

(the Persian cat of the Master walked on these two pages while I was talking with a pilgrim.)

Bahai Pilgrims Home
Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria

Jan 25th 1914

Dear friends!

The ^{almost} apple 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 windows are the blooming apple-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 forming 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 splendor of nature and placing in our hearts the youthful

hopes and dreams of the divine springtime.

This morning about 15 of the pilgrims left for Asca, headed by Mirza Jalal to visit the Holy Tomb of Baha-ullah, 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 ever standing in his Presence at a distance. He stopped before a rose - large, pink - its petals containing the shining drops of an early shower. He stooped down 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 transaction of his material and spiritual affairs is like a man who purposely shut his eyes while walking - the result may be a fall into the ditch or in other words he may meet a business misfortune. A commercial career is a means ~~through~~^{by} which a person does not become a burden on the back of the state, and through a system of the exchange of commodities he gains his living. Wealth is similar unto the sand-hills in the deserts. It is a mathematical impossibility to keep them firmly established in one locality. Today you see the sandy hills gathered here, at midnight there may rise a furious windstorm and lo! tomorrow all the hills are trans-

planted miles and miles away. The hills of wealth are likewise subject to such sudden and instantaneous transferences, leaving one in 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 ~~cold-bloodedly~~. 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. ~~X~~ A rill with a steady flow of water and contentment, constitute inexhaustible wealth.

Years and years ago there lived here 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

had

that he has cleared 3 Piastres (about 7 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 and watery wings before his vision. Supremely contented he lived, from day to day, and never coveted more than 3 Piastres for his sustenance, and God provided it for him. How satisfied, at ease and comfortable he was! How happy and serene 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 gone of the Provinces of Persia. Little by little it was ^{rumored} around that Ostad Esmail ^{was} 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 ~~the~~ any longer. The evildoers are after thee and thy life is in danger. Thou must leave the city without delay.' Then

leaving ~~the city~~ precipitately he arrived in Bagdad after
 a long and arduous journey across the desert and moun-
 tains. When he came to us he did not possess a cent, but
 he had a radiant heart, an illumined mind, and an
 undimmed spirit. He always expressed the highest
 gratitude to his enemies in thus driving him away
 from his native town to his Beloved - ^{Bahá Alláh} ~~the Blessed~~
Perfection. He was overflowing with exhilaration. He
 had a faithful wife to whom he was very attached.
 After sometimes his wife's brother came to Bagdad
 and under the false pretext of taking ^{his sister} her to Persia, so that
 she might see her parents and relatives, he took her
 away from him. ^{Ostad Esmail} When they reached Kermansha-
 han ^{she was taken} ~~they brought her~~ before a Mohamaden Mullah
 and ^{they} pleaded that, her husband being a Bahai, she
^{could not} ~~cannot~~ be considered as his legal wife. The
 prejudiced, ignorant Mullah granted her an un-
 conditional divorce on the spot and later on
 gave her in marriage to a rough, uncouth
 mulatto. When this cruel news reached Ostad

Emael 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 reasons. However it appears from her conduct and ^{to leave and marry another} consent 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 of the world of humanity and conducive to eternal prosperity and success.

Bahá'ílláh

"In short when the Blessed Perfection was exiled from Bagdad ^{Ostad Esmail} he was left behind. Then at the time of our ^{second} ~~next~~ exile from Adrianople to Acca, Ostad Esmail and a number of others ^{were} exiled from Bagdad to Moussel. From the latter place he walked to Akka. Although it took him a long time, yet the hope of seeing ^{again} Bahá-
olláh spurred him on and on. Hungry, sore-footed, thinly clad and laden with years he ^{arrived} behind the iron gate of Akka. 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 Barrack and none amongst us was permitted to leave the premises without the guards following us ^{every} where. When I heard about him I sent some one by night to bring him in, which he did with compunction and precaution. I kept him in the Barrack for a long time. X "

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 the

lunch a Mohamadan judge came to see him. In the afternoon, Mr and Mrs Holback came up the mountain to the Pilgrims house and had another talk with Mirza Haydar Ali. Aga Mohamadan Hassan ^{traveled} out his treasures consisting of four books, each one being a series of original Tablets by Baha-Allah and Abdul Baha. I had never seen nor expect to see such wonderful, rich heavenly collection of the Holy Writs.