brought _____ to you, and we beg you to speak with him. We have done our best but to no avail.'

I said: "Bring him, and I will converse with him."

Then I turned my heart immediately to the Blessed Perfection, and prayed to Him for confirmation. They brought him, and I started to speak with him. Before the hour was up he accepted the Cause. After that he used to serve the believers with unequalled zeal and enthusiasm. Although he did not have to, because he had servants and cooks, yet he would go himself to the kitchen and cook for the friends many kinds of dishes."

A letter from our dear brother Mr. Kinney of New York City, giving the good news of the unity and spiritual activity of the believers, was read to the Beloved. It seems that Dr. O. H. Guthrie, Rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, has offered the Bahais a large room in his church to hold their meetings on Sunday afternoons. The Master was most pleased with this news:

"How happy I feel, He said, "when I hear that the friends are associating with all the religions and sects in the Name of Abha with perfect joy and fragrance. The Bahais are not exclusive, their meetings are made conspicuous by the absence of this quality. These are the victories of the Kingdom of Abha!"

Then He dictated many Tablets, and about 11 o'clock left the house for His usual walk. He asked me to accompany Him, and I did with great joy. On the way, He spoke about humility and how great is its spiritual value. For nearly half an hour He sat on a piece of rock, watching the wonderful green mountain, and discoursing on the charm and spirituality of the scene!

"Look, look at the signs of the Mercy of the Lord!" He would rapturously exclaim.

Several poor people stood in His Presence and received the favors of His hands. On our return, before entering the house,

He said:

"Praise be to God that in this Cycle we are living under the shade of the Tree of the Bestowal and Bounty of the Blessed Perfection. We are encircled by the Army of

His Assistance. Praise be to God! that we are the flowers
of His Garden and the stars of His Heaven. - - -

In the afternoon many Tablets were revealed for
the friends in Bombay and England. The Beloved looked
well all day, and it was about 5 o'clock when some Arabs
called, and He said to me:

"Now it is enough for today, gather up all thy
papers."

In the evening there was a large meeting, and
He told us the story of Sultan-es-Shahada, as related to
Him by Prince Zilli-Sultan while He was living in Paris.

Ahmad Sobh.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Feb. 20, 1914.

Dear Friends:

As the Beloved entered the large reception room in His home, filled with Oriental pilgrims from many countries, and looked into their eager, worshipful faces,

He exclaimed:

"Most wonderful! Most wonderful! How luminous are these faces, how glorious are these countenances! They are like unto the suns from which the rays of the Love of BAHÁ'U'LLAH are diffused to all directions."

After speaking a minute or two about the improvement of His health, how His tired and overtaxed nerves needed a complete rest, He continued:

"If a person is confirmed in the accomplishment of the services of the Kingdom, his worldly conditions are of secondary importance. So far this supreme desire of mine has not been realized. The greatest bestowal that is possible for a soul to attain in this world is this: that he may spend his life, his forces, his possession, his body, his heart and his spirit in the Path of the service of the Blessed Perfection, and turn toward the last days of his life he may drink the cup of martyrdom. This is indeed the most blessed state, the loftiest possible pinnacle of perfection. Is there a greater and more harrowing regret in the world than to spend one's physical energies in the awful road of lust, sinful passions, inordinate desires and the frivolities of the age? No, I declare by God! Oh! how pitiful to watch the last flicker of a hope dying out of such a life. Because when the last curtain falls on such a dissipated life, he finds to his utter remorse his nerves racked, his resources drained, his fortune wrecked, his hopes unfulfilled, his opportunities lost, his visions unaccomplished, his energies wasted and the light of his spirit extinguished. What were the results of these deeds? What was the sum total of these thoughts? What was the outcome of this sowing of wild oats? Where is the man with his youthful ambitions? In what heap of mud and water did he throw the brilliant gems of his ideals? What has he done with his God-given intelligence? He has indeed lived a fruitless life, surrounding himself with the suggestions of passions and the gratification of selfish appetites. His life is brought to a tragic close, enveloped with regrets, remorse. Verily, this is a most evident loss.

