

Home of Abdul Baha
Mount Carmel Haifa Syria
May 1st 1915

Dear friends

The blue horizon of the kindling azure was bejewelled with the gold rays of the dawn of the sun, heralding the coming of the incense-breathing morn and putting an end to the palpable obscure of the night. I had awakened quite early and was walking in the rose-embroidered garden of the Beloved. Methought I was in the paradise of eternal joy, so still and peaceful was the sacred place. My heart was in silent communion and prayer with the source of all-good and my mind was busy with the thoughts of far-off friends who are longing day and night to approach the throne of the glorious Master and receive his spiritual benediction. Although the world has become a pandemonium of harsh and discordant voices and the sound of trumpet and the clash of arms are deafening the ears of all the inhabitants of the globe, yet here, in this sweet garden we have peace, because the Prince of Peace lives amongst us. Because he possesses our hearts and we possess his love we do not feel the need of anything. His love has made us rich; his faith has glorified us; around his heavenly table we have sat and we are satiated; from the many-fountain'd spring of his knowledge we have quaffed and we have allayed our thirst, the ruby wine of his sincerity we have drunk from the goblet of severance and thereby we are intoxicated; the beauty of his face we have beheld and have become his soul-sacrificing slaves; the effect of his words we have felt and thus we are hastening toward the arena of martyrdom; the wisdom of his utterances we have felt and hence we are living under the shade of the tree of shedding to his command; the tenderness of his affection we have experienced and therefore we are devoted to his Cause. The sun of his mercy has illumined the consciences of those who ^{have} turned toward him and sought spiritual life and guidance just this phenomenal sun bestows light and life to all the created beings. With him for our support we are invulnerable. His celestial majesty will transform our earthly degradation and his supernal station will raise us out of the dark well of debasement.

While I was weaving together the silken threads of the above thoughts I heard the footsteps of the Beloved and I turned and bowed down. "Ahi!" he asked "What art thou doing so early in the garden?" "I was praying." "For what?" "I begged Baha Ollah to make the heart of each indivisible like unto this holy garden." "I will also pray for this." A stiff breeze was blowing and therefore he said: "Those who are advanced in age must not expose their bodies to the cold and cutting wind. This frigid wind ~~causes~~ causes the indisposition of the physical body but the frosty gale of passion and self undermines the foundation of the spiritual health of mankind. Under all circumstances we must protect our ideal and astral bodies from such dangers." In order to say something I quoted a verse from one of the Persian poets the translation of which is as follows: "I trained my Self and at last it became the means of my undoing. I did not know all this time that I was training my own implacable foe." He said: "It is very true. Self is not only one's own enemy but rather the enemy of God and humanity alike."

About ten o'clock I went out and found him sitting in the stove of Mirza Inayatullah. He had just returned from paying a visit to the German Consul. He beckoned to me and bade me to be seated. A young boy passed by followed by a little, white bleating lamb. Evidently this simple scene evoked in him the pleasant memories of childhood for he smiled and said: - "How the children love the small, innocent lambs! especially when they ran after them, filling their ears with baa-aa-aa, baa-aa-aa-. Because their nature is so simple children love all kind of animals and stories relating to them as well as to inanimate objects. I remember an incident of my childhood which will bear out this matter. I was then very, very young, probably 3 or 4 yrs. At the time the Blessed Perfection lived in Teheran. In our street, close by to our house lived one of the Farrashes of the palace. He was a bird fancier and in a peculiar manner all his own he had tamed a number of nightingales which followed him everywhere, sitting on his head and shoulders and while he walked in the streets they warbled melodiously. He had cut a piece of the lower bills of the poor birds, - so that they could not pick ^{up} the grains and were forced to eat out of his hand. Often he used to come to our garden with the nightingales perched on his head. As a child I was delighted with the strange spectacle.

The birds flew away and sat on the branches of the trees singing. Then suddenly the man whistled and they returned back swiftly, roosting on his head, shoulders and hands. This sight especially pleased me and I clapped my hands with glee as I watched them." Here the Beloved laughed very heartily and clapped his hands with such joy as though he was again witnessing the sight of long years ago.

In the evening we all gathered in the holy Presence and speaking about faithfulness he said: "Man must be loyal and faithful to his superior. An un-loyal person is dispossessed of every fair virtue. Those who have entered beneath the shade of the Tree of the Blessed Perfection and live in accord with His good-pleasure are the faithful servants of the Cause of God. They are the standard-bearers of the principles of rectitude and integrity."

During the last few days there has been a talk of the return of the Holy Family and the believers from Abru Senan. Four days ago the Master gave them permission and naturally this has made them very happy, because they did not feel quite themselves when he was away from them. Today the first party arrived and were present in the meeting. They reported that the Sheiks and the Druises were much grieved over the sudden departure of believers and were actually weeping ^{on account} of the separation. They had counted on us that we were to continue to stay at least for one year and could not make out the reason why the Master gave the word of return. No doubt each one of the believers according to his intellectual and spiritual training can recount his experiences in the small Arab village on the top of the hill and the simple peasants will ^{store} narrate many about the goodness and benevolence of the Lord. If we do ever meet in this world I shall relate to you what I have witnessed of the glorious deeds of the Beloved. These letters represent but a dim and faint picture of the heroic and dramatic actions of the "one around whom all names revolve". However much we may strive to paint the picture in a life-like manner still it lacks life, motion, energy. The same rule is applied to the translation of his words. One must know and appreciate the subtle beauty, the pictorial eloquence, the poetic imagery, the lofty style, the magnetic diction, the spiritual allusions of the Persian Bahai literature and then he will realize that our translations no matter how perfect, how faithful, how correct are only glimmering shadows of the originals.