

# I HEARD HIM SAY

Words of ABDUL BAHA

*as Recorded by his Secretary*

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## FOREWORD

Mine was the rare privilege of having been born a Bahai. Mine, also, was the rarer privilege of having served Abdul Baha for eight years. From 1912 to 1919, in Palestine and Egypt and during his journey throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, I acted as his secretary and interpreter, performing whatever duties turned up in this daily association. I have observed him in the countless situations afforded by social life—as a father to his family and followers; as a host to pilgrims and to government officials, both friendly and unfriendly; as a teacher possessed of *new* lessons to expound and explain; and as the center of the Bahai Cause and the chosen representative of his mighty Father. At rest and at work, alone and on the public platform, in peace times and in war times, I have stood at his side. I have known him as a human being, in moods of ineffable tenderness; as a man of the world, erudite, brilliant, gay; as a Prophet, overwhelming in his majesty and grandeur, and as the Master and the Beloved of my heart. And I have written down what he said in these various circumstances. Whatever were my failings, this one virtue I claim: I was at all times aware of the opportunity that had been given me to report his words for future generations.

Once, as I was bending over my notebook, he interrupted himself exclaiming: "What are you taking down now? Have you not written enough already? What do you do with those papers? Whenever I speak, you make notes. Who has ordered you to do this?"

Laughing merrily, he caught the book out of my hands and read several pages.

**“Oh, oh! He records everything, everything!” and then he slapped me smartly on both cheeks, saying, “This is your reward!”**

**Little by little, portions of the diary found their way from Palestine to the Western world; but the bulk of this work, now on the top shelves of the office of The New History Society in New York, remains in manuscript form. It was Mrs. Chanler who chose to delve in this mass of documentation and who has picked out, from here and there, and collected roses of poetry, daffodils of humor, anemones of love and longing, garlands of universal ideals.**

**A portrait through his own sayings. We offer it herewith to our readers; at the same time realizing that those who are acquainted with the lofty style, the subtle beauty, the scenic eloquence, the magical imagery, the spiritual allusion of the Persian Bahai literature will find in this translation, faithful though it be, only a pale replica of the heroic original. Nevertheless, in spite of the limitations of language a portrait it is, accurate, authentic, taken on the spot from life. God asked for a Witness upon the earth. Behold that Witness in the form of Abdul Baha, the Servant of Mankind!**

**Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.**

## INTRODUCTION

The Bahai Cause had its inception in Persia, being inaugurated in 1844 with the declaration of the Bab (Arabic word for Gate) which was to the effect: that a New Era had dawned, and that he was the Announcer of the imminent appearance of a World Teacher whose Message was to revolutionize the concepts of men and nations. The ministry of the Bab was of short duration, terminating with martyrdom—historic fate of the Fore-runner. Meanwhile Baha-U-Llah, scion of a noble house of Persia, had renounced his position and estates to cast in his lot with the followers of the Bab (known as Babis). Persecution and death was the price paid by these devoted men for faith in the appearance of a new Cause of human brotherhood; and Baha-U-Llah was imprisoned with the rest. It was at this time, in an underground dungeon in Teheran, that he received the revelation that he himself was the One whose coming had been foretold by the Bab; it was here that he was commissioned with the task of making out of the old barbaric world a *New World* of reason and justice.

Baha-U-Llah was not intended to die at the birth of the Movement. More than twenty thousand persons who believed in the Bab, and later in him, sacrificed their lives for their Faith; but he, safeguarded by fate, was, with his family, banished to Turkey and then to Palestine. There, the prison walls of Acca, which, in their twenty foot depth, had withstood the cannon of Napoleon, crumbled, figuratively speaking, before his dynamic Message. To all parts it went, East and West, North and

South and when, at an advanced age, he departed from this life the Cause was already firmly established in thousands upon thousands of loyal hearts throughout the Orient.

Abdul Baha was nine years old when he entered captivity at his Father's side, and thus he remained always —*at his Father's side*, both during the life of Baha-U-Llah and afterward. Release came to him at the age of sixty-four when, in 1908, the young Turks overthrew the Ottoman Empire; and he immediately made use of his freedom by setting out on a journey, which led him throughout Europe and North America, to deliver the Message to the Occident. In 1921, he passed into the world beyond from his home in Haifa, Palestine.

I

**RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY**

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*I heard him say*

### ON THE ESSENCE OF GOD

Man cannot comprehend the Essence of God, for he is limited and God's Essence is limitless. All the attributes related to the Divinity, such as omnipotence, omniscience, compassion, are simply qualifying attributes which in themselves negate imperfections. Consequently, God, being the Unnameable, cannot be referred to by any special name. The word God, even, is after all but a term which suggests to us that unfathomable, absolute "Something." On the other hand, all these names and attributes apply to the *Manifestation* of God.

In order to understand an object, we must be greater than that object; then we can name and define it with clarity. Now, we never can understand the Essence of God; but we can come in contact with that divine ineffable "Something" when, and only when, we contemplate His Manifestation.