"But on the other hand, how glorious is the life of a person when toward the last days of his earthly existence he is able to contemplate with great satisfaction that, Praise be to God! through the assistance and favor of the Almighty he has been fortunate, and given his belongings, his life, his spirit, his body, and all his faculties in

the Path of the Love of God, accepting all manner of persecutions, revilings and afflictions with serenity of consciousness, and standing firm in the Cause till his very last breath. Indeed the most enduring and imperishable work was performed by the disciples of Christ. Were they not faithful to Him till the very last hour of their lives? After His crucifixion they sought no rest for even one moment, and they longed for no tranquility and composure. ~~These~~ ^{Many} days and nights were spent in the promotion of the Cause of God. With no thought for their own personal comfort they summoned the people to the Kingdom of God, and girded up the loins of endeavor in the enkindlement of the souls. Homeless and shelterless they traveled over mountains and deserts, now spending a few days in this city and then a few months in that town. Alone and unaided they invited mankind to the banquet of the Lord, and raised their voices to the highest heavens. Everywhere they were persecuted, reviled, laughed to scorn and derided, but these things did not lessen their faith and determination. They left behind their homes, their kith and kin, and went away, and the rest of their lives was spent in spreading the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom. At last they were martyred in the Path of His Holiness Christ, may my life be a ransom to Him. Oh! through all their lives they did not forget Him for one moment, they did not cast into the corner of oblivion His Heavenly Teachings. They remembered His advices and exhortations, and strove night and day to carry the Light of the Gospel to the most distant and unknown parts of the world.

- - - "

Then He spoke about the Bahai martyrs in Persia, and contrasting the thousands of martyrs in this Revelation with the limited number of the Apostles of Christ,

He said:

"The disciples of Christ were only eleven, and at the hour of the crucifixion 'all the disciples forsook Him and fled'; and Peter, who was the chief of the disciples 'followed Him afar off into the high priest's palace, went in and sat with the servants to see the end.' According to the Gospels he denied his Master three times. 'Now Peter sat without in the palace; and a damsel came unto him saying: thou wast also with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out of the porch another maid saw him and said unto them that were there, this fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after awhile came unto him they that stood by and said to Peter, surely thou art one of them for

thy speech betrayeth thee. When began he to curse and swear saying, I know not the man! From this graphic description of the Gospel one comprehends the degree of the faith of the disciples. During the lifetime of the Blessed Perfection thousands of men and women and children cried out under the sword of the executioner, *Ya Daba El Abha! However, the Apostles became firm and steadfast after the crucifixion of Jesus the Christ. The cause of their firmness was Mary Magdalene, who gathered them and addressed them with eloquence and fervor: 'Why are ye agitated? Why are ye troubled? What is the cause of your retirement? Jesus always foretold about His death, saying that a day would come when he would quaff from that cup. Now nothing has happened to throw you into such a consternation, only this earthly, elemental body of Jesus is taken away from our midst, but the spirit of Christ is the Sun of Reality which is ever shining upon all the inhabitants of the world. This is not subject to change or destruction. Why are ye disturbed? His Holiness Christ ascended to the same heaven from which he came down; 'and no man hath ascended to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven.' Why are ye perturbed? What is the cause of your discontent? This is not the day of retreat, this is not the time of your seclusion! Be up! Arise! This is the day of service. This is the day of teaching the Cause of God! This is the day of the Declaration of the Gospel! This is the day of guiding the souls to the Kingdom! This is the day of sacrifice! This is the day of work! This is the day of faithfulness! The Lord hath commanded you: Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature! Christ is with you wherever you go, and He will assist you under all circumstances.' In such manner Mary Magdalene filled the hearts of the dispirited Apostles with new hope and fiery earnestness.

