

Home of Baha'ollah. Acre, Syria²³
November 8th 1914

Dear friends!

A heavy cloudburst of rain and thunderstorm deluged Acre and all the surrounding countries. Consecutive roars of thunder ~~de~~derated through the sky and flashes of lightnings illuminated the dark space. The windows of my room opening to the shore of the sea, I listened all the night to the morous fury of the gigantic waves dashing with great force against the primeval walls of fortifications. Gale and rain, thunder and lightning, darkness and tempest! the forces of nature fighting against each other. And such is the condition of the world today; all the physical and intellectual agencies of mankind are combined together against Divine Order, heavenly civilization and spiritual Ideals. As I sat alone in my room I heard the frequent ~~detonations~~ detonations and clappings of thunder like the bursting of the shells of modern cannons and guns and pictured in my mind the indescribable miseries brought about through the personal ambitions of a few really selfish rulers. The time will come when those who have been accountable for this criminal war will be brought before the Tribunal of God's justice and mankind will be freed from these armored monsters of militarism and ugly menaces to peaceful progress, happiness and refinement. In the retirement of my room I prayed earnestly for the realization of that golden Millennium and invoked the Holy Spirit of the Blessed Perfection to hasten the day of Peace and the age of justice. The world is indeed dark and the light of Faith has disappeared. From all appearances, the boasted civilization of the West has done nothing to advance the Cause of Peace which the Christ of Christ. Instead of spreading the gospel of non-resistance they have taught the dictum of the iron and steel, blood and fire, rapacity and devilish practices of savagery. Abdul Baha expects us to do something to hasten the era of solidarity, to pitch up the Tabernacle of the Oneness of the world of humanity, to usher in the day of sunshine and Felicity and to co-operate with every philanthropic movements in freeing from the bondage of superstitious the children of man.

Today from morning till noon the Beloved received a constant stream of callers. Arabs and Turks, Christians and Mohamadians found their way into his presence in the upper story of the house, in the ~~room~~ of Baha-Allah. At eleven o'clock Mirza Hadi arrived from Port Said and brought with himself such a huge package of newspapers and magazines ~~gathered~~ accumulated in the office of Ahmad Yazdi during the last three months. They were mostly from America and England. Owing the very acute and critical conditions in Turkey at this time the Master called me into his Presence and told me to take all these periodicals secretly in the Kitchen and burn them. After dinner I did as I was ordered, putting aside my strong inclination to keep over a few of them. I assure you, it made a big bonfire.

We have a carpenter in the house who is making strong, big, thick boxes and the Master is supervising them. These boxes will contain the Tablets and belongings of the Blessed Perfection and will be removed out of Acca to a safe place for future generations.

In the evening the officer of gendarmerie who is at the head of a thousand men and the chief of Police called on the Master and stayed with him for sometimes. Later in the evening the Beloved sent for me and asked one of the believers to bring. He opened a big envelope containing the letters of the last month and gave me those which were addressed to me. Two long letters from Mr Jos. H. Hammen dated September 24th and October 4th gave me real joy and happiness. I am sorry I cannot write answers to the letters of the friends in detail, because English language is tabooed by the Turkish government. Even the most innocent letters written in English will be thrown into the waste basket. However I must console myself with the thought that these conditions shall not last long, these clouds shall be scattered and these evil times shall pass away. The report of Mr Jos. Hammen concerning the condition of the Cause in Washington cheered the heart of the Master. He was glad that all ^{the} difficulties were removed and the sun of union and accord is actually shining in their midst.

Recalling the black tempest last night he said: - "The tempest in the Atlantic ocean is very spectacular. It is a world of water. Huge waves rise like unto the mountains. During the winter season it is very tempestuous. On account of rapid means of transportation, distance is annihilated and space has become a negligible quantity. In former times, before the invention of steam and electricity, it took months and months to go to London or America but now one can travel around the world in less time than it took many a person to go America two or three hundred years ago. The annals of Turkey contain many curious incidents about the movement of troops by vessels from one country to another. The author writes, for instance, the army left from one place in 1550 and arrived safely to another point in 1556. Haji Sayad javad used to tell me that once he embarked on a ~~steam~~ sailing vessel from Balsorah for Bombay. It took the vessel three months to reach Bombay but before we arrived at the port, a strong wind arose and carried us back to Karachi and from there another contrary gale took us to Balsorah. Thus he was on the sea for five months without landing anywhere and at last he was brought back to where he started on his voyage,"

While he was silent a number of dogs began barking in the street. This brought to his mind a story of his childhood. He said: - "There are times that the barking of the dog is more welcomed than the song of a singer or the melody of a nightingale. When I was a very young child in Teheran, there was a man by the name Alihas Goli Khan who was distantly related to us and was devoted to hunting. He liked hunting better than anything else. Several times he invited Aga Annon (my uncle) to go with him chasing but he could not accept his invitation till one day in winter. Alihas Goli Khan insisted that I should be taken along, that I would enjoy the experiences. Finally the party was ready to start and our old colored Bahai servant, Isfandiyar took me before him on the saddle of his horse. A few miles away from Teheran there are hundreds of ravines and narrow passes that are full of partridges and gazelles. If a person enters into one of these valleys, he will lose his way and

it will be most difficult to find himself out. The leader of the party ^{Abdullah} Goli Khan, seeing from afar a deer, pushed his perspiring horse into one of these deep and narrow ravines and we followed in hot pursuit. For an hour we pushed along giddy precipices and dangerous gorges. By this time the sun was set and complete darkness covered us. We did not ^{know} what to do. They were perplexed and agitated. The party did not have any provisions and they knew that many persons had entered those ^{ravines} in the past and were lost in a complete maze of interminable, dark passages of forbidding rocks. To cap our misfortune, it began to snow heavily. The weather grew utterly cold and the road was covered with snow. They could not see their way but in utter consternation they were going now this way, now that way. They almost lost hope and were worried what to do with me. It was about twilight when they entered a valley and they heard in the far off distance the barking of a dog. This was the sign of human habitation and our hunters became wild with joy. They started to sing and dance and were beside themselves with the thought of deliverance. Immediately they followed the direction of the barking and when they approached they heard the crowing of the cock. When we reached the little village, the farmers gathered around us and ^{we} surprised to find us in their midst at such an expected hour. In brief, they conducted us into the warm and cozy room of the house of the elder of the village. They made a big log fire in the chimney and we warmed our frozen hands and limbs. Then they made tea and while praising the Lord for this wonderful deliverance they were grateful for all the comforts provided for them. Oh! They were so happy that no word can adequately express their feeling. A day after, we got from them a number of efficient guides and we returned to Tcheran safely. In short, ^{what} I wanted to say is that at times the barking of a dog is more welcomed than the warbling of a songster or the utterance of a mystic oracle."