

Pleiades Sylvan Bower

Alhammeh

Lake Tiberias, Syria

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Dear friends!

X "During the lifetime of Baha-o-llah" ~~the Beloved said,~~
~~while sitting at the entrance of his tent and looking up towards the~~
~~height of the mountain~~ "the inhabitants of the village, Mokeiss, were
~~most anxious that I ^{would} buy half of their real state for £1,700~~
~~but I did not ~~do it~~.~~ They knew that if they ^{were} ~~are~~ my farmers ^{would be} they are
~~infinitely better treated than~~ one of these Turkish Pashas who
~~by every hook and crook, try to exact from them all that they~~
~~produce with the sweat of their brows.~~ Now land value is so
~~raised that what they wanted to sell me, ^{an offer of £12,000 was made by the owner for the same} there is a man who~~
~~desires to buy it for the sum of £12,000 and they are not willing~~
~~to part with it.~~ I bought half of the village of Adassayah for
~~only \$1000~~ and half of the village of Nogail for \$300. In those
~~days land was very cheap in these parts, but since the cons-~~
~~truction of railroad all the prices ^{have} are raised considerably, especially~~
~~those lands which are situated in the vicinities of the~~
~~stations ~~all along the way.~~~~ years ago there was a village, half
~~of which I was going to buy, but there was another party~~

who was anxious to get hold of the same. ^{He} ~~he~~ intrigued much but to
 no avail. At last the papers and documents were ~~properly~~ drawn up and
 signed and I went to the government's house to pay the money. When
 I arrived, the judge and a few other officials were present. I sat down
 and after the preliminary remarks, I took ~~out~~ the money out of my
 pocket and started to count it. At that very moment the door was
 opened and one of the believers entered with the following message
 from the ^{Baba Allah} ~~Blessed Perfection~~:- 'Leave the earth to the people of the earth.'
 I took the papers ~~into my hands~~ and ^{tearing} ~~took~~ them ~~into~~ pieces and
 said: 'now whosoever desires to buy this land may do so without
 any interference on my part'. I got up and left the meeting. They
 were all astonished to see me giving up the land so suddenly.
 From that day I never cared to buy land, otherwise I could
^{have bought} buy many, many villages. 'Let the earth to the people of the
 earth' is a heavenly advice to all the ^{friends} ~~believers~~ of God. Let
 them lighten their loads as much as they are able; thus they
 may become inspired with divine ideals and world-illu-
 minating thoughts. The clouds of care and worry must be
 dispelled, otherwise the sun of repose and serenity will be
 always hidden. The garden must be cleared from its thorns
 and thistles, so that flowers of all kinds and hues may
 grow from its soil."

The other day he gave an interesting talk, a short passage may be herein inserted :- "If a friend dies and leaves behind some debt, the believers must do their utmost to pay it off to the very last cent. For example, if I pass away from this world, while being under the obligation of debt, the friends must see to it that all such debts are cleared. During our sojourn in Bagdad and Haifa and Acre many believers died, leaving behind debts of a large and small sums and I paid all of them most scrupulously. It does make no difference whatsoever, whether it is a question of paying my own debt or the debt of my friend or friends. People may look upon this subject from a different standpoint, but it must make no difference to the Bahais. We must consider the debt of the believers of God as our own debt. This is the station of unity."

Speaking about forgetfulness he said :- "Man is liable to forget things very quickly, but the animals remember longer. If you have been kind to a dog once in your lifetime it will never forget and will follow you whenever it sees you. Once in Acre two persons claimed undisputable possession of a donkey. They brought witnesses before the judge to substantiate their respective claim. The judge was bewildered and did not know to which party should he be heard, because to all appearances both seemed to be right. At last he

found a solution. He said: 'Leave the donkey alone. Man may forget but the donkey will not forget. Let it go out and if it stops at the door of any one of your two houses, ~~that one~~ he is its undisputed owner.' This suggestion was carried out and the right owner was discovered."

This morning he came out and walked around the camp and the station for an hour or two, refreshing and gladdening the heart with his spiritual discourses and talks. At ten o'clock the train arrived. Haji Ali Nagi who is a believer from Egypt bent on his way to India, Haji Ali and Soheil Effandi from Haifa descended from the train. I saw the Master walking from one to the other end of the train apparently expecting some one to alight. Suddenly our commander (who was the guest of the Beloved the first day of our arrival) emerged out of the first class compartment. He was dressed in his military uniform. The Master advanced, got hold of his hand and embraced and kissed him before the eyes of all the wondering expectators. Hand in hand, talking and laughing they walked toward the tent. The Commander is a dashing, tall, handsome officer, powerful enough to command and direct the movements of several Turkish regiments in Acca, Jerusalem and Medina. The Master is now old, with white beard

but with youthful energy and power. Therefore it was not only interesting but very significant to see both of them walking beside each ^{other}, with ^{their} hands locked in each other. They are two generals but each one is marshalling different forces. One is the general of the army of Peace, the other the Commander of the regiments of war. But they are friends, I hear the Commander is going to pass a few days at least with us. He is the guest of the Master. The tent and Areeshek of the Beloved will bid him a hearty welcome. They were together practically all day, they dined and supped and bathed together. The conversation between them is carried ^{on} in Turkish and I do not quite understand this language. As they pass their hours in the Areeshek I hear clearly the voice of the Master. Now he speaks about the military heroes of Persia, again the victories won by some oriental general and the romantic details surrounding his adventurous life. They took their supper together right under the soft rays of the moon, interspersed with talks and stories, till very late at night.

Arabic newspapers were brought with this morning train but no letters. Thus although we are temporarily shut off from all the Bahai News yet we are assured that God is directing the steps of his sincere believers.