All the morning the Beloved was busy receiving outsiders. At midday He went to the Mosque. In the afternoon I had the privilege of standing in His Presence. There was an Arab in the room with his little girl. She was sitting beside the Master. After awhile He went out and brought for her a beautiful, embroidered Persian shawl, placing it gracefully on her little shoulders. The father lives in Acca, and spoke about the 'Girls' School' having an attendance of more than 130. Acca has also a 'Girls' School'. Is this not wonderful, a sign of the times? In the evening I had many interesting conversations with the pilgrims, and Oh! I so wish I had space enough to tell you something about their beautiful ideals and wonderful lives.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Extracts from Ahmad's Diary.
Mention of those who helped pay Haifa, Syria, February, 21, 1914.
debt of Orient & Occident.

"The infinite hardships of this fruitful journey (America and Europe) has caused for some time past a great weakness of the nerves. Therefore correspondence was deemed impossible. Now feeling somewhat rested I am writing this epistle, and it is my hope that in the future correspondence will become continuous and the epistles be forwarded uninterruptedly."

"For some time past the weakness of the nerves prevented correspondence therefore no epistles were forwarded. Now through the Favor and Providence of His Highness Baha'o'llah joy and fragrance is attained, hence immediately I have occupied my time writing to thee this epistle."

About the debt of the Orient-Occident Unity in Washington, he writes Mrs. Parsons:-

"I am become exceedingly pleased with thee because thou didst assist in clearing the debt of the Orient-Occident Unity. Similarly I became infinitely pleased with his honor, Mr. Hoar, and Mr. and Mrs. Gregory, because they co-operated with you to lift this debt of the Society. Announce to each one of them my utmost respect."

On the vanishing of the worldly glories in comparison with the service of the Kingdom, he reveals the following:-

"(All that thou observest shall ere long vanish and disappear like unto mirage, except service in the Kingdom of God and calling the people to the appearance of the Lord of Hosts. This alone is permanent and everlasting. Consider that Queen Victoria, notwithstanding her brilliant and imperial reign, passed away from this life, but the lamp of Qurrat-ul-Ain, who was only the daughter of a Mullah, is waxing brighter and brighter day by day, and like unto a bril-

liant star she is shining from the horizon of everlasting glory forever and forevermore."

Through Mr. Kinney, the following message is sent to Rev. Dr. G. N. Guthrie, of N. Y.

"Convey infinite love and kindness on my behalf to the Rev. Dr. G. N. Guthrie, and say to him:—Praise be to God that he hath chosen thee from among the ministers, so that thou mayest hearken to the Call of the Kingdom of God, listen to the Heavenly Melody, behold the Light of Reality, act according to the advices of His Holiness the Christ, promulgate the principles of Baha'o'llah, become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity and be ordained as the high priest of the church of the Kingdom. All the ministers will be submerged under one of those periodic waves of the earth, leaving behind no name and no trace, but thou shalt unfurl the Standard of Spirituality in the universe of Heaven, extolling and magnifying the Lord of mankind with the music of the Kingdom. Thank thou God that thou hast attained to this most great Bestowal."

The echo of the days spent in London:—

"The days that I spent in London, although the physical health was precarious, yet the heavenly spirit was confirming at all times. How often during the days and evenings we conversed together with perfect joy and fragrance, discursing on the high themes of divine, eternal outpourings and imparting the Glad-tidings of the Appearance of the Kingdom. Unquestionably all these particulars marked upon the tablet of your memory."

Therefore, O thou my daughter of the Kingdom! Strive thou with heart and soul so that day by day the light of guidance may shine forth with greater brightness in that country, and that thou mayest become ignited like unto a candle shedding radiance upon all the people."

Lovingly he writes to an old Baha'i:—

"O thou old believer! Thou art one of the old believers, and hast served the Cause most faithfully. I shall not forget thee, and am ever anticipating to re-

ceive news from thee. It is some time since a letter has been received from thee. Unquestionably write letters conveying the news of my health, well-being and spirituality; for this becomes conducive to the happiness of the hearts of the members of the Family. All the household of Baha'o'llah are longing for thy meeting, and day and night are they engaged in thy remembrances.."

Translation of a Tablet to Abbas Ally Butt Cashmire, of Rangoon, India.

"O thou heavenly personage!

