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Moonbeam Bahai Cabin
Alban Leman. Acca Syria
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Dear friends!

X In the golden age of Bagdad when Haroun-El-Rashid was ruling the Islamic world in the name of the Holy Prophet and the philosophers, poets and thinkers gathered around his throne, occurred an incident which is recorded by the Chroniclers of that time. The Caliph whose every wish was considered as divine law by his numerous subjects, desired to have a long straight pole, the length of which may be more but not less than forty yards. They instituted a thorough search in Bagdad and the suburban villages but could not find a tree which would have answered the measure and the requirements of the Caliph's order. Hence they extended their search to other parts of the country and after much inquiry and exploration they found it and wrote to the minister of the Caliph how they should dispose of it. When Haroun-El-Rashid heard the news he rejoiced ^{exceedingly} and told him to write them that they should convey it ^{on the way} to the Caliph by the safest route and be most careful lest it be broken and all their troubles come to naught. After a time word reached the authorities that the pole has been brought within a few miles of Bagdad and awaits the order of the Caliph. By the order of the Commander of the Faithful the chief thoroughfares through which the pole was going to pass were decorated and the inhabitants were called upon to form various processions according to their guilds and crafts, ^{and} precede in a long parade the carriage on which the pole was placed. On the designated day the pole was brought in with much ceremonies and formalities and the curiosity of the populace already excited ^{things} poured out to see this much-honored and honored pole. At last it was stationed in the royal square in the presence of the Caliph, his ministers and thousands of spectators. Bahoul who was a cynic, wise philosopher, ~~at~~ that moment was passing by and seeing the immense crowd pushed ^{himself} forward

and inquired from some one the reason of the gathering, "Dost thou not know?" the man asked him in wonder. "No," Bahloul answered. "Well, The Caliph has brought in the city a straight pole, the length of which is forty yards and they are now dedicating it in his own presence." Bahloul thought that he should teach them a lesson and pushing the compact spread this and that way forced himself into the square. In order, at first, to attract the attention of the people he rode on his stick and galloped several times from one ~~to~~ the other end of the square. As every one knew him and his eccentric ways they forgot the pole and began to look at him with amusement. Seeing that he had sufficiently engrossed their thoughts he galloped toward the pole, approached it, put his mouth at it and commenced to move his lips; then he drew ^{near} his ear and ^{in a listening attitude} as though the pole was speaking to him. Then he galloped another round and on his return repeated the first performance. All this time the Caliph was watching him with amusement and then he sent one of his ministers to bring him into his presence. "Well, Bahloul," said the Commander of the faithful "What was this ridiculous ^{antics} of thine? I see thou art still after thy mischiefs." "Sir," he answered, "For be it from me if I have ever intentionally caused any mischief. I just had a plain conversation with the pole." "Thou art indeed joking. Who has ever heard that the pole speaks?" "Indeed, it does speak. I have studied its language." "Well, tell us what it said?" "I asked from it, at first, what was the reason that they have showered upon it such extraordinary honors, what has it done that all these people and even the Caliph himself have come to its dedication?" "Did it give thee any answer?" "Yes." "What did it say?" "It said: Because I am straight."

The sun had already arisen over the hill of Abou Serran and bearing the Beloved was down stairs we hastened toward the Puzwan of his fragrant presence and perfumed our hearts with the flowers of his utterances. He was speaking about the poor of Acca and how there are many families who are in need

of their bread. Those who cannot believe my statement may go and investigate it for themselves. Their hearts will be torn to pieces if they see the conditions in the homes that I have witnessed with my own eyes. A number of hard working men came to me weeping and saying: 'We are ashamed to go out and beg. We are not accustomed to the humiliation of want. We have had always our work and gained our livelihood but now all the doors are closed to us and save you there is no one else in this town to help us. We entreat you to give us a few measures of flour to feed our families.' In brief there is a great opportunity for an organized relief work, but no one seems to be thinking about it. There has seldom been such a crisis in the life of Syria. Great changes are in store for her. Considering the present situation, the wheat is cheap, because there has been no exportation this year, but before long its price will be doubled. Those who have cash will save themselves from much troubles and worries if they could now buy enough wheat to carry them ^{over} to the next harvest." While he was talking in this

strain Sheikh Tareff entered the room and the Beloved arose from his seat to welcome him. Changing the topic of conversation he soared to higher regions of spirituality and for the feeding of the present ones brought back heavenly manna. They praised God in thus allowing them to sit around the ideal table. Having been cheered and gladdened by the exposition of the inner law of the spirit they left the room with thankful hearts and beaming faces. Then the Master took Sheikh Taref with himself and ascended to his own room.

Meanwhile a warship appeared in sight and entered the harbor of Haifa. With opera glass we could see it very plainly. The Beloved came out also and was interested in the movements of the man-of-war. I told him that Doctor Habibollah has gained 30 Bashleeks from his medical practice in Aboon Senaw and he desires the Master accept this small sum and divide it amongst the poor. He was very pleased with this deed and said: "Brava Doctor Habibollah! Well done!" The son of Sheikh Saleh was present and he told him to send for the

poor of the village to be gathered in the afternoon. When the time came none of them were present, because as Sheik Yussoff asserted with natural pride they had no poor. Excellent as the idea was the Master knew better that they had poor people amongst them but they were ashamed to come out. Therefore the money was given him to send half of it to the Orthodox priest for the distribution amongst his own flock and the other half for the Druises.

For the present my "Bahai Calm" is the centre of many Bahai activities. First, of course, it is our "home", the place wherein we work, eat and sleep. Second: it is the "Bahai school". 3^d: It is the Doctor / Habiballah's "clinic and office". 4th: It is the "Bahai hospice". 5: The general, common "Club" for the meeting of the friends. 6th It is a "store", because our landlord has in one corner several bags of figs and now and then he brings with himself a long train of Arabs to sell ^{them} his dried figs and they spend their haggling and bargaining for an indefinite period of time. The Master has given to this room many titles. One day: it is a "royal palace", another day it is a "university", then it is called a "hospital". While all these things are going on ^{around me}, at different hours of the day and night I sit in my own corner and communicate with you silently through pen and paper. No wonder I cannot collect my thoughts. But today the Master came to our rescue and decided that considering the number of students there must be another room for the school and personally walked around the village and found the place. It will be ready for tomorrow.

In the evening we gathered again and the Beloved like unto a light shone in our midst and the rays of his talk illumined our hearts. He spoke on certain phases of the Cause and its history during the long reign of Abdul Hamid and how at one time in order to extinguish the fire of his suspicion he mailed to him 250 letters received from American believers - in order to convince him that the aims and precepts of this Revelation ~~were~~ ^{are} wholly spiritual and were not ^{at} all connected with any political aspirations. For more than one hour he talked with intense earnestness and eloquence. Then as he was somewhat tired he excused himself and retired.