

Home of Abdul Baha
 Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria
 November 18th 1914

Dear friends!

Walking for a few minutes through the delightful garden and feasting his eyes on the yellow and white chrysanthemums, Abdul Baha, our beloved Master entered the room wherein I was writing and sat down. Little by little the friends gathered and he asked questions about the drift of events now from this, anon from that. After a few preliminary remarks about the heedlessness of men and their forgetfulness of the commands of God he said:—"In the seventy fourth chapter of the Koran called 'The Greeks' the following verse occurs significant of the present situation: 'Destruction hath appeared by land and by sea on account of what men's hands have wrought, that it might make them taste somewhat of the fruit of their doings, that haply they might turn to God.' The holy, divine Manifestations have been sent and have underwent manifold sufferings, persecutions and trials in order that the world of humanity might be freed from the captivity of nature. The world of nature is endowed with the qualities of the animal Kingdom; it is fraught with defects, bloodthirstiness, injustice, struggle for existence, wickedness, treason, hostility ~~and~~ rancour and beastly propensities; in short the world of nature is the arena of depraved immoralities, the field of corrupt vices. The blessed Messengers of God arise with the utmost self-sacrifice so that a number of souls may be freed from the captivity of the world of nature and be ushered into the world of humanity; that they may be released from the world of darkness and enter into the world of light. The religion of God unchains the souls from the gloom of ignorance; suffers them to drink from the Fountain of Guidance, moulds their characters according to divine education, clothes them with the virtues of the human world, invites them to eternal life and summons them to enter the Kingdom of God, - thus darkness is changed into light, error into guidance, infidelity into faith, the defects of the animal Kingdom transformed into the excellences of the world of humanity. In this manner the dark world is illumined and this injustice and tyranny into justice and equity.

For a long time ^{these} spiritual ethics influence widely the lives of men. ^{these} heavenly laws regulate their conducts and these lordly principles adjust their sources of actions. Then many ages roll by and the spirit of these words are forgotten; the objects of divine religions are set at naught; ceremonies and traditions are crept in and the ideals of truth are neglected. Thus religion will become purely sacerdotal, the reality back of the religion is disregarded, superstitions abound, the proclivities of materialism displace all spiritual emotions, the Graces of the Almighty are overlooked and the inclinations of the world of nature are strengthened and reinforced. Do we not see in these days that the banner of oppression and destruction is held aloft and the governments and the nations of the world have girded up the loins of endeavor to kill and shed the blood of their own brothers and lay waste cities and villages. The world of humanity has become the world of the beasts of prey, nay rather a greater ferocity exists. Human susceptibilities are trampled under foot, justice and fairness have lost their pristine significances. Such cruel acts are perpetrated by men that cannot be attributed even to the ferocious beasts.

"The world of humanity is like unto the mineral Kingdom and the prophets of God are similar unto the gardeners and farmers. The farmer harrows the ground, clears it from parasites and uproots the thorns and thistles. With much labor and infinite trouble he transforms the barren soil into a rose garden and through care and grafting the fruitless trees of the jungle become the fruitful trees of the orchards. But if the garden is left unto itself, without the constant care of the gardener, it will turn again unto the wild jungle. Because one of the natural properties of the earth is the growth of weeds, injurious plants and underbrushes. So long as the farmer is at his work, ploughing and harrowing the soil, it is kept clear of thorns and useless plants but when it is deprived of the cultivation of the gardener it will return again to its natural wild, nature-like condition. Therefore do ye not be astonished at the grass

and inhuman acts which are committed by these nations who have forgotten God and the laws of His prophets."

Having given the above talk he went out of the garden and walked towards the store of Mirza Anayatullah. Here Sheik-er-Rais joined him and for more than one hour they sat together in the little store. I went also down town to buy a few things and when I returned I saw both of them coming from the direction of the German Colony. When the Beloved saw me he beckoned to me to join him. "I have been taking a long walk with Sheik-er-Rais" he said "I wish you had come with us. Are you now ready to leave tomorrow-night for Acre?" I gave an affirmative answer.

At noon I took my lunch with the Beloved. There was no one else. "Come, Khosro has prepared for thee Kabab. It is very delicious." He spoke about several phases of the Causes, all of which were instructive and highly stimulating.

About four o'clock I left my room and went out to take a walk. I proceeded towards the German colony and to my delight and surprise I met the Master with Sheik-er-Rais and Mirza Anayatullah. They were walking in the avenue towards the sea. "The world of nature with all its conditions has pitched its tents in Paris" the Beloved was saying. "The majority of its inhabitants are either captives of nature or prisoners of church ritualism. Just as the cow is immersed in materialism and knows nothing but the senses likewise these materialistic thinkers ignore every other thing save those matters attested through the function of the five senses; even they believe that man must appease all his natural appetites, that all moral restraints must be set aside and whatever is the demand of nature be fulfilled." When we reached the lovely shore the Beloved turned ^{his} back and looked up towards the Magham, the holy Tomb of the Bab, nestling high on the ascending slope of the Mountain. "Does it not look beautiful?" he said "the horizon here is very bright and the sunset most wonderful. One glance at it will be remembered for all the time to come." As we passed by the Hotel Carmel the Master ascended the stairs and told us

to go up and rest for a few minutes. When the coffee was ordered he said:-
"This world is like unto a theatre on the stage of which all kinds of dramas, plays, tragedies, comies and operas are presented and the actors are no other than humanity at large. Out of the innumerable plays presented for the serious study ~~or~~ ^{or} amusements of the people of every age, a master-drama is acted, all the characters of which fill most important rolls, ^{and} every scene being a climax of absorbing interest to all mankind. Such a master-drama of this 20th Century is the Universal War, ^{now being} waged both in the East and in the West. We have been spectators of every other kind of dramas, tragedies and comic-operas and now we are witnessing the progress of the master-drama of this century played with machine guns and rifles."