The difference between certain religions and groups, and the Bahais is as follows: Some claim that the Essence of God has become vocal in a personality; others, that It is diffused into myriads of particles or sparks and that these are constantly revealing themselves in human bodies; and the Bahais believe that on the one hand there is the Essence of God—the Essence of Essences, the Mystery of Mysteries, the Light of Lights—the knowl-

edge of which is unattainable by man; and on the other, there is the Manifestation of God—the transparent Mirror, the unencumbered Channel, the perfect Man who presents in a lucid manner the “ideas” of God, who reveals glimpses of that far off Glory and opens our eyes to the Majesty of the Eternal Kingdom.

## **ON THE WORLD OF NATURE AND THE WORLD OF HUMANITY**

In the seventy-fourth Chapter of the Koran, called “The Greeks,” is recorded the following verse, which is applicable to present day conditions:

*“On account of that which men's hands have wrought, destruction hath appeared upon land and sea, making them taste of the fruit of their doings that haply they may turn to God.”*

The divine Manifestations have been sent to earth, and have undergone manifold trials and persecutions to the end that the World of Humanity may be freed from the thralldom of Nature. The World of Nature is the arena of immortality and the field of vice, and the World of Humanity retains the properties of that kingdom. It is fraught with defects—hostility, cruelty, rancor and beastly propensities, and is torn by the struggle for existence.

Now, to the end that a number of souls may be freed from captivity in the World of Nature, the Messengers of God arise with utmost self-sacrifice. The religion of God liberates man from the fetters of ignorance; suffers him to drink at the fountain of Guidance; moulds his character through Divine Education and invites him to Eternal Life. Thus, darkness is turned into light, infidelity into fidelity; and the defects of the World of Na-

ture are transformed into the excellencies of the World of Humanity.

So, for a period, celestial ethics influence the lives of men, just laws regulate their conduct, and lordly principles determine their actions; but as the ages roll by, the Spirit, which has been dominant, little by little, disappears and is lost. Then the object of the religions is set at naught; the ideal of truth is neglected; ceremonies and traditions make their appearance, while superstitions abound and flourish. At such times, the proclivities of materialism displace the qualities of spirituality, and the World of Nature is on the ascendant.

Do we not at present see the banner of oppression and destruction held aloft! The World of Humanity has become the world of the beasts of prey; nay, rather, the cruelty which is apparent in men cannot be attributed to even the most ferocious animals.

The world is like unto the mineral kingdom and the Prophets of God are as gardeners. The gardener harrows the ground, uproots the thorns and thistles and removes the parasites. With hard labor and infinite pains, he transforms the barren soil into a rose-garden, and he grafts into the fruitless trees of the jungle the living twigs of the orchard. All the while, the natural properties of the earth are conducive to weeds, underbrush and all injurious plants; and the garden, if deprived of the constant care of the gardener, will revert to its natural state and become again a wilderness.

Consequently, be not astonished today at the gross and inhuman acts perpetrated by the nations which have forgotten God and the laws of His Prophets.

### *ON THE SAME OLD TREE*

Although the religions of God undergo change and transformation, the primal principles are immutable.

The original aim of religion is the moral instruction of the world of humanity—its illumination, spiritualization and perfection. These are the objectives which are not changed, and which appear in every religion, no matter how enveloped it may be in outward dogmas. They are the unuttered aspirations of every religious man.

The prevalent notion that the religions of the past have set aside and abrogated one another is a great mistake. Indeed their primal objects are but dimly remembered. The people are holding fast to a set of tenets and rituals, which are as far from pure religion as are the heavens from the earth. The fabric of so-called organized religion is crumbling and tottering into ruin.

Once upon a time Christianity was like unto a comely youth—healthy, vigorous, adorned with utmost freshness and charm. Now the eyes of this youth are dimmed, his limbs are paralyzed, his physical forces are exhausted. Or, again, it was as a young tree, the leaves of which were green and on the branches of which the fowls of the earth built their nests and lodged; and it grew and developed and brought forth luscious fruit. But now the tree has grown hoary with age and decay has overtaken it. Then suddenly, the gardener appears upon the scene, cuts from it a green twig which he plants in prepared soil; and the twig starts its growth, taking the place of the parent stock—and all the while it is the same old tree, *renewed*.

Now, those who are too aged to understand the real situation, hold fast to the disintegrated root, averting their eyes from the beauty and charm of the *New Tree*. God willing, you will become assisted in glorious service, so that presently the New Tree, of the same old religion of God, may flourish and attain the state of fruition.

**ON ARGUING OVER A NAME**

The principles of Baha-U-Llah have enlightened the East, laying waste the foundations of prejudice, so that the primal object of all the religions is revealed.

Now, the primal object of the religions is one; it is the creeds and dogmas that have bred differences. All the religions concur that there must of necessity be an intermediary between God and man. Then, one community claims that that intermediary was Moses; another cries out "No, no you are wrong! The Divine Intermediary was Jesus"; while a third emphasizes the fact that it was Mohammad.

Obviously, none of these so-called devout champions have seen their Prophet; nor would they recognize him if he were to appear before their eyes. Thus, you may note that all these dissensions and quarrels take place over a name, and not over a reality. This arguing, in regard to the supposed superiority of one name over another, has led to bloodshed and rapine with the result that the progress of civilization has been retarded.

