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Home of Abdul Baha
Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria
May 23d, 1915

Dear friends!

This morning the Beloved called Badi Effendi and this servant and we walked behind him through the street of the German Colony as far as the Hotel Carmel. His words were as follows:- "A Bahai must conform all his ^{great} and small affairs in accord with the good-pleasure of the Blessed Perfection. This is the unerring criterion. For example if he takes one step forward or one step backward, he must first think whether this will be according to the good-pleasure of Baha Ollah or whether such an step will be considered as service or not. If he sees that his forward step will not contribute something to the promotion of the Cause, it will be better for him ^{to} stand still. The people of the world are thinking of, by, and for themselves. They are promoting their own selfish interests and serving their own small causes. Each soul is attached to his own hobby and beating ~~on~~ his own drum and soaring in the atmosphere of his own desire. If they speak they have some known or unknown object point in view, if they walk they wish to reach the goal of some personal ambition, if they eat and sleep they desire to be strengthened in order to advance their own ideas. In brief all their movements are dictated by obedience to self. They live, move and feel like unto the animals, self-centered, self-occupied, seeing nothing, believing in nothing beyond their five senses. But the moving-spring of the actions and deeds of the believers of God must be the good-pleasure of Baha Ollah. All their services and thoughts must be for the sake of God. If they sleep they must sleep with the idea of being refreshed; - so that when they arise next morning they may serve the Cause with greater efficiency and strength. If they eat they must eat with the object of building up new life-force, in order that they may move and walk in the Celestial Highway. The life of such Bahais with these lofty purposes will bear great fruits, otherwise no results will be gathered from all their strivings and efforts. They will spend a few profitless years and ^{then} there will be nothing ^{position of} left in the end save regret, deprivation and remorse."

When we reached near Hotel Carmel he pointed out to us a fig-tree and said:-
 "If this fig-tree does not bear fruit, the gardener will tear it from the root and cast it into the fire. Similarly if the trees of the world of humanity do not produce fruits, the Hand of Divine Power will pull them out of His garden and throw them away. The friends of God must be the fruit-bearing trees of the Orchard of the Lord. Their manners and behaviours must be as examples for those who have not been fortunate enough to come under the benign influence of the Bahai dispensation. The Cause is great and universal and it will be ever in need of equally great and universally-minded followers."

Entering the hotel he told us to return to the house. We were ^{made} very happy in listening to his words and recording them for the benefit of those who are deprived in these days to stand in his holy presence.

At noon he gave another luncheon and his guests included the deposed Gaemmagam, Lakki Bay, the President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Ottoman Bank, three generals and a few others. As the guests were rather numerous there were no seats for me around the table but from behind the door I could hear his voice and now and then observe his ^{animated} gestures.

About three P.M. Badi Effendi and myself were walking in the garden ^{where} the door of the house ~~was~~ opened and the Beloved came out ^{and stood erect on the step} majestically. Calling ^{out} my name he said: "Hast thou heard the news? Italy has declared war against Austria and Germany has expressed her readiness to take up arms against Italy. What dost thou think? This is another axe added to the slaughter House of humanity, another martial anthem joined to the universal carnage of mankind." I reminded him that four months ago he expressed the opinion that should Italy join this drama of fratricide, it will hasten the end of war.

The landcar was made ready and for one hour and half we had a delightful ride with the Centre of the Covenant. All along the way he did not speak and although I had several questions I chose silence on this occasion.

In the evening he delivered a long historical talk, having a direct relation with the progress of the Cause throughout the world.