

Bahai Nest. Mount Carmel

Haifa, Syria

September 5th 1914

Dear friends!

The world is aflame with the fire of war; some call it a just war. Governments and nations are thrown into a melting pot and only God knows what will be the outcome. Some predict that already the seeds of a socialized, spiritual democracy are being sown in the hearts of men. Once the foundation of Militarism is crumpled, mankind will demand of their rulers to sheathe the sword and devote their time and resources to the cultivation of better understanding between the people of various countries. Nothing else will show the utter foolishness and insanity of war than this universal struggle - fought on a gigantic scale. It is a staggering figure to think that 250 miles are covered with serried ranks of soldiers and decimating each other with cannons, projectiles, swords and other infernal machines! What a colossal loss to the world of humanity! There is not a single individual in this wide world, be he living in a small hamlet in China or in a little village in Africa that is not affected by this war. Already nearly 40 days

have passed, yet we hear they have hardly started the bell of man-killing rolling. We who are so far away from the actual scene of battle pray daily at the Threshold that this soul-trying calamity maybe ended soon, that its aggregate loss may teach people the lessons of Peace and its utter brutality and barbarism may impress all the minds with the criminality of war. It is well said that war is hell, for it burns the roots of the tree of human prosperity, it shrivels consciousness, it dries up the fountains of love and sympathy and it breeds greater hatred, jealousy and a rankling passion for future revenge. Every one in these parts is watching with the intense and sombre emotions the outcome of this putting together of the civilized nations of Europe and instead of the limitation of the area of conflict, the field is daily becoming larger and larger - to the extent that it will soon envelope a number of Oriental nations as well. Hope is expressed on every side that may this war be the death knell of Military despotism and out of its ashes may it arise the beautiful Phoenix of the United States of Europe with the glorious birth-song of a baptized and consecrated democracy imbued with the idea of the government of the people, for the people

and by the people. When they have expended their war-chests, exhausted the contents of their ammunition-wagons, slaughtered millions of men, turned the fair plains into veritable cockpits strewn with shell-splinters, cannon-shot, ruined tumbrils and dead men and wounded soldiers, crimsoned the fields and rivers with the blood of fallen victims, dashed against each other with the fury of a tornado — then they will become awakened out of their lustful and somnambulistie sleep, rub their eyes with their tired fingers and look around aghast at the extent of devastation and destruction they have wrought in their furious madness. Then they will rear the structure of a nobler, purer society, turn their wearied eyes to the Prince of Peace and beg him to come to their assistance in their new resolution. Then a new race will be born who will devote her time and opportunity to the fresh conquest of new worlds of ethics and spiritual morality; a new consciousness, broad as the sphere of heaven, will come into being and the true grandeur will be revealed. This is the hope of Abdul Baha, the desire of all the Bahais, the conscious conviction of all the pacifists, the ultimate goal of an angelic humanity and the earnest longing of every seeker after Truth and Justice.

Abdul Baha has assured us that the Era of Peace will be ushered in before the end of this Century. While in Buffalo a reporter asked him this question and he answered in the affirmative. On the eve of his arrival in Montreal he was interviewed by the reporters concerning this very Universal War and he predicted that it will come upon us soon. Next day one of the papers published a long article with large headings. These articles exist in Washington and any one may refer to them to realize how Abdul Baha saw clearly this terrible storm awaiting to overtake humanity and thus teach them a mighty lesson that will never be forgotten throughout the coming centuries and cycles.

The greatest service that America will render to mankind will be her roll as a peace-maker between these warring nations. The people of the United are a noble people and their "splendid isolation" will entitle them to act as the mediators and thus become the embodiments of the meaning of the words of Christ: - "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." In all his lectures in America Abdul Baha expressed the hope that the inhabitants

of that great and mighty Republic may become leaders in the Peace Movement and standard-bearers of good-fellowship. He is yet hoping that this divine idea may find its full fruition in that fertile soil of altruistic ideals.

In one of his addresses in California he said the following significant words :-

"The issue which is of paramount importance in the world to day is International Peace. The European Continent is like unto an arsenal. It is a storehouse of explosives, ready for just a spark, and one spark could set aflame the whole of Europe Therefore the greatest necessity in the world today is international Peace. The time is ripe for it. This is the time for the abolition of warfare. This is the time for the unification of nations and governments. This is the time for the expression of Love. This is the time for the East and the West to become cemented together. Because the people of the United States seem to be so peace loving and possessed of such great worth and capacity, I hope that peace advocates among them will daily increase in numbers, until the whole population stands for Peace. May the men of affairs in this Democracy uphold the standard of Peace! Thus may these altruistic thoughts

radiate from this centre toward all other regions of the earth and may this glory exist forever for this country. May the great flag of international Peace be upraised in this continent. May the first illumination of reality shine gloriously on this sail. "

In these words did Abdul Baha express himself concerning the future of the United States. May they become fulfilled in the not distant future! We have already heard that President Wilson has ~~promised~~ the combatants that the United States government is ready to act as mediator at any time that they have found themselves exhausted with warfare. This is a good beginning and all the Bahais ^{on Mount Carmel} pray for his success. Abdul Baha was pleased to hear this news.

Like other days he came out of his room in the afternoon and we all visited the Holy Tomb in His Presence. Afterwards he gave a talk on the meaning of a difficult verse in the Book of Akdes which had puzzled all of us quite a good deal. In the morning he spent an hour or two under the pines, also blessed by the Presence of Baha-Allah. He asked for Hajj to join him and they were there together till noon.