"Thy letter was an evidence of the fact that, praise be to God, thou hast arisen to serve the Kingdom, art worshipping His Highness the Desired One, art freed from the world of imagination and independently holding aloof from the mirage of doubts. Thou art a worker of Reality and enthralled with the Beauty of His Highness the One! Blessed art thou for this most great Favor, and the most eminent Bestowal, the likeness of which has never been witnessed by the eye of existence. With a number of friends you have commenced the translation and publication of the heavenly Epistles and art striving to diffuse the Fragrances so that the flag of the Manifest Signs may wave over the mountains and hills of that continent. I beg of God to confer a most great assistance, and suffer thee to become a most conspicuous ensign of the Army of the Kingdom."

Ahmad Sohrab!

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 22, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven! for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

If the above utterance of our Lord Jesus Christ is one of the unmistakable signs of the followers of Truth, then the Bahais can lay a special claim on the great significance of this verse, and apply it with a greater force and truthfulness to the Founders of this Movement and those who embraced their doctrines. For they were not only reviled and persecuted or calumniated, but they were thrown into dark jails, exiled, tortured, and martyred by hundreds and thousands. The contents of the following talk by our Beloved Abdul Baha will disclose one of the smallest chapters of Bahai sufferings and tests.

"The friends in Bushryuah are very old. They have suffered all manner of persecutions, many of them were martyred, yet they remained firm and steadfast and their faith increased. From the day that His Honor Bab-el-Bab accepted this Truth, Bushryuah became a spiritual fort of Bahai victories. The children of the very first believers are living today, and are most happy on account of their divine heritage. They were some of the oldest believers, Persecutions and sufferings were heaped upon their heads; trials and ordeals were their daily sustenance. A large number of them were martyred in the fortress of Tabarassi. Most of them lived at all times under the threats of the ignorant mobs and the outlawry of the unruly rabble. Their hardships and tribulations in the fortress of Tabarassi were indescribable and heart-harrowing. For 18 days they had nothing to eat. The enemies had surrounded them from all sides, and communication with the outside world was completely debarred. They could not go out and buy any provisions. For days they ate the bark of the trees. The grass and the leather of the horses' saddles. But surrounded on all parts by these unbearable hardships, the countenance of their faith remained undimmed, and their firmness and steadfastness unshaken. It is most difficult for a person to remain firm at the time of tests. When Christ was speaking to His Disciple about His approaching death, and the scattering of the sheep, Peter said unto Him: 'Although all shall be offended yet will not I' Then the Master intimated that he would not remain firm, saying: 'This day, even in the night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice! But Peter spake most vehemently: 'If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise.' Likewise also said they all.' But when they were put under the refining process of examination, we find that their assertions did not agree with their actions. The hour of tests is the hour which will settle for all time to come who is firm in the Cause of God and who decamps the field of action. In every dispensation a number of sanctified souls have ~~become~~ become manifest who were self-sacrificing, severed from aught else save God, forbearing sufferings and tribulations, accepting hardships and persecutions, welcoming tortures and death for the sake of Truth: but in none of the past dispensations have there been such heroic and sublime instances of devotion and martyrdom as in this Bahai Cause! At the time when all the inhabitants of Teheran had arisen against this Cause, and the Blessed Perfection was arrested and thrown into prison, I was a very young child. The jail wherein Baha'o'llah was imprisoned was a dark and

gloomy cell, underground, and had no aperture, and no window save a small door. When the door was unlocked one had to descend many rickety steps before reaching the gloomy, stuffy and humid groundfloor. The name of the gaoler was Aga Bozork, and he was an inhabitant of the city of Gazwin. As in the past he had received many favors, bounties, gifts and kindnesses from the beloved hands of Baha'o'llah, he came one day to our house and took me with him to see my father. Descending half the stairs of the cell, I peered through the darkness to try and see someone. Everything was pitch darkness. Suddenly I heard the wonderful, resonant voice of the Blessed Perfection! "Take out this child! Do not let him come in!" Obeying the words of Baha'o'llah, the gaoler took me out and said: "Sit down here and be patient. About noon the prisoners are taken out, and then you can see your father." I sat there. A little after twelve o'clock they brought the prisoners out, and amongst them I saw the Blessed Perfection. A thick, heavy chain called Gare Kahar", the heaviest and thickest chain of the time, was placed about His Holy Feet, the end of which dragged along the ground. His neck was also chained with heavy fetters and his hands manacled. Mirza Mahmoud - a most wonderful Bahai was the fellow prisoner of Baha'o'llah. They were chained together. A common, ordinary felt hat, the top of which was worn out and the fringetorn and soiled, was on His Blessed Head. I cannot describe to you the pain and anguish that attacked and tortured me by this sight of the Manifestation!- - -

