

Bahai Nest. Mount Carmel
Haifa Syria Oct 22^d, 1914

Dear friends!

From the heart of my Beloved there issues forth a limpid stream of love and affection. Tired and wearied with the baffling problems of life I lie down under the shade of the tree, planted beside this heavenly stream. I allay my thirst with its pure, cool draught and wash my fatigued soul in its pearly, bracing liquid. I hear his voice in the softly rustling branches and see his face in the fresh-budding rose. Like unto an angel of Light he passes before my eyes, while his beautiful Countenance is wreathed with sweet smiles. He is my loved One for whose sake I am ready to give up my life with pleasure. He has not only charmed my heart but has captured the hearts of many thousands in all parts of the world. They are all his lovers and abide continually in his unchanging affection. In his union I have abundant life, courage, enthusiasm and vitality but even the thought of momentary separation from him rends my heart. I live on his grace, beauty and sweetness and I shall die if I do not receive this ^{daily} sustenance. At his court I am a humble servant. I crave his merciful glances. I am a prisoner in the cage of his love and I yearn only to soar in the heaven of his good-pleasure. My highest aspiration is to walk in his royal path and I pray strength to submerge my limited will into the limitless ocean of his Will. He is the Lord of all my mental and spiritual possessions and idealism. In darkness I turn to him for light and ^{when} in doubt I supplicate him for assurance. He is the main-spring of my hopefulness and the source of my optimism. His Presence is the enchanted garden for my soul and his mind the heaven of my freedom. In this world of arms I stretch my hands towards him for internal peace and in this state of ignorance I long after his perfect knowledge. In the language of the Poet I raise my voice and pray for illumination :-

"This is my prayer to Thee, my Lord - strike, strike at the root of perversity in my heart.

Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.

Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.

Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might.

Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.

And give me the strength to surrender my strength to Thy Will with love."

This morning the Beloved descended the mountain on foot and after awhile we could see him through the eye-glass walking in the garden. Mirza Nowreddin arrived last night from Aboe Senan and hearing the departure of the Master he went down also to see him. About noon Isfahdiyar came up to carry the Beloved's simple dinner, Abgousht. In the afternoon we went down also and made some purchases in the bazaar. When we returned we saw the Master in the opposite house speaking to a number of distinguished personages. As we passed by we heard the name of "Germany" on his lips. He may have been speaking either about the war or the Cause of God in that country. The carriage was ready to take him up. We came up by an entirely different road, and as we reached near the Pilgrims Home, the carriage also appeared from the opposite direction. As he alighted he said: "By which route did you come up? I was going to take you up on the road but I could not find you."

After half an hour he came over to the Pilgrims' Home and all of us hurried there. Haji Mirza Heydar Ali is a true lover of the Master, therefore he inquired about his health. The Beloved said:—"I am always well, especially in these days. Here the air is parasidical. The weather of Mount Carmel at this season is most healthful and bracing. Were this Mountain in any other part of the world it would have been covered with ideal country houses but the inhabitants have no artistic sense of beauty. Their worldly desires and narrow mental horizon preclude any aesthetic considerations on their part..... God has prepared every means for the Bahais. It was not so in these days when we were in Bagdad. When we arrived there we did not have the wherewithal to buy bread but long afterwards the conditions were a little bettered. The degree of a person's faith and assurance

becomes manifest when he is thrown amidst difficulties and strait circumstances. Before we were exiled from Teheran all our properties and possessions were pillaged and a regular storm was set up; everything was plundered; the Blessed Perfection was thrown into the prison, with chains around his neck and manacles around his feet and we were homeless and penniless. No ^{one} they suspected that a Person is Bahai he was immediately arrested and executed without the least compunction. There was a young man by the name of Abbas. He was the servant of Soleyman Khan, the celebrated martyr. On this account he had come to know all the Bahais. His age was between 15 and seventeen years. The government authorities arrested him and asked him to divulge the names and addresses of the believers. Every day he was followed by 70 or 80 policemen through the streets and Bazaars and he pointed out to them the houses and shops of the friends. Thus a large number of those holy souls ^{were} sacrificed in the path of the Beloved. In short, after sometimes, Baha - Ollah shorn of all his ancestral estates was exiled from Persia with his family. All of us were very thinly clad, the time was in the heart of the winter ^{and} the weather was extremely cold. In such a manner we were sent out of Persia. Words fail to describe our hardships and sufferings during that winter. All along the way hail, snowstorm, rain added to the general discomfort. The pinching, cold weather was a material symbol of the manner we were received by the people on the road. After a thousand indescribable trials that beset our journey we reached Bagdad. Although our outward circumstances lacked the most essential comfort of life yet in those days we were happy - such happiness that could never be duplicated. These days of our journey from Bagdad ⁽²⁾ to Teheran were the happiest days of my life. Having reached Bagdad we found our purses empty and for a time we were thrown amidst the greatest difficulties. Then to overflow the cup of our misery the Blessed Beauty suddenly departed for the Mountains of Soleymanieh and stayed away for two years. During those anxious days we heard nothing about whereabouts. . . . As

we walked through the streets, the populace scoffed at and derided us, but
 our spirits were in a state of radiant resignation and rejoicing. All their
 ridicules did not affect us. Then Baha-ollah returned from the Mountains
 and like unto the good Shepherd gathered the dispersed, depressed flock.
 I was wearing at the time a very thin 'Gaba' made of cotton goods
 I had worn it for such a long time that its blue color had become
 white. ^{because it was washed so often} During the winter none of us had any overcoat and suffered cold
 weather. We bought one pound of meat and made Abgousht. It was
 cooked in a big Kettle filled with water. We were between 40 and 50 souls
 and each person received a bowl of this soup. There was amongst us
 a believer by the name Morza Javad. He could not eat our Abgousht,
 so we bought for him half a cent of curdle per day. So far as his meal
 was concerned he was distinguished from the rest of us. Amidst all these
 changing vicissitudes the hearts of all the friends were calm and
 serene. These were the sifting days. Only the people of faith could
 stand those hardships In these days such power and majesty
 has become manifest from the word of God, that were one to reflect
 upon it he will be astonished! Where is Persia and where is Germany.
 Indeed the progress of the Cause is a miracle! A number of souls
 were exiled 70 years ago out of Persia, they were considered as the
 most undesirable elements of society, their Cause for which they
 suffered was looked upon as doomed! but now their Cause is
 spread in America, in Europe, in fact all over the world. These
 exiled, poor, weak persons have found favor in the sight of the Lord.
 Their meekness and humility became the Cause of their honor,
 they have been enabled to build this fine Pilgrims Home, that fine
 holy Shrine of the Bab on the slope of Mount Carmel. The penetrating
 of the holy Cause is felt in the East and the West. The Word of God
 is being promoted and the Fragrances of the Paradise of
 Abha are being diffused. Without ^{material} help and aid God so assisted
 and confirmed them, - to such an extent that whenever a
 Bahai travelleth abroad he finds in every city a number
 of people who receive him kindly as ^{though he is} a member of their
 own family. This is indeed through the Power of Baha-ollah.