

Bahai Nest

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria

March 9th 1914

Dear friends!

An American ^{missioner} ~~tourist~~ by the name of Mr. Briggs called on the Beloved this morning. He was accompanied by Mr and Mrs Holback. They had met him last night in the German Hospice. Conversation at the table brings them around the subject of the Bahai Revelation, and he, having heard something about the Movement in the United States expressed the wish to meet the Master. For the last nine months he has been travelling through Honolulu, Japan, China, India and now he is here to see what he can of the Holy Land. He is mainly interested in the study of the work and methods of the American missionaries in foreign lands.

When he entered the room the Master arose from his seat and welcomed him. After the exchange of the preliminary courtesies the Beloved asked:

"Are you fully informed of the Teachings of Baha-Allah?"

"I have read a few addresses given by you in the churches and meetings of America" he answered.

"The humane principles of Baha-Allah have enlightened the East. They have laid waste the foundation of prejudices. The structure of creeds and dogmas is destroyed and the primal object of the religions is revealed. He has proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity. The ultimate object of all the religions is One: Dogmas have bred differences. All the religionists concur together that there must of necessity be an intermediary between God and man. One community claims that intermediary to be Moses; another cries out: 'No, no, you are all wrong, the Divine Intermediary was Jesus Christ;' and the followers of Islam aver most emphatically that the channel was Moham-mad. Strange to note that none of these so-called devout champions have seen their prophets and would not recognize them if they appear today before their eyes. Thus you observe clearly that all these dissensions and quarrels are over the names and

not the reality. Fighting over the supposed superiority of one name over another has retarded the progress of the world and led to bloodshed and rapine. (Here the Master told him the story of the 5 men who were of as many nationalities and a stranger to each other's tongue. With a piece of coin which belonged to all, each one desired to buy "grapes" but could not understand that his brother wanted the same thing. Misunderstanding each other's motive they disagreed, but when a tray of grapes was brought in by one who understood their languages they saw they all wanted the same thing.) As long as they were holding to the names, they fought. When they observed the significance behind the names they agreed. Now as long as the devotees of the religions are disagreeing amongst themselves there is no unity and peace in sight but when they start to investigate the reality back of these names, the ultimate truth will be revealed to them." /

"How long will it take before the religionists

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come to believe this, and attain to this lofty summit?

Mr Breggs asked

"God willing! in this 20th century. The rays of the sun of Reality will dispell these clouds and all things will be seen in the light of this Universal consciousness. Thou hast seen in Asia and hast observed with thine own eyes the disenergizing ^{vital} influence of prejudices, and religious fanaticism. The Bahai Movement is the nucleus for the brotherhood of man and is growing day by day in beauty and stature. Already in Persia the adherents of different religions imbued with the Bahai principles associate with each other in one meeting with the utmost joy and fragrance."

"Which one of the great religions of the world is nearer to this Ideal?"

"There are prepared souls in every religion. Today God is working in all the religions, instructing a number of souls in the school of Celestial brotherhood. These souls are related together by the invisible tie of the spirit. Through the

instruction of the Holy Spirit they are rippered. While I travelled in America I met many illumined Jews who are aware of the Mysteries of the Kingdom"

"Which and where is the Cause that shall bring the final unity of humankind?"

"The Cause that will render such a service is ^{the recognition of} the common spiritual basis of all the religions; it will be a synthetic Cause - the combination of the moral and spiritual laws of all the religions into a Whole, through the power of the Holy Spirit."

Before Mr Briggs arrival the Master received all the Pilgrims and while he was reading and signing the Tablets he spoke to them, interpreting certain verses in the Koran and causing them to laugh heartily by telling in an off hand manner a number of funny stories, always with a ^{veiled} or plain moral to each.

In the evening Moḥamed Taki Esphahani and Doctor Sabk arrived from Egypt and the

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Master welcomed them by kissing their faces with an effusion of spiritual love. At first he spoke about the death of Mirza Akbar Ghalib and how deeply the news affected him and how Mirza ever lived in accord with Teachings of Baha - allah. Then when all the believers came into the room he praised very highly Mohammed Toqi Esfahani for his services to the Cause saying: "he has served us most faithfully, he has served all the friends. His aim and central thought has been to win the good - pleasure of the Blessed Perfection. Whenever I think of him my heart becomes happy. His face is radiant in the Kingdom of God as well as in the congregation of the elect." Then he became general. "The good deeds of man are like unto the sweet fragrances emanated from the must. They perfume the nostrils of everyone, ^{more} especially the doer. As his deeds have been performed with no reference to the applause and commendation of men he enjoys them more than any one else. But when the deeds of man are not in

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accord with the great-pleasure of God, whenever he
thinks of them he becomes sad and his heart beats
faster From this standpoint Paradise is
the God-pleasure of ^{the} Lord, Hell is its absence. The
most burning fire is the very disobedience to the
Command of God. For example, one of the greatest
moral crimes is murder. Now murder itself is hell
and burning fire and a punishment. The jail, the
remorse and the penalty of the laws are only the
concomittant results of murder, Similarly in a case
of robbery or injustice " Toward the
end of his talk he illustrated his points by two
stories, showing how the lives of two men were
entirely transformed through the Power of the Love
of God. "The greatest reward for a man is to see
his life well-spent and useful. The reward of the
lamp is its own illumination. It does not require
any other compensation. Good deeds are their own
rewards," he said. Freely we have received freely
we must give. In this manner we will win the great-
pleasure of the Lord.