

Home of Abdul Baha
 Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria
 November 17th 1914

Dear friends!

When I awoke this morning and looked out of my window I saw Mount Carmel transfigured with the glory of the Lord. The vivifying breeze wafting from unknown directions gave me a new life and the charming scene spread before my eyes imparted new cheer. The tender green leaves whispered into my ears the open-secrets of a new springtime in these parts, the warmth and the heat of the sun causing the seeds to burst out and be clothed with the luxuriant, verdant garments of beauty and poetry. Oh! Although in other countries the reign of winter with its snow and hail is approaching, here our hearts and souls rejoice at the signs and tokens of a delightful spring. The seeds of thought, sown in the soil of the mind are beginning to germinate, the pure water is descending from the heaven of the divine Will, the birds of ideals are trying to leave their nests and while singing the joy-giving songs of a New Festival, soar towards the immensity of spiritual freedom. Oh! life without this heavenly rejuvenation is not worth living! I feel already the vibrant notes of the new season, the blood tingles in my arteries and veins with a new vigor and I long to attain the unattainable, to approach the unapproachable, to swim in the sea of Love and search after the white pearls of Knowledge! If I could sustain myself in this marvellous flight, if my wings were ^{to be} strengthened with a higher power, if my vision could grasp the sweeping grandeur of this ravishing panorama, if my mind could hold the significance of all that I hear and see - then on my return, with the holy experiences gathered on the white way of the Kingdom and in the service of Abdul Baha I might be of some slight use and strive to serve the friends. Capacity and the power of assimilation is the chief cause of one's progress and I am so little endowed with these two essential qualities. I pray all the time that my capacity be increased so that I may retain in my memory the beauty of these holy days.

With happiness in my heart I descended the Mountain and found the Beloved walking in the garden well and happy. "Where didst thou go last night? At dinner time I sent for thee and they told me thou art not here, therefore I have kept for thee my share of Pilau and meat. Do stay here to night. Do not go up." Then he went out to call on Sheik-or-Rais and told him about the firmness and steadfastness of the German Bahais and related his own experiences while in that country. On his return he sent me a package of letters which have been left unopened for five or six months. All of them contained good news but they were rather out of date. At lunch hour I presented to him the gist of the letters and he listened to my recital with love and patience. "These are very difficult days. Because the post office does not accept letters written in Persian and English we must wait answering these letters till some opportune time," he said.

At 3 pm a carriage was brought and the Beloved accompanied by Sheik-or-Rais and his son were driven up to the Holy Tomb of the Báb. With a number of believers I ascended the Mountain and we were up just at the moment the carriage stopped at the door of Pilgrims' Home. The Master's talk consisted of an account of his several meetings with Zelle'-sultan in Switzerland and France. His humorous remarks on the character and habits and talks of this madcap Prince caused us laugh very heartily. Pomegranates from the garden of the Holy Tomb were served and after the chanting of the Visitation Tablet we all descended the Holy Mountain.

In the evening the Beloved at first called on Jalal Bey, who is our neighbor, then he came to the house of Mirza Hossein Haji where we were all invited for supper. During his stay in Haifa Sheik-or-Rais lives in his house. Here conversation turned on the great Persian philosopher poet Inasnavi and the spiritual symbolism underlying all his stories and how his unique book has exercised a deep influence on the minds of millions of Sufis and mystics during the past centuries.

For supper we had rice, chicken-stew cooked à la Persan.

and other delicious dish. I ate with an omnivorous appetite without fear hovering over my head that I will have to suffer the consequence of this indulgence. If you were here you would have held my hand and say "Enough! No more".

After supper there was another interesting talk about the dogmas and innovations introduced into the religion of Christ by those who tried to convert the Pagans of Europe—such as pictures and statues, ceremonies and church bells and ecclesiastical robes. By these outward objects they attracted the attention of the Pagans, because in their own polytheistic system of religion their eyes were accustomed to these showy displays.

It was very late when we left the house and directed our steps towards the home of Truth, led by the Lord of Truth. Khasro carried before us a lantern. Mirza Anagjetullah invited me to sleep in his house, because he has also sent his family to Aboon Senan and therefore is keeping a "backlon" apartment. I availed myself of his kind invitation and it is in his cozy house that I am writing you this letter.

Today I was reading the local paper "Carmel" and in it I find the following item of news: "The German Ambassador in Constantinople in his speech at a great demonstration in front of Embassy said that the Emperor of Germany is the friend of Islam as well as the Austria Hungarian Emperor. These three governments are united and know that under all circumstances victory will be on their side." The city of Haifa is also under martial law and stringent laws are promulgated to keep public order. (1) It is incumbent upon the inhabitants to be more law-abiding and peaceful than other times, because the Turkish government is in a state of war. (2) Severe punishment will be meted to any person, spreading wild, incorrect news based upon evil intention or foul intrigues. (3) Whosoever becomes in the least the means of disturbance, causing confusion and insecurity will receive stern chastisement. (4) Should the warships of the enemies come to Haifa and bombard the coast and ^{the} buildings, the men and women and the children must not appear at all in the streets save the officers and the soldiers. (5) Every one

must know that he will be shot to death without question, should he disobey the above martial laws. (6) Therefore the inhabitants must recognize their duties, because the authorities are obliged and forced to act in this severe manner and stop ^{speedily} all the means of insurrection.

Another rule is that when the English or French warships come to Haifa the Consuls or the subjects of non-combattant nations must not raise their flags. This is the hardest rule of all, because many people ^{have} relied so much on their own protection by raising their national flags - thus they may be preserved from the bullets of the enemies. Still another military rule is the registration of the names of all the foreigners. Every foreigner, whether Persian or American or German and of course Russian, French and English must register during the next 8 days, otherwise he will be summoned before the Pasha. The subjects of the three nations who are at war with Turkey will be kept as prisoners and only God knows what will become of them. Even during the reign of the tyrant Abdul Hamid, ^{people} were not so much persecuted, robbed, tyrannized over. There are every signs apparent in the country except liberalism, democracy, and justice. Despotism and Militarism wield in their hands the iron club, religious fanaticism is stalking abroad, ignorant fury is boiling in the hearts, mobocracy is encouraged and the barbaric nomads are incited to leave their tent-dwellings in the Saharas of the interior Arabia and come out to uphold the religion of Islam. The Eastern nations are in fermentation and we may witness before long such spectacles of unbridled lawlessness as to cause the sun blush ~~by~~ ^{at} looking at our distracted humanity and seething globe. All the Arabic and Turkish newspapers contain articles on "jihad," publishing the exact copies of the Imperial Trade and "blessed Gatoa". They are read to the people by the Mullahs in their Mosques, to the soldiers by their generals on the battlefield, to the passersby at the corner of streets and to all the Moslems through the length and breadth of land.