

Home of Baha-Ollah
Acre Syria
January 21 1915

Dear friends!

It is four o'clock A.M. My room overlooking the Mediterranean is flooded with the silver beams of the white, beautiful moon. The surface of the sea is a shining, dazzling plain, reminding one of the reflective surface of a transparent mirror. The gentle breeze is wafting over the ^{liquid} crystalline plain and nymph-like, the lapped ripples respond to this delicate touch and keep the surface in constant motion. Neptune is holding a charming concert on the shore and the Nereids are playing and singing their mellow, soft pieces. Where I am sitting I hear their sweet voices, their delighted laughter and their fairy music. I look out of my window and right before my face in the northwestern horizon the full disc of the bright moon greets me in her own silent eloquent language. I look over the sea and the pearly ripples waltz dreamily to the sound of the nature's orchestra. How wonderfully calm and serene is the scene! It is indeed the stillness of the spiritual Kingdom that encircles this sacred place; for right above my head the Moon of the Covenant is shining gloriously in the firmament of the religion of Baha. The reflection of his light is apparent in many hearts for they are also as clear and polished as the translucent surface of the ocean before my eyes. The moon of the Covenant is always radiant but we must cleanse the surfaces of our hearts so that the beaming, sparkling, dancing rays may reflect thereon. The sea of his Graces is always at hand but we must not go to it empty handed. Let us carry with us our largest vases of capacities and fill them with the sweet water of his attributes. If our ears are also attuned to the music of higher life we shall ~~also~~ hear the supernal harmonies and entrancing melodies of the spiritual orchestra played on the shore of the sea of the Divine Will. We are presented with this celestial opportunity but on our part we must make an effort in order ^{that} ^{we may} crown our lives with this imperishable ^{of inspiration} Brestival of truth and ere long the sun shall rise from the horizons of our hearts and illumine all the dark chambers and people them with the ideals and sentiments of paradise.

This morning my face was brightened by looking into the face of Beloved and my heart rejoiced over his good health and happiness. He told me to write a general letter to the American Assemblies but with no reference to the internal conditions, for the censors will throw it into the waste basket or if it is found on any person he will be sentenced to hard labour or prison, as it is done already to many persons. It is very difficult to write anything in these black days of humanity and one is never sure that the letter shall reach its destination.

Then after drinking tea he asked Khosro to be ready to go with him to the Bazaar for marketing. He wanted to demonstrate to Khosro how he should economize on buying the daily perishable provisions. Together we went out till we reached the Bazaar. Owing to the state of war out of ten stores only three were open and the stocks of the small traders in non-perishable and consuming goods are fast disappearing. The Beloved stopped at many stores asking the price of meat, eggs, vegetables etc and asking Khosro to write them down. When we reached the end of Bazaar the ~~cheapest~~ ^{list} was placed into his hands and he chose a few articles which were ^{cheaper} but comparatively ^{cheaper} than the rest and Khosro was ordered to go back and buy them. He was also told that as long as we are in Acca he should go to the Market every morning and get the prices of different things and bring the list to him in the house. Then out of that variety he will select what is needed for our daily consumption. While he was thus engaged an old man passed by and saluted him. He called him to come near and gave him a Madyidi which is about one American Dollar. "This man" he said in order to enlighten our curiosity "was one of the richest men of Acca. Now he is reduced to such dire poverty. He has nobody and that is the more reason why we should help him when everyone is great want." We returned home by another road and when we reached near the house he went away to call one a Christian friend and I entered my room, joyous over the morning's experience. His is indeed the true spirit of charity. He tries to economize one or two cents on our daily ^{expenses} and then gives one hundred cents to those who are in need. May we be all involved with the same spirit of economy, charity and generosity.

We are now accustomed with the sight of warships. A day before yesterday one
hove into sight, saluted us for a few hours [others call it threat] and then disappeared
in the north. This morning another appeared in the south, anchored far away
from the shore, leveled its armored guns now toward Acca and again to
Haifa and unnecessarily frightened the inhabitants. Evidently they were practicing
for future marksmanship which from all appearances will not be far off.
All the time with telescope in his hand the Beloved was watching the ^{very} lively
scene of bluejackets running hither and thither to carry out the commands
of the Admiral - on the upper porch. While everybody was afraid he was
assuring us that today it will fire no gun, that before long it will steam
off and go away. This was no doubt their manoeuvre. About 3 o'clock
P.M. it started and steamed off very slowly, disappearing behind the
promontory of Mount Carmel.

Then the Master asked Khour, Shah-Karouss, Javad Effendi, Sayad
Ali and myself that as a precautionary measure we must transfer the
furniture of the room of the Blessed Perfection which faces the sea ^{and}
on whose porch he was walking - to the ^{front} room on the second floor - the
room in which he received the friends and often the strangers. There
were his bed, mattresses, counterpane, cushions, the chairs on which he sat,
the dishes in which he ate, many framed pictures and photographs, a
library of more than a hundred volumes, His Taj {hat}, a ^{large} ^{iron} box,
several delicate China vases for flowers and other effects.
It was touching to see the Beloved with what solicitude and anxiety
he was supervising the transference of these sacred objects and giving
me now and then the history of this or that thing. In about an hour
the work was finished and the windows and the doors of the room
locked and keys placed into his holy hand.

About 5 P.M. our carriage arrived from Haifa bringing the blessed
daughters who have been there for the last three days.

In the evening the Master called the friends into his room one by
one and gave to each several pounds of sugar. They came down
with heavy, large lumps of sugar in their hands. It is now very expensive ^{and}
he bought a big sack to be divided amongst the friends who are great tea-drinkers
but cannot afford to buy the commodity on account of its prohibitive price.