"In short, the fiendish cruelties of the authorities reached to such a height as to divide a large number of the believers amongst the various classes of the inhabitants of Teheran, so that these people might martyr them according to their own devilish desires. For example, a believer was given to the Government clerks, another to the policemen, another to the infantry, another to the Ulema, another to the Dervishes, another to the butchers - one to the members of each craft and profession - so that all of them might lend a hand in shedding the blood of these innocent Bahais. For instance, a believer was given to the cavalry. The ferocious beasts took him to Saleza Meydan and about one thousand of them riding on their horses, with drawn swords attacked him from all sides. The body was actually cut into a thousand small pieces, turned them into wild, dancing savages, thirsting for more blood. Finally the executioner cried out to them: 'O ye mad-men! It is enough! Stop! Nothing is left of the body. I must take these small shreds and pieces and bury them! Do not add more to the horrors of my task!' At this juncture a restaurant keeper arrived on the scene and asked the executioner to let him have the remains of the "Accursed Bahai" because he would burn them in his stove and by this act gain his entrance into Paradise.

- - - - - Those were the days of miraculous deeds, matchless heroism, unsurpassable firmness, and divine courage. Each one of the believers while walking upon earth, was at the same time soaring toward the Supreme Concourse. They were the angels of the Kingdom of Abha and the spiritual heroes of the arena of unparalleled sacrifice."

While the Master was entertaining many people all day long, I was busy translating in my room. When I saw him this evening he said: "I have been talking all day, and now I feel tired. I am obliged to speak. Often I am almost unable to speak one word, but I must talk for more than an hour. People coming to see me do not expect to go away disappointed, and so I must satisfy the need of everyone. I have been working and speaking all day, now speaking with a Jew, then a Mohammedan, now with a Turk, then with an Arab!" - - Then we had a large meeting, in which the

Beloved gave the above spiritual talk, which made us all weep. He himself was moved to tears. In this determined spirit, he expects to see our American and European brothers and sisters working for the Cause and spreading the Teachings of Baha'o'llah. The foundation of this Revelation is laid on such adamant rock of sacrifice.

We are not fortunate and worthy to demonstrate our faith like unto these martyrs, but we can at least catch their enthusiasm and faithfulness!

Ahmad Schrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,
Haifa, Syria, February 23, 1914.

Dear Friends:

"Dr. Coles, of the English Hospital, sent word that a number of English and American tourists desired to call on the Master, and that they would be here after a few minutes. As soon as they arrived and the preliminary courtesies were attended to, the American College in Beirut became the subject of the discussion. "We must be just," Abdul Baha commanded. "The American College at Beirut is carrying on a sacred mission of education and enlightenment and every lover of higher culture and civilization must wish it a great success. One of the brightest attributes of Divinity is Justice, and He likes to see His servants clothed with this quality. Years ago I went to Beirut, and visited the College in its infancy. From that time on I have praised the liberalism of this institution whenever I found an opportunity. Some of the bigoted Mohammedans complained bitterly because the College gives or rather insists upon a religious education, and the students are asked to attend a Sunday service in the Church. They carried their complaints so far as to write articles on this subject in the daily press. I told one of these men that all these talks were based upon ignorant prejudices. I am sure the morals of the students will not be corrupted. They will be informed with the contents of the Old and the New Testament. What harm is there in this? A church is house of prayer. Let them enter therein and worship God. What wrong is there in this? These students attending the services in the Church glorify God, their Maker, and not the Devil. I have no doubt that much good will be accomplished, and many misunderstandings will be removed, if the Mussulams attend the Churches of the Christians with reference in their hearts and sincerity in their souls, and likewise the Christians may go the Mohammedan Mosques and magnify the Creator of The Universe. Is it not revealed in the Holy Scriptures that "My House shall be called of all nations the House of Prayer? All the houses of different names, - - Church, Mosque, Synagogue, Pagoda, Temple are no, other than the House of Prayers. What is there in a name? Man must attach his heart to God and not to a building. He must love to hear the Name of God, no matter from what lips; even should the devil mention the Sacred Name of the Lord, I would be pleased with him. I love God and I love to hear His Sacred Name. I do not look upon the personalities. When I was in Tiberias, my house was near the Synagogue. At midnight the Jews gathered in the Temple and sang hymns of Hallelujah. I would especially get up and listen to them, and in my heart pray with them. - -When a man's life is a life of eternal quest after God, he will worship Him no matter where he may happen to be. I pray to God in the Mosque, the Church of the Synagogue in the same spirit; as if I were in His Presence. ----"

Many other subjects were discussed, and his western trip was touched upon. "In my first stay" he said, "in London. I spoke from the pulpit of Archdeacon Wilberforce. He is a true Christian and a noble character? He lives a life according to the Teachings of His Holiness the Christ. He is kind to all the strangers and works for the Cause of humanity."

They were most happy to be given this rare privilege of meeting Abdul Baha, whose life and Teachings have created such a volcanic change in the religious thought of the world, and whose name is most familiar to the American and English people.

Speaking about a Persian by the name of - - - whom he placed in the English Hospital under the medical care of Dr. Coles, he said: "This Persian has been my enemy for forty years, but during all that time I never directed toward him an ill wish. When He visited Acca this last time, he came to me sick, weary and repentant."

"I have done many things against you," he said: "Now I have reached the end of my resources. I cannot go any further. Please do not leave me to myself any longer. Do not send me away. I have grown very old. I am ill and tired of the world. Misery and remorse are my companions. Regret and sorrow are my bedfellows. I have come to you as my very last helper." I answered him: "Thou hast ever been my friend. Anxiously have I been waiting for thy return. Just as a father has been longing for the return of his absent son, so have I been yearning for thee. Thou art indeed welcome. Thou art my friend. I love thee very much. Come with me to Haifa, and I will put thee in the hospital, so that thy health may be restored."

In the afternoon the Beloved came out of the house and beckoned me to follow him. He walked toward the German Colony and on the way a number of pilgrims joined us. Along the way most everyone saluted him and paid him reverent respect. After a long walk we reached a tall, overshadowing tree under which there were several boulders. He sat on one of them, and gave us permission to do the same. Then he asked our pilgrims from Kerman to speak to him. "Tell me", he said, "what voice is heard in thy city? Is it the voice of an earthly singer or the Voice of the Cause of God? For whenever the divine Voice is raised, all the other voices are hushed. The charm and beauty of the Voice of Truth attract the hearts and spiritualize the thoughts. When the rich and highly gifted spiritual Artist breaks forth into a concourse of soft lays and colorful tones of minstrelsy, then the melodies and scores of the earthly singers will sink lower and lower till at last they are lost in a sea of eternal silence - obscure and mystifying. When the sweet harmonies of the Bird of the Supreme Paradise are raised, the buzzing of the bees are not needed. Today whosoever takes the lessons of voice culture in the Celestial Conservatory of Baha'o'llah, he will be endowed with a soul captivating voice which would move and thrill the hearts of numberless music-lovers."

