

No 9

Diary of Mirza Ahmad Iskrab

Beginning October 22d 1913

Ending October 31st 1913

Ramleh, Egypt

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Dear friends!

This was a day of movement. The Master gave up the house in which he and his family have been living since his arrival in Ramleh and in and around which so many wonderful and significant events have transpired and will ever fill a place of historical interest in the Bahai Cause in the future. The Beloved was up early and Khosro assisted by the other members of the family were packing the trunks and other household utensils. The Master was in his own room, standing near the window. For months every morning the family gathered together around his patriarchal figure chanting prayers and supplications and listening to his word of life. There has been an air of sanctity and sacredness in the very atmosphere and all the late comers felt this spirit permeating the home life of the Master. Every morning the spiritual batteries were set to work, sending forth divine energy for the quickening of nations and peoples. In these morning prayers the Master always prayed for all the friends both in the East and the West and begged the descent of the Holy Confirmations upon all, supplicating God to reinforce the believers with a new hope and courage to go out into the wide world and teach by word and by deed the principles of universal civilization. But now for the first ^{time the} morning ^{prayer} was suspended, one could not hear the mellow, sweet voices, there was no trace of the daily devotion at the Altar of Love but the Master alone was praying and

offering his supplications before the Throne of Baha-Allah. On his face there was the light of heaven, in his eyes there were the immortal rays of the Sun of Reality, his whole being was in a rapture of ecstasy and celestial peace; the Proof of God amongst men.

Then he sent for a number of believers who had arrived last night and the rest of the pilgrims. For a long time they were in His Presence and his talk to them was on how the soul is purified from all dross and sanctified from all desires once it goes through the fiery furnace of sorrows and tests, that Christ-being a Man of sorrow filled the world with his never-failing joy, that Baha-Allah undergoing willingly all the sufferings and persecutions was for no other purpose than to make the loads of humanity lighter, their hearts brighter, and their innermost beings more luminous. Let them go out with this divine fire. Let them rest neither by night nor by day and work for the general uplift of humanity. Let them have no thought of their own save the Will of the Lord of mankind. Let them be ever joyous. Let them be positive forces amongst men. Like unto the rain they must pour down upon the rose-garden and the thorny Sahara. Like unto the sun they must shine upon the orchard and the jungle. Like unto the wind they must blow over the living and the dead. They must see no evil, hear no evil and talk no evil. They must be kind toward all their fellowmen, associate with all mankind with joy and fragrance and like unto the roses, the garden send their perfume to all directions.

Everyone has received the leave of departure, amongst them our story teller with whose name no doubt you have become familiar Mirza Jalal Sina. He is commissioned to go to Ashkabad and later on other cities of Caucasus and Russian Turkestan. All along he has been a happy, instructive companion and I hope his stories have delighted you. I will miss him very much but have been delighted with his association. After his long stay in the Presence of the Beloved and coming in touch with so many pilgrims from all over the world he will assuredly be assisted to teach many souls and guide many people to the right Path. Our cook also, Mirza Jamal will leave also for Haifa. All the members of the Holy Family left today for Haifa via Port Said, leaving behind only Mirza Jalal. The Master has engaged in ^{the} Victoria Hotel on the first floor No 26. The room is situated in the corner and is under the big clock giving the Western and Eastern time a significant coincidence for all those who understand the universal spirit of the Bahai movement. By one o'clock all the luggage were either hauled in our house or to the station, and the Master transferred his abode to the hotel and the apartment was delivered into the hands of the Proprietor.