Once there were five men, of as many nationalities, to whom a coin had been given in common; and these individuals, all making up their minds as to how the money should be spent, began to dispute amongst themselves in most forceful manner. A conclusion, however, was not reached because the language of each and every one was totally unintelligible to the others. Presently, a stranger, who had been watching the scene in quiet amusement, ordered a tray of grapes to be brought in; and lo and behold, the five men fell upon the tray with expressions of intense delight. They all had wanted to buy grapes.

When the devotees begin to investigate the *Reality* that is back of the "names" which they worship, they will find the ultimate Truth which is identical in all religions,

## ON MOSES

For what reason did God send the Prophets into the arena of the World? For the purpose of instructing humanity; that through this instruction the wild tree might become a fruitful one and the extinguished lamp a star.

Among the Prophets of God was Moses. If we study his life and teachings we find that he was one of the Great Spiritual Educators of Mankind. From an outward standpoint he had no power, no influence, and there were no means at his disposal. He was a Jew; and the Jews at that time were in captivity, being looked upon by all as a race of serfs. They were ignorant also, and wrapped in the gloom of human defects. Then Moses, appearing among them, delivered them from their thralldom, led them to the Land of Promise, imparted to them a moral education and conferred upon them ideal virtues.

As a consequence of the enlightenment thus acquired the Jews attained the highest level of civilization. In science they made great progress, so much so that, degree by degree, they became famous throughout the world. Their knowledge and wisdom reached such a point that the philosophers of Greece travelled to Palestine to learn from them. Then the Solomonic Sovereignty was established.

Moses, single and alone, with no support and despite a stammering tongue, caused the rise of a lowly degraded race to the apogee of spiritual attainment. From every standpoint this was an unparalleled achievement, proving unquestionably that he was confirmed by the Divine Power.

The great philosophers, who have stepped into the world of existence, have not been able to give a moral education to the inhabitants of one village. Their utmost was the training, through classes and conferences, of a few students. Therefore, to a mere man it would have

been an impossibility to reform a nation and deliver millions from the claws of ignorance and defects, causing them to mount upward toward the realms of light and the effulgence of God.

### *ON TENDING THE NEW TREE*

At the coming of every Messenger of God, the people of negation have arisen and objected. As is quoted in the Koran, Pharoah complained of Moses and Aaron: "Verily, these are magicians who try to change our faith and make us to walk in their false paths." The Arabs addressed Mohammad: "Dost thou dare to alter our belief and prevent us from that of our fathers?" The people of Mazandaran asked of Baha-U-Llah: "What is wrong with our beautiful religion that you have invented this strange religion of the Brotherhood of Man. How can we love those whom we hate?"

From a biological standpoint, a tree when planted will, day by day, grow and develop until it reaches the condition of fruitage, during which, at stated times for some years, it will produce leaves, blossoms and fruit; but presently, this same tree will start on the path of decline, and disintegration will set in. In the world of genesis, every phenomenon goes through this process of growth and retrogression, spring and winter, heat and cold, life and death. Now, when its trunk is rotten and its branches withered, is the tree worthy of sheltering human intelligence?

For example, the Mosaic Tree was at one time covered with green leaves, and for ages it bore blossoms and fruits for the healing of nations; but now it has passed its period of productivity, and the gardeners who have tended it must turn their attention to the New Tree that is growing by the River of Life. When a tree is dying, a sprig shoots from its root; and so in these times the

Bahai Tree has appeared, springing from the roots of the former prophetic Trees. Consequently, to tend *this* Tree, to nurture *this* Tree is to tend and nurture *all* the others.

Today, the Call of the Kingdom is raised. Having heard it, can we deny its soothing effect? Today, the Sun of Reality is shining upon all regions. Having been warmed by its rays, is it possible to move away and cry: "No! No!" Today, the Breeze of Providence is wafting. Having seen the quickening of the dead bodies of the world, shall we refuse?

### **ON THE POWER WHICH IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN HOSPITALS**

*A doctor who had long served in the modern hospital and clinic in Tiberias, Palestine, complained:*

*"Every year, at least a thousand Jews enter this hospital and receive treatment and healing; but none of them become Christian. Yet these same Jews accept the Bahai teaching. How is it?"*

*The Master answered:*

Consider this point: In the Apostolic age, the Jews who became Christian were not attracted by hospitals, clinics, or schools, for of these there were none; rather they accepted the Christ together with that which went with his name at that time—persecution and martyrdom. Why was this? Because the early teachers of Christianity possessed the divine *power* and were able to impart it. Today, in like manner, the Bahai teachers, possessing the same divine power, are enabled to capture the cities of the hearts.