After awhile he continued his walk, and a little further on he pointed out to us the cave on the slope of Mount Carmel in which Ustad Ismael lived day after day, and the Master related his story with fuller particulars. Contentment and independence were the key-notes of his simple, majestic life. "These are," the Master said, "the qualities of the people of God. These are the requirements of the Bahai Life!" Then having gone quite far he retraced his steps and we followed him peacefully while the sun was slowly setting in the Western sky. In the meeting he spoke chiefly concerning the conditions of the children of the martyrs of Yazd, and inquiring after their well-being. "The children of the martyrs," he said, "are the limbs and organs of my body, because their parents have revealed in the world the mystery of sacrifice. Whoever assists them has assisted Baha'o'llah. The station of the martyrs is the highest in the world of humanity; even the prophets have longed to quaff of this cup." The Beloved continued to speak a long time on this subject, so that when we left his Presence we yearned to be sacrificed in the Path of God and to shed these few drops of blood for the sake of His Glory.

Ahmad Sohrab.

(Very fine)

Extracts from Ahmad's
diary -

Haifa, Syria, February, 24, 1914.

"Any undertaking started by the believers of God and which directly or indirectly helps the promotion of the Cause and the diffusion of the Principles of Brotherhood between the East and the West is commendable. This is the standard." "As this Bahai Cause is in its nascent stage and its basic doctrines are universal, uniformity of rules and forms are not only impossible but undesirable. A Bahai teacher is a constructionist. He avails himself of the ~~un~~impaired materials in the past religions, reinforces the faith of the inquirer by simply holding before his path a greater and brighter light. He has not come to destroy but to build. The inquirer will discard the superannuated dogmas and unnecessary rituals of his former religion along the road of his search. The teacher holds aloft the 'flambeau' of Truth and little by little the darkness vanishes. The teacher before attempting to take hold of the searchlight of Truth, must learn two lessons. First, the art of manipulation, and second the inflexibility of Will. Just as the searchlight revolves around its axis on the high tower, sending forth into the dark space a continuous stream of white, piercing light, so also the teacher must learn to manipulate the searchlight of Truth, so as to scatter not only the forces of spiritual darkness, but mental, intellectual, social, physical, and economic darkness as well. A teacher is a physician. A physician does not give the same kind of medicine to every patient. What is good for one will cause the death of another. What alleviates one kind of sickness may aggravate another. The Pharmacopia of a Bahai teacher must be well supplied. If he sticks to one kind of a prescription, I do not say that he shall fail, but he will not accomplish universal results. He must be fairly well informed with the Scripture the history of the Cause, and its principles, the underlying spirit of this age and the longings of the heart for vaster and more spacious fields of noble labor and elevating thoughts. This is an Oriental saying 'There are as many

roads to God as the number of sand on the seashore. A teacher must know these roads and strive to put himself in sympathetic touch with the weary pilgrims who are struggling along each road, and little by little teach them that what they call a road is not a road at all, but an unbeaten, hard trail leading to the jungles and deserts and precipices. When they are prepared he might, then, call out at the top of his voice: 'O men! The Highway of the Lord of Hosts hath appeared! The broad Boulevard of the Kingdom of God is paved. Lo! Behold! There are many people who have left their trails and are walking along this Celestial Path. Do ye not see them? Are you not learning by their examples? ~~Open~~ your eyes! Look! Look! How many companies of people composed of ever so many nationalities are thronging the golden Way of the Kingdom! They are marching on and on, and with every step they take, they come nearer the goal. Their path is strewn with the lilies of Love and the hyacinths of Affection. In their white hands are the harp and lyres of divine music, and on their lips the songs of thanksgiving and the anthems of glorification. Listen! Listen! Now they are singing in soft, harmonious murmur, and anon they raise their voices, flushed and inspired with rejoicing and happiness! Is it not better for thee, my brother, my sister to leave thine own narrow trail over which is grown thorns of dogmas and underbrushes of creeds, and walk on this broad, brilliantly lighted Path of the Kingdom? Here thou wilt enjoy the companionship of spiritually minded men and women who have given up everything to serve their God and the world of humanity. This golden hour is slipping by; this divine opportunity is passing away; so avail yourself of it. This is my advice to thee!'

*** **

"The Druses" (a peculiar sect in Syria) "never divulge the creeds of their faith, and very few know anything about them. In their intercourse with devotees