At noon he sent for me. He had already gathered all his belongings personally and was tired. As I entered he smiled at me and bid me to sit. The room was quiet, the family had left and he was waiting for his lunch to be brought by the faithful Khosro. He turned to me his penetrating, kindly eyes: "All are gone" he said "We are again left alone. During the last few months we have found many friends but they have all

left us. We have returned to our original number,
 the old and tried friends. We are the same number
 of friends - three or four - inseparable and with
 the assistance of Baha - Allah we will be always
 inseparable. "I love faithfulness." I was very
 happy. Who will not sacrifice his life to a Friend
 like Abdul Baha? Who will desire to serve any
 one else after serving Abdul Baha? Only to
 serve the Cause of God, the friends of God, be-
 cause, they are the visible expressions of his Cause,
 the outward manifestations of his attributes, the
 true symbols of his power, the standard-bearers
 of his army. Then he turned the conversation
 toward an opposite direction: "Thou must be
 always ready for the time when I send thee
 back to America." I was startled and said:
 "Oh no! One hour in the Holy - Presence of Abdul
 Baha is better than a hundred years in America."
 I said it with much earnestness. It was the
 inmost voice of my heart, the living expression
 of my secret aspiration which leaped forth
 without my own volition. Now I could not
 leave the Master if they gave me the whole
 world. Later on, probably and that also with
 his expressed Command. Am I so childlike
 after all as to leave the Beloved and chase after
 my own fancy? There is nothing on this earth
 and above this earth that can separate me
 from him, the King of my heart. I live beneath
 the protection of his Majesty and I do not care
 for any earthly glory, name or fame. All are
 phantasms save his love, illusions except his
 good-pleasure. These thoughts passed through
 my head and as though he ~~had~~ divined them

he raised his head and with twinkling eyes said: -
 "Yes! Yes! This is important. All the rest are simul-
 acrum. Its importance is not known at the present.
 It will become apparent in the future. People do not
 realize what is going on at the present time. They are
 totally ignorant as to the supreme importance
 of this Cause and those who devoid of any self-
 interest are serving it. Some times ago a great
 discussion was carried on between the theologians
 of Persia as to who is the greater - Gabriel or
 Ganbar. (the latter was a plain servant of Moh-
 amad, a young illiterate man who walked
 on foot beside Mahamad whenever he was
 riding and performed the small unimportant
 errands entrusted to him) After months of
 debates they agreed that Ganbar was a greater
 personage and his rank is higher than Gabriel.
 A humorist, however taunted satirically the
 decision of the ~~ecclesiastics~~ by saying: 'O men! Have
 fear of God! Ganbar after all was the
 servant of Mahamad but Gabriel was the
 servant of God! Do you put the former above
 the latter?' But no one gave any heed to
 the just criticism of our wit. The decision
 of the Council of the learned Ulama stood
 unchanged. By this I mean that the
 Stations of those who are serving at the
 Court of Baha-Allah are very glorious!
 Even those who are engaged in it do not
 appreciate it duly, cannot see its grandeur
 in all its wonderful settings. That is
 why we often see that certain people
 deliberately turn away from the Cause
 and scatter to the winds the heavenly Glory.

destined for them. They are like the children who will ground ^{to dust} a diamond ring, thinking it is made of glass, or will exchange it for a piece of colored crockeries."

In the afternoon he came to Murza Abul Kazi where a number of Egyptian men had congregated. They had come to invite him to speak at a meeting. He declined the invitation by saying: "Egypt is the place for our retirement. Our field of labor is Europe and America. We have come here to rest. We speak from the platforms of the Universities and the pulpits of the churches of America and Europe." Then he gave a very vivid account of his addresses in the University of Stanford in Calif, and Oxford in England. Those who were present listened with rapt attention and when the Master arose they were filled with the spiritual Ideals of the Kingdom of Allah.

Our American sisters, Mrs Beede, Mrs Wincock and Mrs ^{Port} Lillian that are overjoyed because the Master is living in the hotel. With Mrs. Stannard they live on the same floor and they hear the voice of the BLOOD often speaking with the servants and showering kindnesses and gifts upon them as he walks to and fro through the large corridor of the building.

The plan of the departure for Haifa although not definitely given up is a little shaken and although there was every sign of departure a few days ago I am not so sure now whether we will leave Ramleh after all or stay here.