### **ON ANCIENT PEDIGREE**

**When I was in Alexandria, the Minister of Reception**

to the Khedive asked me to his house to meet a number of distinguished men. Having accepted the invitation, I went and spoke on the necessity for the revising of religion, urging an entire rehabilitation of the moral codes; and incidentally I referred to the Jews as examples of morbid tenacity in regard to antiquated laws. Now, a Jew who happened to be present took offense at my remarks, and defended his people by quoting the oft-repeated idea that they are children of the Prophets, lions of the tribe of Judah and representatives of a most ancient race. I then answered:

"Ah heaven! Why, in these days of progress, should one plume oneself on ancient pedigree! Superannuated, out of date, obsolete! Who wishes to be known by these characteristics! An old tree, the roots of which are dried up, can never push forth leaves or bear blossoms and fruits. Will it become verdant by asserting that it once was a sapling? Or will an old man be rejuvenated by claiming that he has been an athlete? My friend! I advise you to throw away the swaddling clothes of an infantile humanity. The world is being completely revolutionized and you sit, an anomaly, on your ancient lot. This is the day of youth! This is the time of progress! This is the age of reformation! This is the period of re-animation! The trumpet of resurrection has blown and you are yet asleep. I say: Out of your tombs, out of your sepulchres! This is the hour of new life;"

### *ON UNEXPECTED WORDS*

Up to the present day, there has not appeared a single person who would boldly come out in the Synagogues and proclaim unequivocally that Jesus was the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and that Mohammad was the Prophet of God.

I remember an occasion in a New York Church when

I presented proofs establishing the validity of the Mission of Mohammad. It happened that a distinguished Indian was in the congregation and this man, as I afterwards learned, was overcome with joy. He had not expected to hear such words spoken in the West.

### ON THE PARABLE OF THE LOAVES

Jesus said: "I am the bread which has come down from Heaven," and again he said: "Whosoever eats of this bread shall gain eternal life."

Now this *bread* is Divine Virtue; and the meaning carried it that those who partake of this infinite Bestowal shall never die.

It is evident that Jesus was a pure Channel for the diffusion of the bounties of God amongst men. He made of the simple fisherman the great Peter. These symbolic teachings are clarified by another saying: "The Father is in me and I am in you." Naturally, the physical body of the Christ was not in the Disciples; but the heavenly Bestowals, received from him, were in them. The phenomenal sun shining upon the mirror reflects therein its disk and rays, so that the mirror can truthfully claim to be the sun. Likewise, the Sun of Reality with all its characteristics was reflected on the clear mirror of Jesus; which reflection, by a process of radiation, was repeated upon the mirrors of the Disciples turned toward him.

So, the heavenly bread signifies the divine perfections and, to continue, the *five loaves* represent the five stages of inner unfoldment. The first of these is intellectual development; the second, spiritual illumination; the third prophetic experience; the fourth, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the fifth, the acquisition of the Divine Bestowals. From among these five loaves the multitude was fed and was satisfied.

Now, the *twelve baskets* which were filled with this heavenly bread were the twelve Disciples, because these men were acquainted with the five stages of inner unfoldment; and they gave of this bread to the people, of one or two kinds, according to their capacity.

Material bread sustains for a day only; but the heavenly bread confers eternal life.

### **ON DEGREES OF PROGRESS**

The line of progress is perpendicular and endless; infinite but of many degrees. For example, no matter how much the mineral evolves, it does not attain the state of man. It is susceptible of advancement merely within its own sphere. The rock becomes diamond or, in the vegetable kingdom, the seed develops into a mighty tree, producing blossoms and fruits; but these cannot obtain the senses of sight and hearing. Similarly, a man may make progress in his discipleship to Jesus; but he does not become the Christ. Jesus is infinite, while man is finite in comparison with him.

Paul became Paul, not because he was a learned man, but because he *followed* Jesus. In the same manner did Peter become Peter; otherwise, they were as any other Jews living at that time. The light of the Christ was as the light of the sun. He was the center, the reservoir, the powerhouse of illumination; others received light from him. Paul and Peter attained their lofty station, not through their own virtues, but through the qualities derived from Jesus. Thus, in his era, Jesus was the Supreme Master.

### **ON HOUSES OF PRAYER**

A church is the house of prayer. Let men enter therein and worship God. Much good will be accomplished if

the Mussulmans, with reverence and sincerity, seek the Christian Churches; and if the Christians, likewise, magnify the Creator of the Universe in the mosques. Is it not revealed in the Scriptures, "My house shall be called of *all nations* the house of prayer." All those houses of different names—church, mosque, synagogue, pagoda, temple, are none other than Houses of Prayer. What is there in a name? Man must attach his heart to the spirit and not to a building. He must love to hear the mention of God no matter from what lips; and if even the devil pronounce that sacred Name, he must rejoice.

### ON MIRRORS

The Spirit of God is as the Sun, and Jesus was like unto a translucent mirror. The sun, with its heat, its rays and its creative energy had become manifest in that mirror; consequently, the mirror could truthfully proclaim itself to be the sun. Jesus said, "The Father is in me!" meaning that the virtues, the perfections and the sublime qualities of the Father had reflected themselves in him. The sun had not left its station, in order to occupy a position in the mirror; but simply its disk and rays had been repeated. The essence of God, functioning from its divine station, had become apparent in the Christ.

