

Moonbeam Bahai Cabin
 Abou Senan, Acre, Syria
 December 4th 1914

Dear friends,

During my absence our room has become so much more of a cozy room by the addition of a set of tea-service - so much loved by the Persians who are as a rule a tea-drinking nation and in this respect have developed a fastidious habit. Hence my roommate, Badi Effendi, took great pride and pleasure in displaying them in actual service, acting "under fire." Having thus helped ourselves of the frugal breakfast we repaired to the reception room of Sheik Saleh and his sons. Here the Master was engaged in a lively discussion with an Arab, Druse Sheik from a village by the name Swedee. The Sheik was a local patriot and was emphasizing in no uncertain manner the importance of his village in the history of Syria by citing facts and figures about its annual crops in wheat and cereals and the number of cattle belonging to each farmer. I was amused at his enthusiasm because he looked to me so much like certain Americans who pile up statistics to show the progress of their country since the Industrial Revolution. Then the Master called Khosro and told him to bring his black hand bag, out of which he offered to the Sheik a large gatering which gave him much pleasure. After this he came out of the room followed by several friends. Starting from the beginning he called at the houses of all the friends, staying a few minutes in each place and showing kindness and love to all. He even came to our Cabin and exclaimed with joy: "Praise be to God you have a comfortable quarter. This is Kingly room, a royal chamber."

While the Beloved was paying visits to the friends I went out to take a walk and made friend with a shepherd who played for me on his flute very sweetly. He was a young, unsophisticated boy whose view of the world was confined to Abou Senan and his flock, simple, care-free, happy and unworried by any of the thousand problems which beset the lives of city people.

In the afternoon with Sheik Saleh and his son the Beloved went out to pay a visit to the officers and the soldiers in the English Messutery. When they heard about the approach of the Master they ran out

to welcome him and while surrounded by these military men he entered their headquarters. For an hour or so ^{he} talked and entertained them with the stories of hunting in Persia etc. The Doctor ordered tea but the Master declined to drink it on the ground that it is a stimulant and lessens sleep. "No indeed" the physician answered "your sleeplessness has not been caused by tea but by the constant motion of the sea of thought. Great men sleep little during the hours of the night for the armies of ideas besiege them from all directions." Before his departure the Commander requested him to bless their mess as well as that of the soldiers. He did so with infinite tact and delicacy of the spirit. As he was leaving the building many soldiers ran to him, kissing his hands by force and begging him to pray for them - so that they may return safely to their homes and families. Many of them were weeping and the Beloved assured them that he will pray for each and all. The officers walked after him as far as the spring and then he requested them to return and not trouble themselves any further. They considered themselves very much honored and privileged to have received a Call from "His Highness Abbas Effendi". Then riding on the little, black donkey of Mirza Tarazollah he ascended the mountain with many believers who walked on foot. It was a triumphal procession of the Lord of the Vineyard with his disciples around him! It was another living picture out of the pages of the Bible, wonderfully complete in all its details and set in a background of the beautiful coloring of the East.

The evening was a real feast of the Angels and the intellectual, anecdotal, spiritual victuals, were to say the least very sumptuous and appetizing. Speaking about the inability of man to overcome the physical demands of his nature he said: - "The body of man is built with various material constituents and therefore it is a prisoner of nature, it is dominated and ruled by nature. It is a philosophic theory that the part is attracted to the whole. Now, ^{for as the physical} man is a part and parcel of nature and nature is the whole, the part is ever drawn to the whole unconsciously. However man is endowed by the Creator with a second nature which is supernatural, spiritual, ideal and celestial. With this power he is enabled to overcome his lower, physical nature.

"The source of the excitation of the physical emotions is the material nature of man but the mainspring of the appearance of spiritual susceptibilities is the spiritual nature which is the foundation for all human progress. When man is under the control of his material nature and his life is not influenced by the heavenly Power nor directed by the moral voice he is worse than a brute. For example he knows that drinking is a bad habit, gambling is a vice, robbery is a crime, still you find him committing one or all of these things - simply because these things belong to the natural, unregenerated state, they are 'part' of nature and as he is another 'part' of nature - [but unenlightened by the heavenly light] he is attracted to them and takes pleasure in the companionship of the wicked. Under such circumstances the animal's actions are excusable because he is not endowed with the intelligent Faculty but man is responsible on account of his superior creation and reasonable powers. The duty of man is to overcome the lower nature by the omnipotence and positiveness of the higher. He must not let his nobler sentiments be stifled and asphyxiated. He must transmute the iron of self into the gold of altruism. For example ~~the~~ iron is cold, hard and black; ^{but} once thrown into the furnace of fire it becomes warm, soft and red - it assumes the qualities of fire. Thus through the Fire of the Love of God the lower, debasing thoughts of man must be changed and become the shining, scintillating ideals of the Kingdom. This transformation is made possible through the spiritual Power which is deposited in the heart man by the hand of the Almighty. It is a Celestial Gift on the part of God to His own handiwork. The Greatest Bestowal of the Lord of mankind to man is this power of reason or intellect. Through it man overcomes all the difficulties; reveals all the mysteries of existence, solves the problems of ~~existence~~ life and attains to the highest station of comprehension " In this strain he talked for the Sherik's who listened to him with the concentration of true adepts. Then realizing the weight of the talk on their minds he dropped his tone into lighter channels, history, anecdotes and laughter - creating jokes. We sat in his presence till 10 o'clock and when we left the room we were all drunken with the wine