At this juncture Gaemmagam and an old Jew with long beard came to the hotel and the Master spoke to them about the advancement of the Jews in America, the freedom of religion they enjoy, the high position they fill and the wealth they have accumulated through their industry and perseverance. He told them of the Zionist movement and how certain American Jews believe that their future Zion and Jerusalem should be considered America, that America is the land flowing with milk and honey, that so long as Syria offers no facility nor any inducement to the Jews to come and colonize it they should not risk their fortunes for the sake of a purely religious idea. They uphold this plan with much fervor and enthusiasm but the Orthodox Jew is not convinced by these matter of fact arguments and ever longs for the time when he is established in Palestine and visits Jerusalem, the city of his fathers. By this time it had become dark and we started homeward. With great emotion and eloquence the Beloved went on describing his numerous meetings with the Rabbis in America and relating his lectures in their Synagogue. To emphasize his points he would stop at every few steps, making wonderful, natural gestures with his hands and then going on speaking quite unconscious of his surroundings.

and the attention he drew unto himself by the passers by.

In the evening we had a lovely meeting and the Beloved was radiantly happy. One of the believers in ^{Kaspa} ~~Kaspa~~ a very small shop told the Master that he has heard the government authorities have gone to the very extreme in searching the houses and stores for food supplies. "Have they ransacked thy store?" Every body laughed and you would have laughed ^{also} if you had seen his tiny store with almost no ^{in it} ~~in it~~.

Looking at me the Beloved asked; "Ha! What art thinking? Is thy ship with its argosies captured by the enemy? Art thou afraid that thy house will be searched? Art thou depressed because thy commerce is paralyzed? Art thou unhappy, because thy trade is ruined? Praise be to God that thou art ^{not} ~~not~~ burdened with any of these ties. Thou art free from all these entanglements. Thy capital does not consist of nickel, silver and gold; it is the Love of God and therefore they cannot take it away from thee. Thy house is not built of mortar and clay; it is a mansion constructed by the angels of the Most High in the Kingdom of Alha; no hand is powerful enough to destroy it. Detached and free like unto a bird thou art satisfied with a few grains and art singing the praises of thy Lord, the Gracious, the Lament. Art thou not happy? Art thou joyful?"

From this sweet personal conversation he raised immediately his tone and spoke as follows:— "When the prophetic light of Mohamad dawned from the horizon of Hijaz the Persians and the Greeks were engaged in a severe battle. The Persian government defeated the Greeks probably in Palestine in the 6th year before the Hijira under Khosrow Parviz. The Khoreish tribe to which Mohamad belonged and whose leaders were inimical to the Cause of Islam rejoiced over this defeat of the Christians. They argued thus: "The Greeks were the 'people of the Book'; the Persians fire-worshippers and not classed amongst the 'people of the Book'; nevertheless the Christians were defeated by the idolatrous fire-worshipping Persians. In the same manner, Mohamad consider himself and his followers ~~a~~ the people of the Book and the members of the Khoreish tribe ~~a~~ idolaters and infidels. We who are idolaters shall in the long run overcome Mohamad and crush his religion of One God."

For this reason the following prophecy was uttered by Mohamad in the Chapter of the Koran called the Greeks: - "The Greeks have been defeated in a land hard by; But after their defeat they shall defeat their foes in a few years. First and last is the affair with God. And on that day shall the faithful rejoice." Then in the year 625 the Persians were defeated by Heraclius. The truth of the matter is, both of these Powers were defeated and the Cause of God was the Conqueror; the Cause of Truth triumphed over all the people. Similarly, all these nations who are fighting each other and forming ^{red} rivers of the blood of their fellowmen - are defeated - one and all. For all of them are captives in the claws of lust and passion, are prompted by greed and cupidity and are imbued with the spirit of jealousy and hatred. The Army of the oneness of the world of humanity conquers over all, the Flag of Universal Peace shall wave over all, the power of the Divine Graces shall defeat all and the truths of human solidarity will vanquish all. Who can dam the irresistible torrent of the Destiny of God? Who is able to stand before the march of the Army of the Kingdom of brotherhood? Who is omnipotent to withhold the descent of the Outpourings of the Merciful? God has predestined that humanity may become ultimately as one family; He has decreed that these scattered parts may be cemented into one whole, these walls of divisions may be brought down, these turbulent rivers join the vast Great Sea, these different sections of mankind may be joined into one commonwealth, these multi-colored flowers be gathered into one bouquet, these seeds be sown in one field, these crops be garnered up by one harvester and these various pages be collected into one great book. This is God's decree and it will come to pass notwithstanding all the present conflicts.

After this talk he read for a few minutes the Arabic newspaper and then went out to call on Jamal Bay. With the helens we had a nice chat and for dinner I was the guest of Mr. J. A. B. B. B.