Now, when other mirrors were placed facing that in which the sun was repeated, it became evident that these bore the reflection of the *reflection* of the sun. Jesus said to his disciples, "*I am in you.*" He meant that the attributes of the Father, revealed by him, had become apparent in them also.

### ON THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF ONE PERSON

The chief aim of this Movement is the investigation

of Reality and the revealing of the underlying Unity of the world's religions. During fifty years Baha-Ū-Llah suffered imprisonment, exile and persecution to the end that this divine idea might become manifest. Now, praise be to God, his principles have illumined the horizons and the souls and minds are delivered from morbid dogmas. The flags of Guidance have been unfurled and the peoples of the Orient and Occident are increasingly united through the bonds of spiritual brotherhood.

There are, in history, many instances showing how, through the instrumentality of *one person*, godly ideas have been born, celestial thoughts promoted and stupendous progress made possible. Among such benefactors of the human race was Jesus who, although apparently poor, was possessed of the treasures of the Kingdom; who, although outwardly humble, yet was the Sovereign of the realm of hearts. Through the light of his command, Europe emerged out of the darkness of idolatry and ignorance.

### *ON THE HUMBLE FISHERMEN AND THE MAGDALENE*

Here, in Tiberias, I call to mind the times during which Jesus lived in these parts, when the people, in their negligence, failed to recognize that Incarnate Light. Only a few fishermen believed in him and, in their faith and assurance, soared toward the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, the regions of the world became illumined through the Light of the Most Great Guidance.

These men, in their lifetime, were not revered; nay rather the people arose to ridicule and scoff at them, to persecute and kill them. Nevertheless, reflect upon the mighty revolution that appeared in the world after them! So did the humble fisherman become the Great Peter; and Magdalene, the Saint.

## ON WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE APOSTLES

Pagan rituals and accumulated dogmas must be discarded, and we must return to the fountain-head of the teachings of Jesus, as he uttered them here, on the shores of Galilee, many generations ago. A whole-hearted surrender to the Divine Will, a spiritual attraction and enthusiasm enabling us to disregard all hardships and persecutions, a degree of self-sacrifice as manifested in the lives of the saints and martyrs, a complete surrender to the influx of the Holy Spirit and a dedication of our entire forces to the service of the World of Humanity, these things will establish the Kingdom of God in the hearts of all men. *It is the only way.*

Our deeds must conform with our professions. The Apostles lived the life of Jesus. The trees of their lives yielded good fruit. Upon them was great power, and grace encircled them. They did not receive any stipends, but rather sold everything they had, to preach the Gospel of the Lord; and they labored and gained the means for their support, so that they might not be a charge upon those others who believed.

Are the Christian ministers capable of living according to this standard? Have they faith enough so to work and preach? If they have made up their minds to walk in the footsteps of their Master and his Apostles, this is the method: "Therefore, take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take thought for the things of itself;" but if they do not live according to this clear injunction, all the sermons and writings will bring no results.

What similarity is there between the Apostles and most of the modern preachers of the Gospel! The latter have lowered the name of Jesus and put in its place, church service, anathematic creeds, liturgy, denominational rival-

ries and factional controversies. Where is the charity, the tolerance, the *spirit* of the Apostles?

There once was a Mullah who thought that one of his fingers had become impure through the touching of an unclean object so, passing by a butcher's shop, he asked the butcher to cut it off. The man naturally refused: but as the Mullah kept insisting, he finally said: "Very well, place your hand on the block and I will do as you say." The Mullah obeyed and the butcher lifted a great knife, bringing it sharply, blunt side down, on his hand. At this, the Mullah began to scream and curse: "Oh, cruel brute! What have I done to you that you should so maim me?" As he crouched, whimpering, the butcher stood over him and laughed: "Coward! I did not harm your hand. I simply tested you to see the stuff that you are made of!"

During the last thirty years many societies and individuals, in Europe and in America, have attempted to pattern their lives on those of the Apostles and bring back the old simplicity; yet they failed because they were unable to interpret the Will of God according to the exigencies of modern life.

### *ON THE MAN WHO WAS ALL ALONE*

A philosopher once visited Jesus for the purpose of defeating him in discussion; and he argued heatedly and with persistence, until finally he whom he was opposing had silenced him on every point. Then the philosopher said:

"After all, you have not accomplished very much by coming out victorious in this encounter, because the Holy Spirit is back of you, and God is back of the Holy Spirit; so that makes three, while I am all alone."

In like manner, whosoever is backed by Baha-U-Llah, even as I have been, will never be alone and can never be silenced.

## ON THE HIGHER STATION

Men do not realize the significance of current events. They are totally unaware of the supreme importance of the Cause, as well as of the nobility of those who, devoid of all self-interest, are serving it.

Once upon a time the Ulemas of Persia discussed, in detail, the comparative greatness of Gabriel the Arch-Angel and Ganbar the servant of Mohammad; finally coming to the conclusion that the illiterate negro occupied the higher station. At this point one of the theologians satirically exclaimed, "Oh men, consider well the facts! Ganbar was the servant of Mohammad, but Gabriel was the servant of God." Nevertheless, the Ulemas contended that he, who on the march walked by his master's horse, who in the camp attended to the details of service, who executed with fidelity the missions entrusted to him—loving with fervor, and to the end—he held a rank even above that of angels.

