

Home of Baha - ollah
 Acca, Syria November 7th 1914

Dear friends!

At last I am out of Abou Senaw! I could not stand it any longer. I am again in the spiritual headquarter of the Blessed Perfection, close to the heart of Peace, drinking the water of Peace and thinking the thoughts of Peace. Oh! it is so difficult to live in these days of hate and war, days of international calamity and heart-burning woes. So far as I am concerned I like so much to be dead and not alive. Then I could not hear the agonizing cries of the dead and the ^{wounds} see in the terrified faces the story of human brutalities and cruelties and read about the fields covered with the corpses of stricken soldiers. I weep but what good my tears do accomplish! I suffer, but who cares for sufferings in these dark days. The whole atmosphere of humanity is being filled with the putrid odor of death and murder, the thoughts of men are vitiated, their feelings are paralyzed, their minds are ~~like~~ store-houses of the serpents of rancor and the scorpions of hostility, all the noble ideals of brotherhood are completely forgotten, nations are possessed with the malignant powers of carnage and slaughter. The heaven of fraternity is beclouded and the stars of love are not shining. The leaders of every nation are adding fuel to this world-wide conflagration - thus causing the mass of humanity to hate and despise their brothers. Sensational stories of barbaric atrocities find credence and the pages of newspapers and magazines are covered with red blood and the most unaccountable accounts of ^{savage} destruction. Day by day the sphere of war becomes larger and the miseries of mankind greater. The whole world has become one universal orchestra of battle and intense animosity. Who cares for Peace and conciliation? Very few. And the voices of those few are not heard in this pandemonium of noises and shrill cries. May the Bahais become confirmed to arise with a supreme effort to create in the hearts of men the sentiments of Peace! May they be inspired to utter such words as to find their homes in the minds of nations! May they uproot the tree of ill-will and plant the tree of good will! May they enkindle the lights of love in the chambers of the spirits!

Because Mashadi Elbrahim was going to take the donkey of the Master to Acca, I hired also a donkey for 10 cents and together we started for the city of our Desire. On our way we saw many camels and horses and donkeys loaded with household furnishings, their owners escaping from the town to take refuge in the villages and mountains. We talked about the days of the Blessed Perfection and the heavenly knowledge of the Manifestations of God to predict the exact happenings of future ages. As I rode on the little donkey and was passing through the Bazaar of Acca I looked at myself and was amused. With green turban on head and a long green Oriental overcoat riding on the donkey I would have attracted much attention if I passed along Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington but here I was part of the natural scenery and no one as much bothered himself to look at me. Anyway I reached the store of Aga Hossein Ashjee and gave the donkey to one of his sons to take it back to Abou Senan. With a joyful heart I entered the Home and after a minutes I was ushered into the Presence of the Beloved. He was sitting on the divan looking out of the window, while near at hand was his black hand bag. I was smiling when I entered the room. "Oh! Thou hast come!" he declared as though surprised. "What is the Cause of it?" I said: "I could not wait any longer. I have nothing to do in Abou Senan. My work is in Thy Presence. I prefer death to staying in Abou Senan without him." "How didst thou come?" he inquired. "I hired a donkey," I answered. "Why didst thou ride on my donkey?" he asked. I said that his donkey was brought by another friend. "Why," he said "you are all gathered there. How is ^{that} thy patience was exhausted?" "It is true, all the Bahais are ^{there and are} associating with each other like the members of one family, but without the Master they are like a flock without shepherd." I said. Then he asked about the health of each and I assured him that they are waiting for his return. After a few moments of silence he said: - "all the roads are closed and it will be most difficult to send or receive the mail. This war will drag along all this winter. Communications are practically at a standstill. These governments have completely upset the order of our work. although these events must come to pass. The wine must be clarified from its dreg."

I told him because we cannot send any letters in English I want

to send a number of postal cards to the friends in America, just giving them the bare news of his health. He was evidently pleased with this, for he said: "add the following message to it on my behalf: - 'Praise be to God that through the Bounty and Divine Providence we are protected and guarded. We are always engaged in your remembrance. We beg for you heavenly Confirmations and firmness and steadfastness in the Servitude of the Celestial Threshold. We hope that these international disturbances will soon disappear from the face of the earth.'" He asked me further to bring the cards and let him sign them. As regards the war he said: - "The European armies are wearied with fighting. There is now a lull in the air. Their antagonistic forces on the battlefield have received the severest resistance. They have found out that the units of their contending armies are becoming more and more on an equal footing. At first, Germany, both in the West and in the East, was on the offensive in the theatre of war, but now she is retrenching her national resources and will take the defensive. Now that the winter is setting in, there will be appalling disasters and untold miseries to be received all along the line." At this juncture Mashadi Ibrahim came in and the Master started to speak with him. Aeroplanes and Zeppelins became the subject of conversation. Then he said: - "The European governments were expecting great feats of daring from their fleet of airships but their sanguine expectations were not fully realized. They thought with these aerial ships they will change into ruin whole cities and towns. This they could not do. Just the same what a dreadful havoc they have wrought!" Then changing the mode of his expression he said: - "I am going to build an airship and send Mirza Ahmad to all parts of the world as a messenger of Peace and goodwill ^{and a carrier of the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom of Allah} on my behalf. Will thou go?" and he smiled. "If it is thy will" "I said" and if thy confirmations follow me everywhere I shall go but I am not worthy of this great mission." "Oh! Baha Allah shall confer on thee strong wings and thou wilt become enable to soar high, very high."

Before I left his holy Presence other subjects were discussed such as the bombardment of Tchenare Ghala, at the mouth of Dardanelles by the English warships and the throwing of 240 balls into the barracks.

At lunch time I was glad to sit around the table of the Lord. He looked well and had an air of activity around him. He spoke about the incidents in Acca and how the town is almost deserted and how the fear of bombardment hovers around all the heads. He told us of the mental agitation of Ibrahim Akki who has two merchant steamers in the Beirut port. His agent has telegraphed him that unless he does something very quickly his steamers must be either delivered to Foreign warships or bombarded by them. He had come to the Master begging him to loan the carriage - so that he might go to Haifa - to see whether he can transfer the ownership of these steamers to an American gentleman and by unfurling the Flag of the United States save them from destruction.

In the afternoon he received several guests and was busy talking with them till four o'clock. Coming down he sat in front of the house for a number of minutes. Everyone passing by saluted him reverently. Then riding on his little black donkey and asking Shah Kavous to take the reins he went to Bahajee. He asked me to follow him ^{about} half an hour. Impatiently I counted the minutes and when the half hour rolled away I started on my walk. The sun had just set in the sea in a blaze of glory when I ^{at last} entered the holy Tomb of the Blessed Perfection. The Master was chanting the visiting Tablet and was ^{already} half through. Finishing the Prayer he led us out and when he was in the open air he said: - "How charmingly peaceful and spiritual is this place! Baha-Allah always loved this divine silence." And for more than ten minutes we sat there in the deepening dusk of the night, while the stars appeared one after another in their brilliancy. We did not speak and the Beloved was wrapped up in a cloak of sweet silence, probably thinking of the sacred days when His divine Father was treading on this Blessed ground.

It was dark when we started back. I was walking beside the donkey. Out of the deep silence I heard the voice of the Beloved: "Speak Speak to me. God has given man one tongue and two ears - so that he might listen to more ^{than} speak." He urged me again to speak. Then I commenced speaking ^{now} about America, then India, then the present war and a host of other subjects. When we reached home, several officials were waiting for him. I then ^{was} with him till past seven o'clock.