

Home of Baha-olleh

Acca, Syria November 24th 1914

Dear friends!

When we sat around the table last night in the Presence of the Blessed One I mentioned the name of Sheik - or Rais. The Master said: - "He is one of the noblest men of Persia. Learned and eloquent and as a former representative of the people in the Persian parliament he is made famous throughout Persia. He is a scion of nobility. He is the grandson of Fatahi Shah and the son of Mohamed Taki Mirza. His father as the son of the then reigning Monarch, was for thirty years the absolute Governor general of the Province of Boroujerd. One of the characteristic signs of Fatahi Shah's reign was the division of the various provinces of Persia amongst his sons. Each royal son was as a despotic ruler in his own Province as his Sire. For example Tabriz was parcelled out to one, Esphahan to another, Kermanshahan to a third and so on. All that they did was to pay an annual tribute to their father and the one that payed more was more favored in his estimation. They ruled their subjects according to their whims nor did they listen to the injunctions of their Sovereign father, when the governor of Kermanshahan died he left behind his son to rule in his stead, Fatahi Shah at first gave his assent to this arrangement, because after all he was his grandson, but Mohamed Taki Mirza, the father of Sheik - or Rais wrote to his Sire that now since his brother is dead he would like to have the governorship of Kermanshahan. Fatahi Shah did not give his consent but the son knew better the nature of his father. He wrote him I will buy the province. The Shah loved the money so much that could not resist this temptation and sold it for one hundred thousand dollars which was considered a vast sum at that time. Then he wrote to Mohamed Taki Mirza that he is authorized to proceed to possess that province in whichever manner he deems best. Realizing that he cannot out the son of his own brother he fitted a large army and walked towards Kermanshahan. Fate had it so arranged that he was completely defeated at the hands of the young prince and his army annihilated. When he wrote

to his father in desperation to release him from the arms of his grandson. The King, wrote back to the victorious Prince to leave his uncle and have mercy upon him. In short, he lost his money and his province at the same time and the Shah laughed at both of them."

He told us about An Armenian exile to Acca. His name was Caspar. As he was identified with the revolutionary movement in Armenia Abdul Hamid had exiled him to this town. At the time there was a very fanatical Mofte who heaped abuses on the head of poor Caspar whenever he met him. He called him "traitor," "liar," "anarchist," "revolutionary," "rebel" etc and the Armenian exile could not utter a word in answer. In his own country he was a much honored man and it was very hard for him to bear these unmerited abuses of the Mofte. One day by chance he meets him in the bar. Now to find the Mofte in a christian bar drinking liquors is enough to brand him with eternal infamy. Caspar immediately realized that this was his only opportunity to inflict a severe punishment on his tormentor. He knew that if he beat him ^{in the bar} he will not go to the Court to complain against him, lest they may find out the place of his resort and his transgression of the religious law in the matter of drinking intoxicants. Hence, he went for the Mofte and gave ^{him} a sound beating, wounding his face on several places and to complete his disgrace he kicked him out of the bar. Next day I saw Caspar beaming with joy and excitement and after our formal conversation he revealed to me the cause of his boyancy. I could not help laughing. When I met the Mofte I saw his face all bandaged and could imagine the terrible scuffle that they must have had. "your honor! Mofte, what misfortune has caused you these wounds?" I asked hardly able to contain myself. "Oh your excellency!" he moaned "Is it not dreadful! I had an awful fall from the top of the stairs."

This morning the Beloved spoke a few words about his grandfather. "His name was Mirza Abbas, the same as my name. He was, however better known under the name of Mirza Bozork. He had also a title which I do not like to mention it. In the Cabinet of Persian government he was an important member. Although his seal was Abbas, yet very few people knew him by that name. Everybody knew Mirza

Bozorki but very few Mirza Abbas. His seal is with me."

Miss Sanderson arrived before noon from Abou Senan and for the first time during the last 3 months I had a talk with her. She did not know ^{what} she should do, whether to leave the country or continue to stay. Italian steamers are the only ones that ply the Syrian waters and if that Power ^{enters} ^{into} the conflict of Europe all outward communications will come to an end and it will be impossible to leave Syria. She talked over the matter with the Beloved and afterwards decided to stay. The Master assured her that she is most welcomed to stay as long as desires, that she is in his estimation like one of his own daughters, that she is very spiritual and sweet and the members of the Holy Family are delighted to entertain her. "I am very pleased with thee" he said "because thy disposition is calm and unruffled. I am glad that thou art here at this time, Thou art my real daughter and hope that thy spiritual progress will be uninterrupted". She ate her lunch with us and then departed for Haifa accompanied with Mirza Anayetullah. She will return in a day or two.

After his nap 3 of his Christian neighbors called on him and spent a pleasant hour. The Beloved told them that during 25 years of Baha-O-llah's existence in Acca no plague crossed the gate of the town; although several times the surrounding country was ravaged with the malady. When the people asked of the significance of this extraordinary matter, a Bulgarian doctor by the name Goujeshk answered: it is because of the thick walls of the fortifications these walls acted as natural barriers. He was heedless of the spiritual influence at work. But three days after the ascension of the Blessed Beauty plague entered the town and all the inhabitants flew away. Closing the doors of their houses they brought the keys to me and hurried out; only the Bahais stayed here. This is a historical fact and there are many people living who remember it still. One of the present, by the name Demetri said:- "I believe that we will be also protected through the presence of Abbas Effendi."

you are the protector of this town. Without you we ~~could~~ not heart enough to stay here." For half an hour more he spoke and joked with them and reconciled between two of them who were cross at each other for a long time.

Then when they left the room he told me and Ostad Mohamed Ali to go out and take a walk. Although it was cloudy we went to the garden of Rejwan, ~~where~~ Abul Gasim, talked with him, were fed on pomegranates and mandarines and returned home just before a heavy rain started falling. The Beloved was also out but he was calling when the rain poured down. Soon he joined us and asked the believers to go to his room. When the news of the day was told him, he said: - "May God place pity and mercy in the hearts of these 'cruel Kings and emperors! In order to gain an empty fame or a parcel of ground, they are burning the world and its inhabitants with a destructive fire! For them an afflictive punishment on the part of the Almighty!" In all probability he would have continued the talk were there no intruders. The Commander of the Turkish Army, Hasny Bay and his aid-de-camps and another officer were announced. We retired into another room and these guests stayed with the Master for more than one hour. We could hear his resonant voice entertaining them with the description of some of the Military exploits of the Roman Emperors and Napoleon the Great.

After supper in his holy presence I retired into my room and was awake till past midnight. I could not sleep. I was thinking of all our friends scattered in all parts of the world. What are they doing now? What sort of services are they ^{rendering} to the Cause of humanity? How are they influenced by these mighty conflicts of the East and the West? Are they firmness in their faith in the Alpha Kingdom? Are they devoted to the cause of brotherhood? I strain my ears and out of the thundering sound of the sea, the falling of hails and the rushing of the cold winds I hear the still small voice of Peace and Love borne on the