In like manner, the men and women who, in these early days, serve Baha-U-Llah, have assumed a station which neither themselves, nor the world at large can estimate.

## ON "THE STRIKING"

*Abdul Baha was asked to explain the meaning of the phrases in the Koran which read as follows:*

1. *"The Striking! What is the Striking?"*
2. *"And what shall make you to understand how the Striking will be?"*
3. *"On that day, men shall be like 'moths scattered abroad."*
4. *"And the mountains shall become like carded wool, of various colors, driven by the wind."*
5. *"Then as to him whose balances are heavy—his shall be a life that will please well."*

8. "And as to him whose balances are light—his dwelling place shall be the pit."

7. "And who shall teach you the meaning of the pit?"

8. "A raging fire."

*He said:* This chapter demonstrates the depth of wisdom and the divine perception of the Founder of Islam. Many Koranic commentators have written pages about these words, saying that they referred to the Day of Resurrection. Now we, at present, are in the cycle of Resurrection, one of the manifold phases of which is this universal war. Verses 1 and 2 mean that a general struggle and revolution shall take place in the world, bringing upon mankind manifest calamity. Verse 3 is a statement of the utter confusion that is to reign, the snapping off of all social ties, the pulling down of the structure of civilization and the "scattering" of individuals "like moths." Verse 4 shows that the leaders, politicians, statesmen—those considered as firm as mountains, shall, in the estimation of man, fall from their high pedestals. They will become like loose skeins of "carded wool." Their intellectual and moral weaknesses will be exposed, and their policies will collapse like a pack of cards. As to Verse 5: Following brutalities without number, when the nations and governments will have had enough of bloodshed and destruction—then the Balances of Divine Justice shall be set up. Those souls who have been kind and merciful, who have promoted peace and good fellowship, who have joined the ranks of the Army of the Kingdom—those whose "balances are heavy," their good deeds outweighing their evil deeds—shall attain unto the good-pleasure of the Lord, and receive, not only the approbation of man, but even the approbation of the Creator, who watches over all things and loves a faithful steward. They shall be given the boon of immortality—"a life that will please well." According to Verse 6: Those souls who

have been instrumental in sowing the seeds of mistrust and discord among their fellowmen, who have encouraged animalism by perfecting engines of hell, who have brought about the destruction of the fair fabric of human progress, who have forgotten God and religion they, (*Verses 7 and 8*) shall dwell in "a raging fire"—that is, they will continue in a state of ignorance, heedlessness and inadvertence, and find themselves deprived of the Bestowals of the True One. They will be lost in the bottomless pit of remorse and wander in the darkness of regret.

### *ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TEACHING OF THE KORAN AND THE CREEDS OF ISLAM*

The true aspect of Islam is misunderstood, not only by the Western missionaries and scholars, but even by the Mohammedans themselves; therefore, if we wish to study this religion, we must, with reverent hearts, turn to its source—the Koran.

The theologians and commentators confuse and mislead us and, in themselves, are a cause of humiliation, rather than an honor to Islam. For example, one of their most important creeds is this: "Whosoever publicly confesses that: 'There is no God save the One God and Mohammad is His Prophet,' he shall be saved." Naturally, the inquirer will be led to believe that this doctrine is the faith of Islam, simply because the orthodox Mohammedans are upholding it; yet, if they go straightaway to the Koran, they will find no verse that even indicates such a narrow creed. On the contrary, they will come across the following: "The people of the Books, such as Christians, Jews, Sabeans and those others who believe in the unity and singleness of God, the immortality of the soul and the practice of charity and benevolence—they are the people of salvation."

Consider the vast difference that exists between the teaching of the Koran and the creed I have mentioned; and from this one instance judge of others.

**ON DISTINGUISHING THE DIVINE WORDS  
FROM THE HUMAN IDEAS**

The Vedics contain both inspired utterances and human ideas. These latter have crept in through the lapse of time; yet, men believe that the Books in their totality are the revealed Word of God. Likewise, Christian theologians, up to the last century, have been confident that the Pentateuch was written by Moses. However, modern evaluation, by scholars and thinkers, has shown us otherwise; for the Bible contains so many historical discrepancies that the reading of it is simply bewildering. The decalogue and a few other utterances *only* are from Moses; the rest was from Ezra, the priest. It is easy, with a critical spiritual eye, to distinguish the divine words from the human ideas

**ON "THE RETURN"**

There are two schools which believe in the rebirth of the soul: the school of reincarnation and the school of metempsychosis. The first teaches that the spirit of man goes through infinite processes of birth in the human kingdom until, purified and refined, it ultimately reaches the state of Nirvana. The second asserts that man, by consequence of his deeds, may revert to the animal kingdom. In Syria there is a community, called Baktashi, which holds to this latter theory and, to illustrate the point, I will tell you a story.

