

Bahai Nest. Mount Carmel
Haifa Syria.

August 31st 1914

Dear friends!

The Beirut. Persian Bahai Students have an oratorical Club, the members of which give weekly lectures on the Bahai Cause and other allied subjects. The talks are delivered now in Persian and again in English. Twice a week they elect two or three members from amongst themselves and they are going to be ^{the} speakers at the next meeting. In this way, everyone - big and small - has a chance to express his thoughts and develop his speaking faculty. So far they have done creditable work and have made much progress along this line. Yesterday when the Master entered the reception room, after looking in the radiant faces of each student he said:-

"This is a good Society; it is a spiritual gathering. It is a well-organized, harmonized Club. In this world many societies are organized but their constitutions and By-laws do not hold them together and difference is rampant amongst the members. But praise be to God the hearts of the members

of your society are cemented together. The aim and object of all is one. One cannot find the traces of conflicting opinions amongst you. I hope that day by day this society may attain to extraordinary progress and evolve higher and higher along all the degrees of existence; whether in attention toward God or in ideal excellences or in acquired sciences and arts; that its advancement may be through all the stations of life and that it may be protected from the clashing ideas and inconsistent disagreement. For all the difficulties which have appeared in the life of nation owe their origin to the detrimental, opposing policies, egoism, arrogance, conceit and presumption. This egoism and arrogance are the bedrock of all the differences. Selfishness or self-conceit is the greatest calamity in the world of humanity. There is no other ^{worse} quality. Self-conceit means: to be pleased with one's self and look down contemptuously upon others. Self-conceit breeds haughtiness, pride and heedlessness. When we investigate thoroughly we find that the basis of all human misery is self-conceit. We must not be pleased with ourselves, we must be satisfied

with others and know them better than ourselves. We
 must even prefer to ourselves those souls who are not believers,
 for the end is unknown. How many persons that are not
 now believers but a day may soon come that they will
 accept the revelation and become the centres for the
 execution of universal services! How many souls that
 are now believers but towards the end of their lives
 they will forget God and the spiritual things. We
 must consider every soul wiser, more perfect, more honorable
 than ourselves; but no sooner we start to think that we
 are a little better than the rest, we have deviated from
 the path of righteousness and salvation. It is the con-
 cupiscent appetite that makes everything disagreeable in the
 sight of a man save himself and the gratification of
 his inordinate desires. Thus he is thrown headlong into a
 deep, black, bottomless pit out of which there is no ^{seeming}
 deliverance save through the regenerative power of the
 Love of God. Now the impersonification of tyranny is
 presented in his eyes as the embodiment of justice;
 the lowest depravity assumes the form of ^{the highest} incorruptibility
 and the greatest catastrophe looms large as infinite
 tranquility. This black pit is no other than

selfishness. One who is inoculated with the virulent microbes of self-conceit is displeased always with the actions, deeds and behaviours of others but self-satisfied, self-complacent and self-chained! God forbid that in our innermost nature there may be found ^{lurking} the least trace of self-adoration. This is a destructive germ, the presence of which in anybody's system leads to disorder and awful diseases. Toward others we must show the utmost spirit of meekness, humbleness and lowliness and treat them as though they are the dearest, the most precious and the most perfect likenesses of the Universal Intelligence. We must do this with the utmost sincerity and truthfulness. For we must look upon them with the eye of the True One. We must behold them as most noble and ourselves as inferior; for if we were perfect others would not have been imperfect; if we were truly great we would have overlooked their littleness. A perfect man does not see the defects of others but tries to set in order his own house. Know ye of a certainty that in any heart wherein abides the least illumination of the Blessed Perfection he will not let fall

from his lips the little one letter-word 'I' - I mean that kind of 'I' which implies self-conceit, self-adulation, and egoism. This ~~word of~~ 'I' with its implied arrogance is a darkness which disperses the light of Faith and suffers man to become entirely negligent of God. Let us all pray that we may be protected from its soul-killing effect and arise with whole-hearted enthusiasm in the service of our fellowmen. This is a sea from the depth of which we shall collect the white pearls of wisdom. This is the garden of the Lord through which we shall walk contentedly and pluck the roses of severance and holiness.

This morning the Master came to the Pilgrims House and stayed with Mirza Haydar Ali for one hour, talking with him about the old times of the Cause. In the afternoon the students had their Club meet in the house of Aga Sayad Yahya. They discussed the subject whether the influence of the mother ^{or the father} is greater over the education of the child and after nearly two hours debate on the question, the votes were cast in favor of the mothers. From the very ^{of the debate} beginning you could see ^{poor, much abused} that the fathers did ^{even} not have the ghost of a chance.