

Home of Abdul Baha 18
Mount Carmel Haifa Syria
May 20th 1915

Dear friends!

In the Tablet of the Blessed Perfection that I translated on April 20th, He mentions the name of Nabeel whose voice was heard from Nazareth and who was one of those earliest pilgrims who could not enter Acca and meet the glorious Manifestation in the ^{prison} Barsack. About the history of this remarkable Bahai the Beloved said :- "His real name was Mirza Inohamad Ali Qaini. He was a man of great spirituality and wit. Long before the appearance of the Bab from Shiraz, he and the son of Mirza Assadollah Khan, the brother of Mir Alam Khan, the Ameer of Qain, were brought to Teheran. The government held them as hostages, because they asserted they were in a state of rebellion and revolution against the established authority. Together they lived in the capital under the secret eye of the police. Nothing ^{however} could be detected from their words and actions that they harbored in their minds any revolutionary plan - and thus the restrictions and precautions with which they were hedged in were temporarily removed. One night the Blessed Perfection invited these two men to His residence and showing them much kindness, consoled them with His utterances. From that time ^{on} Mirza Inohamad Ali became the devoted friend of Baha Olla and under all circumstances expressed ^{for Him} his respect and love. Later on His Holiness the Bab proclaimed his mission to the world and then the Blessed Perfection espoused his Cause and became the staunch supporter of his principles. When Mirza Mohamad Ali heard about the appearance and execution of the Bab and the manifestation of the Sun of Reality under the title of 'Him Whom God shall manifest' ^{He} became a believer ^{without} asking a single question. He would often state that he was a believer in Baha Olla before He declared Himself, for on the night that he was invited to His house he observed in His general appearance the grandeur and spiritual authority of the Lord. Through His elevated discourse, ^{he would say} He cheered and brightened us, saying, 'Be not unhappy, be not sad, ere long you will become free and return to your town with honor. At that time we entertained no hope of liberty, for our enemies

had woven the ^{iron} webs of accusations all around us. But all of a sudden the authorities sent for us and informed us that we are free, that his ^{high} majesty the Shah was very gracious toward us and held no grudge against us and that full permission was granted us to go wherever we were pleased. In short during those days Baha Ollah told us many things in the course of conversation, all of which came to pass. Hence from his manners, behaviour and morals one could easily see that he was an individual distinct from other members of humanity.

In short, this Mirza Mahammad Ali was at the time living in Khorasan and associating with the erudite philosopher and Bahai thinker Aga Mahammad Naheel, well-known in the Bahai world for his deep learning and eloquence. [In another letter I will translate the story of the life of this second Naheel as related by the Master.] Through their public teaching of the Bahai Cause they became famous and the ignorant mob arose in their persecutions. Realizing how ^{im}possible it was to live in such fanatical communities both of them journeyed to Teheran and here also their open way of spreading the teachings made them odious in the sight of the public. Mirza Mahammad Ali could not tarry any longer and decided to leave the capital. Going through a series of startling difficulties and sorrows and travelling on foot, he at last reached behind the gate of Acca. It was in the first year of our arrival and thus we were imprisoned behind the thick walls of the military barrack. Seeing how utterly impossible it was to enter the town he went to Nazareth and passed his days in selling needles and his nights in prayer and supplication, but he behaved with such an independence of spirit that all the Nazarenes thought he was a wealthy man. Meanwhile I was watching for the opportunity to send for him and when it was offered I took it by the forelock. Secretly and with the utmost precautions I brought him to the prison and all his troubles were compensated the moment he stood in the presence of the Blessed Beauty and hearkened to His life-giving words. After a number of days he was permitted to return

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to return to Nazareth and engage in business, At that time he was accompanied by his two sons, Mirza Ali Akbar and Aga Gholam Hassan, the latter of whom is now living in Ramleh, Alexandria.

"When the freedom of the town was granted us he used to come and go often. On one of his trips he came to me and said: 'Sir! I desire to enter into a partnership with you. You invest the capital, I will work and the profit be divided equally between us. Let our capital be seven piastres and half. With this I shall buy needles and in selling them make a world of profit.' I laughed over his modest demand for such an insignificant capital [about 0.30 cents] and his expectation of making a 'world of profit'. I gave him the required sum and he went away. Buying several packages of needles he started on his road toward Nazareth. Now he used to exchange 3 needles for one egg and when the eggs were collected he sold sixty or fifty of them for one Beshlek. [ten cents] Out of the profit of this prosperous business he made a living.

"After a few months he came ^{back} to Acca and I asked him for my share of profit of our partnership. 'I hope thy expectation of making a world of interest' is realized. Come now my friend, and let me have my share. Thou must have become ^{as} rich as Croesus.' He laughed and was full of joviality and good humor. 'O my Lord! we are ruined, our very capital is gone. I don't think I am a good business man.' I asked him with amused amazement: 'How is that? What didst thou do to demolish our house of fortune?' He answered: 'One day I got sick and ^{could} not go ^{around} peddling my needles for eggs, but toward the afternoon I felt better and thought I will leave my lodging and do at least a little business. It was a little dark and my eyes could not see very clearly, hence I gave four needles instead of three for one egg. Oh, this was the beginning of our business collapse! The women, communicative as they always are, informed each other immediately that this Persian peddler is a rich 'merchant', that all along I have been cheating them, that today I have given them four instead of 3 needles for one egg and that if they boycott my ware I will raise the number of needles to five. For several days they did not buy ^{anything}.

from me and thus I was forced to give them five needles for one egg. 21
combination of feminine determination drove a dagger into the very heart of
my profit-making ambition and reduced my income. After a time I saw
with astonished disgust that the capital is gone and now I have come ^{back}
to you with another proposition of 'commercial partnership' which in a
short space of time will make both of us ^{quite} rich! While talking in this
half-serious, half-joking manner he laughed all the time. He was in the
highest station of joy, fragrance and attraction, as though established on
the golden throne of sovereignty."

This morning I was sitting alone in my room, and was speaking with
you with my pen and heart when I heard the distinct sound of the feet
of the Beloved and ^{his} resonant voice calling out ~~my~~ name reached the ears.
Before I had time to get up he was in, carrying in his hand a dish of
mulberries. "This is from the garden of Rizwan. Abdul Gaseem has ^{sent}
it for me and I have brought this plate for thee. Dost thou like it?
Then he asked me to follow him through the garden and see the apricot
and prune trees of Esmael Aga. "I love to look at the trees while they are
adorned with their fruits and not much when they are devoid of them.
A fruit-laden tree is like unto a man who has accomplished many good
deeds and performed many selfless services." Walking around the garden
he pointed out to me the fruits with the injunction that they must not
be plucked. ^{now and then} He felt them with his hands and every time I thought he would
pluck a few and give them to me but he did nothing of the kind. He
guessed my thought, for he said: "Will not the mulberries be sufficient
for today?" He told Esmael Aga that he should not let the children enter
that part of the garden, for with one attack they will put an end to all
the ripened and unripened fruits.

In the afternoon he had a ride in the landau with Lakki Bai,
and Doctor Ali Reza and with Badi Effendi and Mirza Anayetullah.
we called on Doctor Ginkelsstein whose face and hands were slightly
burned by the explosion of powder.

In the evening the Beloved gave a very short talk on the
ephemeral qualities of all things and the ~~unchangeability~~ of the eternal
Essence of God. unchangeability