One day, in an open space in Acca, we were gathered together in the presence of a judge, who was delivering himself of certain arguments, when one of these Bak-

tashi, suddenly withdrawing from our circle, approached a donkey who stood nearby, and began alternately to whisper into his long ear and to listen at his mouth. All the while, various expressions were passing over the man's face, just as if he actually were carrying on a conversation with the donkey. For a time, the judge ignored this proceeding but, curiosity finally getting the better of him, he called out:

"What are you saying to that animal?"

"Your Honor, I was asking a serious question."

"Repeat it."

"Please excuse me."

"But I insist."

"Well, if your Honor insists, I must obey. I was asking the donkey what form he had enjoyed during his last incarnation."

"And what was the answer?"

"Oh! He said that he was previously a judge."

Now, speaking seriously, science accepts the fact that the elements which make up the body of man are indestructible. The indivisible atom travels through the various kingdoms appearing in countless states, each one endowed with peculiar virtues. It passes through the mineral, perfecting itself on the way; it enters the vegetable kingdom, manifesting itself throughout the varieties of plant life; it progresses through the animal kingdom, undergoing a like process of assimilation and improvement and finally emerges in the human kingdom. From this state, it returns to journey again through the lower kingdoms, in which being eaten by man, it once more becomes part of the human structure. The circle is endless.

This shows that each atom in the body has had previous experiences in the lower kingdoms, where it has manifested itself through infinite forms and grades. The primordial atoms which constitute this flower will ap-

pear in other flowers, and in the animal, and in man. Thus, the statement that "all things are involved in all things" is an exposition of divine philosophy.

Now, to come to the question of the "return" which is spoken of in the Scriptures: Jesus said that John the Baptist was Elias, and John said, "No, I am not Elias." These two statements contradicted each other seemingly, but not in fact, because that effulgent Reality, which is absolute, had appeared in all the Prophets including John the Baptist; that is, the same virtues had appeared, the generic idea, meaning qualities, as differentiated from the specific idea, meaning flesh. The qualities of color and fragrance as expressed in the flower of last year are again expressed in the flower of this year; the light which shone in the lamp of last night shines again in the lamp of to-night, although the lamp itself may be different. Thus, in this station we do not consider outward limitations; but look for the reappearance of the identical virtues of the eternal Reality—which eternal Reality has ever shone forth from the dawning-place of Truth, and will continue to shine from the horizons of the Prophets of God.

### *ON WILL POWER*

Will power exists in the animal and in man. The animal enjoys physical will power, which has a limited sphere of activity; while man possesses both the circumscribed physical will power and the transcendant spiritual will power. The bird may soar high in the heavens, but there is a limit beyond which it cannot rise. It must return to earth. Man may spur his physical will power to the point of walking ten miles instead of two, but he finally is overpowered by exhaustion. On the other hand, the Creator has deposited in the humankind the seed of a will power that is not satisfied with *anything*. The one who

has developed this will power knows *no limit* in his flight. His thirst is never allayed. This is a sign of the signs of God.

How can we develop this will power? Through 'divine unrest.' Inventions and colossal undertakings have been carried through by will power exercising in the proper channels. Jesus said: "Thy will be done and not mine;" because all our longings and hopes are realized through the appearance of the Will of the Father.

Strive ever that your will power may be expended in philanthropic ways. Except the aims be humanitarian, nothing is productive of lasting result. The sovereign dynasties of the world have been established through the intense exercise of will power; but as the initiators were not disinterested people, these dynasties are tottering to the ground. At the same time, those souls which arose to serve the Cause had no will except the divine Will; consequently, their will power became the will power of God, and their traces, the traces of God.

Why is so much tyranny apparent today? Why so much discord and bloodshed? Because the people do not live in accordance with the Will of God.

In the world of existence there is nothing more productive than the coordination of the will power of man. The coordinated will power of two men brings greater results than can the will power of one man. Therefore, if the nations were to coordinate their will power, for international amity and unification, the happiness of all humanity would result.

### *ON THE TWO ASPECTS OF MAN*

Every creature is possessed of one aspect or reality; but man is possessed of two aspects or realities. Consider the sentient beings: they, whether upon the earth or in the air, manifest but one aspect. The mountain, the

meadow and the desert have one mineral reality; the trees, the flowers and the fruits have one vegetable reality; the quadrupeds, the birds and the fishes have one animal reality, while man has both human reality and spiritual reality. Thus he is different.

Man in his human aspect is of the animal kingdom and consequently is captive to nature; but in his spiritual aspect, he wields a power which the animals do not possess, and by it is distinguished from them. Although enthralled by nature in the physical, he is master of nature in the spiritual—becoming the discoverer of the verities of life. So, when the spiritual aspect is trained and the intellectual forces developed, man attains a pinnacle wherefrom he can unravel the secrets of nature, penetrate the purposes of creation, understand the accomplishments of past cycles and measure the events of the future. It, therefore, is evident that a divine power resides in him.

Reflect upon the extent to which man is nature's captive. The slightest draught may chill him; unaccustomed heat will incapacitate him; a tiny mosquito bite can prove deadly to him. At the same time, his mind or his ideal reality is victorious over phenomena and, with these assets, he conquers the world of nature.

