

Home of Baha Allah
 Acca, Syria February 13th 1915

Dear friends!

When we all gathered in the Blessed Presence tonight, the Beloved gave me a postal card mailed direct to Acca. It was an international New Year's greeting from Mr Charles W. Wendte of Boston, Mass. General Secretary of the International Congress of Free Christian and other religious Liberals. I translated its contents to him and the friends listened with attention. He was so pleased with the thoughtfulness of Rev. Wendte that he immediately dictated a Tablet for him. I will share with you the message and the Tablet. The noble ideals of the message from America were as follows:-
 "A new year's wish for a world rebuilt: that thought replace unreason, love take the place of hate; that the laughter of little children no more be stilled, the beauty and the strength of women no more be turned to ashes, the vigor of men no more be given to desolate the earth; that for us all the silence of the sunrise bring again the day of service, the quiet of the sunset yield us to the night of rest; that wisdom, faith and patience fail us not, facing the eternal task of peace through brotherhood."

Thus ^{the} voice crying for light in the dark wilderness of the West reached the ears of Abdul Baha, and he, being, the heavenly voice crying in the dark wilderness of the East answered it back. The first was the New Year's wish of the Occident, the second is the New Year's wish of the Orient. Although the languages are different and the words not the same, yet the spirit behind the words is the same, the clear longing, the unmistakable yearning for a better day is the same:-

"O thou faithful beloved friend! The New Year's greeting was received. I became most grateful and pleased, because you remembered this longing friend and forgot not our friendship and meeting while I was travelling in America. This fact indicated that you are a loyal, firm and steadfast friend. Faithfulness and loyalty are two of the greatest virtues of the world of humanity. Should a person be endowed with these two qualities there is no doubt that he will become the centre of Divine Bestowal and the dawning-place of

heavenly outpourings.

"I perused on the back of the postal card which you so kindly forwarded noble ideals the application of which will ensure the happiness, prosperity and the ultimate perfection of the commonwealth of man. We hope that this war may be changed into Peace, this revolution be transformed into security and composure, this disturbance be ended by public reconciliation and serenity; the weeping and crying of the children melt the hearts, the lamentations and moanings of the widows suffer the eyes to weep, the wailings and sorrows of the afflicted mothers become the source of the appearance of the reign of justice and equity and the complaints and protests of the fathers whose sons are killed cause the world of humanity to espouse the movement of Peace & salvation.

"May the dark clouds of war and bloodshed be dispersed, the rays of the Sun of Reality shine forth upon all parts of the globe from the horizon of harmony and Concord, the splendours of guidance irradiate, the hearts become illuminated, the souls be resuscitated with the Breath of Eternal Life, the heavenly Teachings which are promulgated in this radiant century be fully established, the edifice of hatred and animosity be laid waste, the palace of good-fellowship and love be raised, the ships of war be changed into a fleet of merchant marine, the weapons of war be converted into the instruments of agriculture and farming, the fire of tyranny and oppression become extinct, the Breeze of Providence be wafted, the Spring of the oneness of the world of humanity pitch up its tent in the apex of the earth and the Standard of Universal Peace be unfurled. These are the ultimate wishes of the Bahais. Convey on my behalf loving greeting to all the friends! Upon thee be salutation and praise.

Signed Abdul Baha Abbas."

After dictating the above Tablet he inquired from Jamsheed, the gardener of Gerdeess, how is ^{he} getting along in his farming. He reported that one of his cows is stolen a few days ago and because no train comes to Acco and this town is almost depopulated, he cannot ship his vegetables to other points nor sell them here. "Very well then,"

he answered half-amused "Eat it yourselves." "But we cannot eat all of it." "Distribute amongst the friends, give to the poor," he commanded them. Vegetables and oranges and mandarinines have become so cheap that it does not pay the farmer to pick them up and bring into the market for sale. For example one buys twenty five bunches of spiroach for one cent, 25 bunches of radishes or onions for one cent, ten ^{big} ~~big~~ oranges for one cent, five or six mandarinines, one cent, etc. Because there is a famine of currency, many people cannot even avail themselves ~~of~~ of this ridiculously cheap value of perishable goods. Addressing the friends the Master said:—"You are under the protection of the Blessed Beauty. He will sustain and provide for you. Consider the conditions of the people who are around you. How are they groaning under the burdens of military exaction and conscription! At least you are not called upon to carry arms. You are not coerced into the army. Your hands are clean and pure. You are not made to shed the blood of your brothers - no matter to what religion or nation they may belong. It is true that your trades are destroyed and you have been obliged to contribute towards the ^{extra} expenses, levied on the country but the natives have had to suffer worse calamities. Pray that the God of justice and mercy may soon come to their assistance, that the angels of Providence may soothe their pains; that the rains of His Compassion may pour upon their fevered brows, that the beauty and innocence of love may be revealed unto them, that the balm of spiritual tenderness may heal their wounds, that the darkness of their disappointment may be changed into the light of hope and that the night of difference ^{become} the day of Peace."

In the morning and afternoon we spent hours in the presence of Abdul Baha and he talked to us on ever so many subjects of interest; now about Bagdad and then about his Western experiences. Afterwards he went out and Mirza Anayetullah asked us to spend an hour or two walking in the country and if possible visit the garden of Ridwan. We did so and Abdul Gasem accompanied us back to the house. We walked over Napoleon's hill and he showed us the place upon which Baha Ollah pitched up his tents several times during his sacred life.