

Mosulham Bahai Cabin
 Abou Senan. Acca, Syria
 December 5th 1914

Dear friends!

On December 5th 1912 I left the shores of the United States of America in the service of Abdul Baha - after a stay of 9 years and seven months; On December 5th 1913, I landed at Haifa in the company of the Beloved and on this December 5th 1914 I found myself in Abou Senan at the holy Threshold of the Lord. From the moment that the steamer bore me away from the harbor of New York I have shared with you the daily words and movements of the One whom we all love and whom we all try to serve but with ill-success. You have been my constant, faithful companion during all hours of the day and the night and the knowledge, that you are so close to me and ^{are} watching my actions has given me great stimulus and inspiration to work with hope and happiness. Together we have travelled over many lands and crossed many seas, entered many meetings and witnessed many scenes of imperishable glory. Under all conditions and circumstances we beheld with our own eyes the Majesty of the Lord and listened with ~~our~~ own ears to the undying and eternal words of Reality and felt the infinite kindness and compassion of our peerless Leader. We have but just to return to the treasure of thoughts and ideals which we have attempted to gather during the past two years and we will be richly ^{re-}warded with the contemplation that if we have not been able to gather all the precious gems scattered on the shore of eternity, we have at least collected a few, to be preserved in the casket of memory and handed down to posterity who have not been fortunate enough to be born in this grandest of all ^{the} cycles of existence. Our policy has not been to hoard and bury our ideal riches, but to save and invest ^{them} for the interest of the good Cause - so that every one may be benefitted by the exposition and display of our heavenly treasures. Thus step by step we have advanced along the path of life and have passed many milestones of research and inquiry till we have ^{reached} now at the portal of our third year of intimate companionship. May our sails swell with new favorable breezes and may we land safely on that haven of Peace and brotherhood which is our ultimate goal!

Yesterday I heard that Mrs Getsinger has arrived in Acca and therefore I sent her a note of welcome to the Holyland and this morning the Beloved sent the carriage and she arrived long after sunset. With Mirza Moneer and Mirza Housseddin^d descended the Mountain to see her but after one hour of waiting we returned a little disappointed. What a contrast between the days of our lives! It is only by the anti thesis of events and ideals that we appreciate the best hours of our existence. Two years ago we were in the harbor of New York, surrounded by hundreds of Bahais who had come to say farewell to the Beloved, last year we landed in Haifa amidst a throng of joyous Oriental Pilgrims and resident believers! and this year we are in the quiet, small village of Abru Senan with the world thrown in the melting pot of tests and afflictions! To make the contrast complete in all the details; this was a rainy day and black clouds glowered at us angrily, as though nature has had a declared war again man. Thus during the best hours of the day we were confined to our Cabin and did not venture out very far, nor did we see the Master till after sunset when we entered the hospitable reception room of Sheikh Saleh and found him sitting in his own accustomed corner near the window. Because Sheikh Saleh is a Mason of many years standing the Beloved gave an informal talk on the doctrines and principles of Free-masonry and the influence this secret Society exercised in middle ages Against Papal divine authority and the dethronement of Monarchical institutions by the substitution of the moral and intellectual autonomy of the individual and the right and duty of investigating every fact presented to us - free and independent of so-called dogmas of the Church and the infallibility of the Pope - as well as by the incalculable of the political axioms of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. What we need in this practical world is the practice of these three civic principles. Every person promptly agrees with every other person that justice is much to be valued, liberty is a most exalted ideal, equality is the sore need of the time and fraternity is the solvent of all our problems; but those who have been loudest in preaching these doctrines have been the very ones who have abused them most and have trampled under their iron heels the most sacred laws of the nations and God.

Then he dwelt with much feeling and eloquence on a comprehensive description of his journey throughout the United States, giving supreme encomium and the highest eulogy to the extraordinary intelligence, inventive genius, ready grasp and dextrous alidity of that "representative nation of all humanity, the mouthpiece of political justice and the oracle of national liberty and independence." The American woman as usual came ⁱⁿ for her share of praise. "The American women as a whole are better educated, more well-informed on classical as well as current subjects and the spreaders of the right ideals of education. They are endowed with a most wonderful power of assimilation and comprehend quickly the subtleties of philosophy and religion. A woman Principal in any of the high schools of the United States is more intelligent than the President of the University of El Azhar in Cairo! I talked with some of their wise women and their minds quickly grasped my meaning although we were discussing the profound subjects of divine philosophy. I have spoken on similar topics with the Professors of El Azhar and they were as far from understanding my talk as the tadpole is from visualizing the condition of man!"

Then he spoke about California and the spiritual days we spent among the friends of God. "When I reached Los Angeles, I realized how far I was from Acca and my people, the people whom I loved with passionate earnestness. On the second night of my arrival there, while I was lying awake in ^{my} bed I said to myself: - 'O thou my Acca? O thou my spiritual Acca, O thou my beloved city? O thou peaceful Abode of ^{my} Pison? How far art thou away from me! I stretch my hands towards thee but thou dost elude me! Am I not reared in thy midst? Art not thy people my people, thy sorrows and pains my sorrows and pains? How fair art thou in my sight! Will I ever see thee again with my physical eyes? Will I ever walk through thy narrow streets? Art thou not the city wherein Baha Ollah spent His earthly life and then ascended to the supreme Concourse? Truly thou art the mother of all the cities of the world and thou art blessed beyond the grasp of human imagination! Thy spiritual station is very great and thy fame shall reach to the uttermost parts of the earth.' Thus I prayed and God through His Favor answered my prayer."

Then he contrasted the liberality and tolerance of the educated, reformed Jews in America and their hide-bound, narrow-minded sacerdotal brothers in these parts. "For three years I was away from the fanatical prejudices of the East and breathed in the Western clime the air of the freedom of conscience and the broad, catholicity of human and divine principles was much to my liking. After my return to Alexandria, the Minister of the reception to the then Khedive invited me to his home where I found a number of Pashas and Bays with whom I spoke about religion and the need of reformation and urged the necessity of an entire rehabilitation of the moral codes referring to the Jews as an example of morbid tenacity to ^{the} ancient, putrid, antiquated laws of Mishna and a blind following of the Rabbis. Amongst those present was a Jew and he was offended at my remarks and tried to defend his people by quoting the oft repeated idea that they are the children of the prophets, they are the lions of the tribe of Judah, they are the origin and most ancient race, etc. I answered him: 'Gracious heaven! Ancient indeed! Nobody in these days of Progress plumes himself over his ancient pedigree. Ancient, superannuated, moth-eaten, obsolete, old-fashioned, antiquated, out of date! Who cares to be known by these bygone attributes! An old tree, whose very roots are dried up shall never again push forth leaves, blossoms and fruits. Will it ever become verdant by ^{saying} asserting that once I was a sapling, young tree? or a foolish dotard, will he ever become rejuvenated by claiming that once I was a strong, powerful athlete! My friend! I advise you to throw away the swaddling-clothes of the childish humanity. The world is completely revolutionized and you are sitting in your ancient lot, an anomaly and a freak. The world has attained to the highest pitch of honor and glory while you are fooling yourselves by shallow pretenses and empty words. Throw ^{away} the mask of self-deception. These days are the days of youths. These times are the times of Progress. This age is the age of reformation. This epoch is the epoch of rejuvenation! This cycle is the cycle of renovation. This century is the century regeneration. This period is the period of reanimation. The trumpet of resurrection is blown and you are yet sleep? I say, out of your tombs, get out of your sepulchres. This is the hour of revivification. Avail yourselves of the opportunity