

475
64

No 24.

The Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.

Beginning

May

13th

1914

Ending

May

28th

1914

Alhammeh. Lake Tiberias, Syria

Adaseyah

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Tiberias

Sea of Galilee

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Page 50

The Mohamaden lover and his gemsh sweetheart.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower
Alhammeh

Lake Tiberias, Syria
May 13th 1914

Dear friends!

While the Beloved was journeying toward California in 1912 he stopped one day at Lincoln, Nebraska and called at the house of W. J. Bryan, just situated outside of that town. Mr Bryan was at the time campaigning in some part of the States but the Master was graciously received by his charming wife, and talented daughter. In the light of recent events a translation of Abdul Baha's informal talk which I ^{then} took down while he spoke, may have more than ~~an~~ historical interest to his friends and ^{to} our friends;:-

"I have come especially to Lincoln to pay you back the visit you made to me during your trip around the world. At that time I was much grieved because on your second visit to Acca you were prevented ^{from coming to see me} ~~to come to me~~ by the surveillance of the guards. Those were difficult and troublesome days indeed. As it was almost impossible then to meet you, I was longing and praying for a greater opportunity and ^a better chance. Consider the power of His Holiness Baha-Allah! I was a prisoner and no one would ^{have} ever

thought that I ^{would} ever be allowed to leave for one moment the fortified town of Acca! But God took off the chain from my neck and put it around the neck of Abdul Hamid. He is ^{now} surrounded with far worse sufferings than those with which he surrounded me. I did not feel the pains of his fiendish persecutions, because I possessed the glad-tidings of the Kingdom, but he is afflicted with the pangs of regret and remorse as the result of his evil days. These dark days have come upon him as the consequence of his darker days of tyranny and oppression.

"No one ^{then} could ever predict that a day ^{would} come when I will travel throughout the United States, and more particularly visit you in your hospitable home. From the day that I landed in America I have been anticipating to meet Mr. Bryan and you. I am very sorry that he is not here, but praise be to God you are his noble and worthy representatives.

"I love this country with an exceeding love, for its inhabitants are a noble people and its government is fair and just. Its citizens are enjoying the greatest amount of political and civic freedom. In reality every soul is a real sovereign and delights in the fruit of his hard-won liberty. No one is harassed by secret fears, and expresses his thoughts freely and with no compunction. The sphere of the minds

is made radiant with dazzling Ideals, and the circle for the discussion of progressive and advanced problems of the age as ^{large} wide as heaven. Consequently I hope that this illustrious Democracy may become confirmed in the establishment of Universal Peace and Mr Bryan may become the standard-bearer of the invulnerable army of International Arbitration. I am very hopeful that he may fulfill ~~this~~ my expectation. Because the greatest principle of His Holiness Baha-ollah is Universal Peace, He proclaimed this principle more than fifty years ago and wrote about it in wonderful epistles to the governments of the world, urging them to come forward and lay the foundation of International Conciliation amongst the religious, ^{nations} and races.

"America has demonstrated great organizing capability in this direction, and I trust Mr Bryan will exert his utmost influence - so that the basis of the palace of Universal Peace ^{may} be firmly secured, and ^{that} through his wise and deliberate effort this sun may dawn from the horizon of the United States.

"In short, convey to your respected husband my love and warm greeting and say to him on my behalf: 'I called at your home and received a hearty welcome from your noble wife and daughter. I hope that before my return to the

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East I may have the pleasure of meeting you. However, under all circumstances I will never forget our meeting in Acco, and ever pray that you may become assisted in the accomplishment of such services as to ^{enable} ~~suffer~~ you to shine like a brilliant star from the horizon of everlasting glory for ever and ever. Your aims and intentions are honorable and their full realization conducive to public weal. In all your undertakings you have been aided by God in the past and will be similarly reinforced in the future. If the wide scope of their results are not quite manifest now, they will become evident afterwards. Work for the sake of God and for the improvement of humanity without any expectation of praise and reward. His Holiness Christ was not appreciated in his lifetime. The magnitude of his character and the sublimity of his teachings were duly recognized long after his crucifixion. The present is always unimportant! But we must make our present so filled with mighty, altruistic deeds as to assume significant weight and momentous importance in the future. A shallow present will be surely followed by a superficial future. Christopher Columbus and his idea, before the discovery of America were ridiculed and scoffed at, and he spent the last days of his eventful life in poverty, shame and prison. But now

in ^{whatever} ~~whichever~~ city I enter I see the houses, the parks, the streets and public buildings adorned with his pictures, paintings and statues. All the prophets, philosophers, benefactors of human race, leaders of great reforms, scientists, inventors and discoverers were not duly appreciated in their own days: nay rather they were persecuted, maligned, thrown into the prison and if possible put to death. The fact is they ^{should} ~~must~~ have honored and adored them: but the people are not, on a whole, worthy to worship the reality; they apotheosize the phantasm - a supposed image formed by their minds. ' "

Like former days the Beloved continued his discourses with the Commander, especially during the lunch time he related the story of the martyrdom of the Sultan of the Martyrs - the father of Mirza Jalal - in Esphahan. He did not take his bath this afternoon but stayed for about half an hour in and around the spring.

An interesting and vital significant incident happened this afternoon the narration of which may not be out of place. A ^{poor} poor, middle-aged Jewish woman had come from Tiberias to take the hot spring baths. After two days stay the proprietor had asked her two dollars for the rent of her Areep ^{heh} and not being able to ^{pay} do this, she was going back to Tiberias.

Dejected and heart-broken she was walking on the platform of the station and waiting for the train to take her to her home. In her "Soknaje" dialect, while weeping she was complaining to a friend of hers who had come with her from the spring to bid her farewell. At this juncture the Beloved came out of his tent and hearing her loud voice asked the cause of it. She came forward and with tears in her eyes explained her case. After listening to her most attentively, the Master ordered some one to bring her several loaves of bread and ^{gave} ~~payed~~ her the rest of ^{for the} ~~of~~ Aresh - so that she might be able to stay longer. She was so overpowered with emotions that like a wild creature she ran toward the Beloved to kiss his hand and feet. He did not let her, but several times she made her desperate attempt and half succeeded just to kiss the hem of his garment. There were many people in the station and silently were watching this heart-moving scene. When she ^{had} brought her emotions under control, she straightened herself and looking firmly into the eyes of the assembled crowd she cried aloud: "I swear by the Lord this man is a prophet, he is the representative of God upon earth, he is our father." Thus like the Samaritan woman at the well, this Jewish woman testified before the people to the spiritual station of the Blessed One. She passed away from the stage, but her testimony shall live forever as a ^{divine} ~~an~~ example of unconscious faith and illumined intuition.