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Moonbeam Bahai Cabin
Abou Senan. Acco. Syria
January 10th 1915

Dear friends!

Behind the clouds, drifting here and there, the sun played a lively hide-and-seek, peeping out at intervals to show its dazzling face and retiring again, as the drifting curtains of the upper theatre dropped down. Now the thirsty grass welcomed the downpour of rain - the white drops glistening like the facets of diamonds and pearls on the corolla, petals and ^{the} leaves of the wild flowers, decorating the plain and the valley. Before noon I sat under my figtree, reading and writing and watching the Beloved while walking in the Porch in the sunshine. I laid myself on the velvety sward and listened to the buzzing of the insects and the droning of honey-bees, seeking airy, ambrosial food from the fragrant pollen of the delicate, odoriferous flowers. Swarms of honeybees! industriously working to build their hexagonal waxy cells to hold the sweet, viscid fluid which is the magical result of the mysterious function of the smell of the flowers of plants! They are so small but they fill the world with sweetness. The Bahais also in comparison with the Adherents of others religions are not numerous but they are the spiritual honeybees of the world of humanity. They are working day and night to build a Comb from the cells of which may flow the sweetest and most delicious honey of Love. They have no drones nor can there be found amongst them any sluggard. Their field of labor is the garden of Akha, the flowers from ^{which} they gather the perfumes are the Words of God and their honey is their unselfish lives, their charities, their humanitarian deeds and their praise and thanksgiving to Almighty. As the years roll on this honey will be carried from country to country and sweeten many tongues, - now embittered by the acrid and biting taste of ill-feelings and persistent hostility. Both rich and poor, high and low will gather around and eat thereof thanking the Lord for His Bounty and Grace. Then the tongues of mankind will become purified from all defilement, calumnies, curses and vituperations and only sweet words of love, honeyed speeches of affection will be uttered and heard on all sides.

This morning the Master was in the reception room talking with several sheikhs who had come from the neighboring villages to call on him and receive his benedictions. I will pray to God that He may assist you and preserve your crops and shepherds upon you His Graces. He is the Lord of the heaven and the earth and in His Grasp He holds the rein of all things. His Love for His children is unrestrained and He protects them from the malicious and evil-minded. Be ye confident, be not troubled. Resign all your affairs into the Hands of the Creator. He will take care of you, sustain you and provide for you. Abide forever in the station of eternal submission. Then he asked them questions about their sheep, goats, cows and ploughed fields and they answered him briefly and to the point. Leaving the room he took a walk around the ground and through the surrounding, undulating hills and dells. He returned fatigued but well and in good health. As he ascended the stairs to have his lunch with the Holy Family we had a lovely view of him standing at the top and looking pleasantly into the faces of those who were below - eager, expectant, happy faces.

In the afternoon he spoke about education and how evil habits are acquired more rapidly than good ones. For example if a traitor and a trustful man associate with each other, the latter may gain the undesirable characteristics of the former. A temperate and a drunkard, a truthful man and a liar, a generous soul and a stingy fellow, a moral and an immoral person living together, the probability, almost the sure certainty - except in some rare cases - is that the first will be controlled by the last - the satan will drive away the angel, blame-worthy qualities will take the place of praise-worthy attributes. Consequently in the matter of children's education the primary consideration is ideal association, ^{clean} environment and the formation of good habits. There is always a hard struggle between the evil and the good and ~~in~~ the tender character of the child which is ⁱⁿ a process of becoming, if proper precautions are not taken, the evil will become ascendent and leave on the pure tablet of the heart its ineradicable impression, a disgusting picture that no amount of ablution can wash it away. This is so self-evident. For instance, if you permit a man who

has an infectious disease associate with one thousand healthy men,
the almost certain fact is that before they are made aware of the case,
either all or many of them are inoculated with the contagious germs.
It will ^{be} not necessary to shake hand, or speak or eat at the same table
with him to catch the disease. It will be enough to inhale the
foul and bacteria-ridden air exhaled by him and take into the
constitution the bacilla. Again, a mansion ^{which had taken years to build it} will be destroyed in an
hour by a dynamite; a Dreadnought which was constructed in 3 or 5 years
will be sunk to the bottom of the sea by a mine or a submarine and
a bold young man of 20 yrs old will be changed into a lifeless body
through a bullet. Therefore it is most vital that the children asso-
ciate only with pure-minded and the rightly-guided. For often
one small mistake will undermine for ever the foundation of
their characters and neutralize the effect of all subsequent
education and instruction. It is related that a devoted, pious
man exhorted a drunken, pleasure-loving Bakhtashi: 'Why do
you drink wine forbidden by the prophet? Why art thou committing
all these unseemly acts? Art thou not ashamed? Come my friend,
and live with me forty nights and follow me during that time
in praying, fasting and worshipping. Then I hope that at the end
of this period thou wilt be ~~saved~~ saved and reformed.' The Bakhtashi
laughed and addressed the holy man: 'Cut it short! Come and attend
one of my convivial nights and I am sure thou wilt be my ^{disciple}
the rest of thy life. Thou wilt forget prayer and meditation and
become a devotee at the Shrine of Bacchus and a worshipper
at the altar of Venus.' X

In the evening there was another large meeting and the Beloved
spoke about conscription in Germany and France and how it is
utterly impossible to evade military service in these days. ^{even}
if a person was willing to pay all his fortune to get his liberty.
Then he detailed the incidents of his sea-voyage from Alexandria
to Naples and how on some slight pretexts three members of
his party were compelled and forced to return to Egypt.