

Bahai Nest - Mount Carmel

Haifa Syria

September 1st 1914

Dear friends!

Today I received a lovely, sweet letter from Miss Lillian Kappes, the teacher of ^{the} splendid Bahai girls' school in Teheran. For the last four or five years she has been teaching the girls and has carried along a most significant work in introducing the American system of education amongst the women of Persia. With her are three other American ^{women}, Doctor Susan Moody, Doctor Clark and Miss Stewart, each one of whom deserve unqualified praise and commendation for the special work they are doing ⁱⁿ the birthplace of Baha-Olah. The Master is most pleased with them and often mentions their devotion and self-sacrifice. Miss Kappes writes interestingly on several subjects, ^{and} foremost is the description of ceremonies in connection with the coronation of the Shah of Persia. You may have already read the details in the newspapers but her letter is specially interesting to us because we know and admire her so much her pluck, energy and ever happy disposition. She says: "There are so many things to tell and I cannot stop

without saying how quietly and surely Ahmad Mirza has been crowned the Shah of Persia, in spite of rumors and anticipations of disturbances. We were given an example of some of the work of the Swedish Gendarmerie officers who have done much to establish good order here. The streets along the route of the procession were not only well policed, the guards being placed at frequent intervals but the crowds who thronged the streets were in a better state of submission than we often see in America. The men and women (it had been spread that the women were not to be allowed for 3 days) were kept on separate ^{at intervals} sides of the street. The men were requested to take their hands from the pockets and take them out of their Abba's to show that they held no weapons concealed; while all doors and windows fronting on the streets were required locked for the time being and more police patrolled the roofs. All these precautions were taken against any attempt on the life of Ahmad Shah as some had anticipated. As he arrived the day before the coronation from Sultan-Ahmad in Shimran delegations of boys from various schools were lined up in front of Dar-ol-Fonoon and cheered him as he approached. I heard afterwards that the Tarbiat boys were the only ones able to respond to

military commands. For days beforehand rugs, lamps, mirrors and even minor household furniture and decorations began to deck the house-fronts and this was even carried to the gates; six of them which form the entrance of the main streets to the Toob-Maydan. In short it was the greatest exhibition of rugs and carpets that I have ever seen. Long, thin poles surmounted by flags were placed at frequent intervals along the route and festooned between these were strings of red, white and green banners, while in the Toob-Maydan these crossed and recrossed in endless lines of color and here also additional poles to support strings of ^{the} ancient forms of oil lamps (Cups of oil with a small wick) made the square a fairyland of twinkling lights at night. In between the arches of the great rug-decked doors. I have before mentioned hung great crystal chandeliers lighted with many candles. Everywhere additional framework gaily twisted with colors and covered with rugs, photographs of the Shah, paintings and pictures, ancient and modern, flowering potted plants and even clocks, converted ^{the} once familiar places into Aladdin's caves and fairy palaces. In some places a framework of rug-covered

wood fenced off the public from the sidewalk and within the enclosed space basked the proud male contingent among tables literally covered with shining lamps, mirrors, flowers and glassware - in some cases glass dishes piled high with cones of sweets. For the first time for hundreds of years in the history of the land, the girls and women shared the freedom of the streets with men. Never before have the women tamashad [had a good time.] to their hearts contents and they do love to have a good time. Our neighbors the sons of Alladouleh were supposed by some to have the finest exhibition of all. For three nights they had a large band playing Persian and foreign airs before their resplendent and luminous doorway - entrance. In some places dancers performed, Even the walnut vendors had special reflector lamps on the trays which they carried on their heads. Yet withal, although the people clapped as the newly crowned Shah drew past, there was not one-tenth the noisy welcome an American populace would offer; however this was well, for the safety of the King and for the control of the crowd. All the Calis in the city were in commission and filled to their capacity, yet thousands more were afoot. The street cars on

the Lalazar and Nasseryah were decorated and these with large plaster archways erected at intervals, the lights and the noise brought "Coney Island" very vividly to mind. The morning, just before the Shah's return to Sultan-Ahad he gave a Salaam. Miss Stewart and I being too late to see him on the throne, went into the throne-room for closer inspection of the marble throne and the paintings on the walls. Then we stood just outside the gate where his coach was drawn up - so we had a good look at His Majesty while he paused a few minutes to talk to his courtiers before starting. I am sorry to say His Majesty is too stout that he had to be helped up and in with considerable force for the door is narrow. It was all a gorgeous spectacle but what is this all this glory compared with the Glory of the Kingdom of the Blessed Perfection of which all the Bahais are receiving on inexhaustible share. She writes also about the school of Farhiat and the girls' school and how both of them are progressing along definite lines but she says: - "We are still far from my ideals. We will do all much better when the Bahais build their own schools in suitable fashion."

Again she says: - "Fa'ezze' Khanom and I, in every women's meeting raise the cry that the women must go a head and advance and the signs of their progress are wonderfully evident everywhere. You should see (that is the trouble, I cannot see them) the girls hold up their heads and stand erect. The boys have military drill and the girls calisthenics and they speak out so they can be heard. In many instances I have been telling the boys how much better the girls can do this or that and it is true."

Of her own private life she says: - "Oh! our house and garden-beds are so pretty. I wish all the friends could come here and see us!"

Both in the morning and the afternoon we saw the Beloved and heard him speak on life and motion. He told us that motion is the inherent quality of all phenomena and the Bahais must be involved with this inner motion. Growth and motion are the two laws of progress. These are the days that the friends must move quickly, speak decisively and work unceasingly. In the evening there was a meeting in which there was the chanting of prayers mingled with the Divine Silence of the Beloved. He spoke to the hearts and every one understood his message.