

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

Dear friends!

The landeau was waiting at the gate and as the Beloved came out of his room he called out my name. I gathered my papers and hastened in answer to his summons. "Come in" he said "We are going to have a drive all to ourselves. I am tired by talking to strangers from morning till now. They come to me with an infinite variety of appeals." The landeau was driven towards the Cave of Elijah and for more than fifteen minutes he was silent. He asked me to speak and I related the story of a Bahai teacher and his wanderings. He said: "I have repeated on various occasions that the foundation of the progress of the Bahai Cause <sup>consists</sup> in the spread of the message and the diffusion of the principles. For many years to come this must be the supreme concern of every Bahai assembly and the driving force of every individual. To be able to teach one soul is more profitable than to write a thousand ineffectual letters. The corner stone of the spirituality of the future humanity is based upon the rock of teaching. No obstacle must discourage us and no persecution must shake our faith in the ultimate triumph of Truth. At all times and under all circumstances the friend must proclaim the Cause and promulgate the principles of divine Civilization. This will become conducive to their own salvation and the elevation of their station in the Kingdom of Abha. This is the time for laying the foundation and raising the walls. This is not the time to think of the interior decorations and furniture. Our duty is to gather stones, mortar, cement, lime, bricks, iron, wood and other building materials. It may be an interesting speculation but quite profitless for the immediate purpose to think of the ornamentation and embellishment of the interior of the chambers and halls which have not yet come into being. Now, we must teach the people, awaken the souls, invite men to usher into the Kingdom and ~~upraise~~ <sup>raise</sup> the Flag of Peace."

I asked him a question about the Orient-Occident Unity and the scope of its constitution. He said: "This must become an effective, humanitarian institution and its progress must be steady and sure. Like unto an infant it must be nurtured and developed. By slow, geometrical steps it must become a dynamic movement, propelled by the highest spirit of altruism and philanthropy. All the great and virile organizations have grown from a small beginning. The Orient Occident Unity must work on the moral, intellectual, aesthetic and artistic relations of the East and the West. The physical and material relations may also be fostered but in an impersonal, selfless manner. To become a member of the Society, to contribute a sum toward its running expenses and to help the education of a child in Persia by getting an scholarship must be entirely a voluntary act and not in the least by compulsion. Circulars stating the needs of the society may be drawn up <sup>from time to time</sup>, printed and spread amongst those who are interested in its aims and let all those who can, help it according to the measure of their sympathy. If firmness and steadfastness is shown the sphere of the influence of this Society will be widened and great men will become interested in it. I have prayed and will again pray for its progress. Did I not speak at its annual Conference in Washington I know if thou wert in America its present status would have been different but thou couldst not be in two places at the same time. Rest thou confident that its future is bright and its star shall again ascend, shedding light with greater brilliancy and splendor."

On our return he stopped at the door of a garden, alighted from the landau, walked through its avenues and talked with the gardener about the locusts. He preferred walking to riding and from that point we walked slowly back home. Several persons greeted him on the way and solicited financial assistance which he was prompt to give. "Nowadays extreme poverty is the general rule," he said with a sigh in his voice.