

Bahai Inst. Mount Carmel
Haifa Syria
July 21st 1914

Dear friends!

Isfandiyar, a Zoroastrian Bahai who married the daughter of Jamsheed, the gardener of Herdous, left today for India with his bride. He is a thinly-built young man, dark features and an active, good Bahai. The Beloved received him this afternoon and showered upon him his Grace and Bounties. "I hope" he said "India will become the burning furnace of the Love of God. The people of that country are very receptive and their leaders are quick to perceive the need of spiritual and social reformation. The educative and reformative ideas must be introduced little by little according to the mental grasp and habits of the masses - so that they may adapt themselves to the new environment without any protest on their parts. I trust that ere long sweet fragrances from India may reach the nostrils of these longing ones, the Flag of Guidance might be raised and the Teachings of the Blessed Perfection might be promulgated through the length and breadth of

India. " A very long illuminated petition written and signed by the New York believers was sent with Isfendyari, so that he may show it to the friends in Bombay and other centres. The Beloved embraced our departing pilgrim and kissed him on both his cheeks.

After an hour five young American teachers who are teaching in 3 American schools in Turkey, amongst them Robert College in Constantinople called on the Master. They have been attending a Missionary Conference somewhere in Mount Lebanon and much of the discussion was consumed on this interesting subject. Having read about the Beloved and knowing a few facts concerning his trip to America, they could not of course pass through Haifa without calling on the Master and paying their respectful homage. One of the questions they asked was the Master's said impressions of the United States. He said: - "The true, liberal, religious spirit is more witnessed in America than in Europe. From an ethical standpoint they are far ahead of European nations. The American people as a whole are a religious people. They investigate the reality and are free from the fetters of prejudices. The Europeans are

are not deeply religious but they have their prejudices. The Americans are an inventive nation. In the light of their manifold inventions their services to the world of humanity are considered as incalculable....."

"Is there any leader or head in the Bahai religion?"

"The Bahais are a community of co-operative servants. They have no leader. Their only Leader is God. They have no ordained ministers or priests. Whosoever hears and believes in the principles of this Cause, it is required of him to convey this Message to others. The Bahais have no organized Missionary headquarter. Because their cardinal Creed is the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man they have no theological wrangles and no metaphysical speculations."

"Do the Bahai teachings renovate the individual, private life? Or are they only a set of principles for the adjustment of general relations ^{between} men without the necessary requirements of personal regeneration."

"The Teachings of Baha-ollah are the Breath of the Holy Spirit which create men anew. Personal purity, both in private and public is greatly emphasized and insisted upon."

"What do the Bahais believe?"

"They believe that mankind must love mankind, that universal unity must be practiced; that dead dogmas must be ~~thrown~~ away, that we are at the Threshold of the era of interdependence, that we must forget prejudices and that Universal Love must become the dominant note of the music of the 20th century."

"What do the Bahais teach?"

"They teach that the internal, spiritual Idea is the same in all the religions, that a unique, general plan underlies the foundation of the past faiths, that priestcraft has discredited the religion of God, that the ^{palpitating} divine Idea is hidden under the incrustation of dead ecclesiasticism, that religion must shuffle off its tattered garments of mediæval ages and put on the robe of universal precepts of God."

"What is the Bahai faith?"

"Trust in God. Be kind to thy fellowmen. Fill the world with the spirit of Love. The Spirit of Faith in a Bahai is very strong. His trust is on the Grace of the Holy Spirit." Then they asked about the history and the teachings of the Cause and for nearly half an hour he spoke on those subjects. After drinking tea and lemonade

they said: "We (by "We" they meant the missionary world) are watching with great interest ~~the progress~~ the progress of this Movement. For it seems to us it is advancing with great rapidity without the usual propaganda organization which to us hard-headed, practical Americans seems so essential and necessary. We are watching to see what ~~will~~ be the objective aims of this Cause."

"The objective aims are the oneness of the world of humanity, Universal Peace, Universal Love, international Cooperation and reciprocity, the founding of divine Civilization, the promotion of the principle of human consanguinity and solidarity and the establishment of the Kingdom of God, first in the hearts of men and then upon earth. These are the noble objective aims. Are you not in sympathy with them? Will you not do also your utmost to hasten that day? What harm is there in this? We are working day and night for the realization of these Ideas and purposes.

God and His servants are also pleased with those souls who are serving under a different flag and in a different camp ~~to~~ actualize these principles of humanity."

Then the Beloved made several inquiries about their Colleges, number of students, different nationalities attending etc. Having received their answers he said: - "The doors of Colleges and Universities must be wide open to the adherents of all religions and the members of all nationalities - so that these different people from widely - scattered countries may meet and associate with each other in those educational institutions, learn each other's customs and habits, ^{inter}change their ideas and discard their purposeless prejudices. In this way these young men and women will grow up with the ideas of World patriotism. There are a number of Missionary Colleges in the East who are dogmatically sectarian, trying all the time to teach the students the falsity of their parents religions and the grandeur and sublimity of Christianity. The net result has been a useful failure, for generally the students turn out of the college with no religion. Thus it has been witnessed that when a Missionary ^{teacher} tries to undermine, either with bitter antipathy or indirect references the religion of the students in which they have been brought up, he is unconsciously undermining the religion of Christianity.

In short, in this radiant century the Sun of Reality has dawned, scattering its bright rays upon all humanity. We are beginning to realize that this globe is one home, and all men are brothers and sisters - the members of one family, the stars of one heaven, the lamps of one meeting, the pearls of one necklace, the trees of one garden and the signs of the Mercy of the Almighty. Creationally there are no bad people. They are all good. It is only when we subvert the original plan concerning our progress that the outcome is a distorted, abnormal state of being. The tree of humanity is one and is planted by God. The origin is one and the end must be also one."

When they left the Presence of the Beloved they wandered a few minutes in the garden, admiring the flowers. Ismael Aga was at hand and offered to each a lovely bouquet.

In the evening Shauqi Effendi, Rouhi Effendi, Badi' Bushreei and myself were invited to dinner by the students and till almost midnight we had a meeting of prayer, chanting appropriate songs, because according to the Mohamaden

reckoning this was the night of the Martyrdom of the Bab.

This morning the Beloved had a long talk with a Persian concerning Justice and how man should investigate every problem and weigh it with the scale of his common sense, to see the things with his own eyes and hear the things with his own ears. He must not accept anything on hearsay and assertion and not let prejudice deprive him of impartial judgment. He must test the soundness of every fact and search after the ultimate reality. The world is a symposium of contradictory statements, each community or sect holding the idea that they are the last custodians of Ultimate Truth. Through this dark passage of confusing theories the seeker of Truth must plod along, giving quarter to none and receiving favors from none, - till at last entering the world of light and looking into the Face of Unchangeable Truth.

Then I read to him a few letters just received from India and he dictated a long Tablet to Mirza Lotfollah Bakhtiari in London,