An Arab boy leads a thousand camels through the desert. How can he do it? Not through his bodily strength. Man dries up the land or floods it at his will; he breaks through the mountain or descends into the earth. Through the employment of his genius he creates industries and develops the delicate arts and crafts. From Europe he discovers America; from the East he communicates with the West; from the surface of the globe he explores the starry firmament. Physically he is not able to overcome a panther or a wolf; but spiritually, he subdues all ani-

mals. The holy power in man is one of the Divine Bestowals. It is a sign of the power of God.

Now, the physical aspect is dependent—food, water, sleep are needed; and if these are not available, man dies. Likewise, the spiritual aspect requires sustenance; and if deprived, it also perishes.

Therefore, the Divine Manifestations have appeared to the end that the ideal reality of man may be fed.

### *ON A GREAT PHILOSOPHER*

Today, the body of humanity at large is very ill; one of its ailments being that it is submerged in the sea of materialism. The power of materialism has prevailed and is in the ascendancy, while spiritual susceptibilities are lingering behind. The forces that discover the reality of phenomena are not manifest; knowledge of God has been forgotten.

The majority of men, like unto the animals, are captive in the claws of nature; they cannot comprehend what is said to them regarding the spiritual world. Truly, I assert that these men are worshipping nature and glorying in this worship; even as the animals, their inferiors, which are engaged in like pursuits on the natural sides of life.

The animal is held to the tangibilities. He knows something about the world of nature, but nothing about the world of idealism and aestheticism. He is unconscious of the spirit, unaware of the love of God and uninformed concerning Reality. It is very strange to witness the fact that contemporaneous scholars and thinkers are upholding this type of worship, stating: "We do not accept anything but that which we see with our own eyes. We adhere only to that which is apparent in the world of nature and will have nothing to do with the realm which religionists call the supernatural. This kind of super-

naturalism is without foundation because we cannot conceive of it. We accept merely that which is tangible; that which we witness and feel. We are indeed the philosophers and wise men of the age! We are professors in universities and, having searched through the laboratory of nature, have found nothing of that which you call God."

In reality, this condition of life belongs to the animal kingdom; for the animal simply knows matter, which is nature, and therefore, if glorification and worship of nature be a virtue, as is believed by some of our contemporaneous thinkers, then the animal is more virtuous than man.

The cow is out of touch with the supernatural realm; she is not cognizant of spiritual life. Captive to the senses, she holds fast to matter and, without entering college or mastering the sciences, remains, similar to our philosophers, enthralled by the world of nature, and is consequently, herself, a great philosopher.

### ***ON THE RECOGNIZING OF THE "GREAT MASTER"***

*A question was asked regarding the "Great Master" who was to come to the world. By what means would he be recognized. Abdul Baha answered:*

The recognizing of him is dependent upon the realization of certain conditions. Investigate the reality, and in whomsoever these conditions are fulfilled, know of a certainty that he is the "Great Master."

*Firstly:* He must be the Educator of the world of humanity.

*Secondly:* His teachings must be Universal.

*Thirdly:* His knowledge must be innate and spontaneous—not acquired.

*Fourthly:* His wisdom must be infinite and all-comprehensive.

**Fifthly:** He must be a joy-bringer—the Herald of the Kingdom of Happiness.

**Sixthly:** He must solve the problems of mankind.

**Seventhly:** The penetration of his Word and the potency of his influence must be sufficiently great as to humble even his worst enemies.

**Eighthly:** Sorrows and tribulations must not vex him, for his courage and conviction must be god-like.

**Ninthly:** He must be the Establisher of a New Civilization, the Unifier of the Religions and the Standard-Bearer of Universal Peace.

When you see these conditions realized in a human temple, rest assured that you have found the "Great Master."

### **ON ENGRAVINGS DRAWN ON TABLETS OF ADAMANTINE ROCK**

The author who wishes to write on this Cause must be well grounded in the literature of his own country, and thoroughly acquainted with Bahai history. He must be versed in the subtle and eloquent expressions pertaining to his subject and attracted, and deeply in love with his theme. If a man is not by nature spiritual, sincere and compassionate; if he is not severed from earthly things, God-intoxicated and in a state of enthusiasm and glowing conviction, his oral or written words will have no effect, or at most but temporary effect. The fire of the Message must burn upon the altar of the heart in order to give light and heat to those who have gathered around it.

The people of the world have fallen into deep slumber. The more they are shaken the deeper they sink under the spell of sleep. It is the sleep of the dead. If they were, in the least degree mindful, they would realize that today the Call of God is raised from this Cause—that the Di-

vine Summons is issued to the world of humanity through this Revelation.

The religions are trying to bring about union by means of political persuasions; the Bahais have turned their faces toward the heavenly Potency and, through this Instrument, are consolidating the various contradictory factions. The religionists say: "We have found our ancestors in this Faith, and are following in their footsteps. Why should there be a change?"; but the Bahais can truthfully say: "We have abandoned traditions and dogmas and, without any prejudice, investigate Truth for ourselves."

The work of some is like unto pictures drawn on the surface of a lake; that of others is like unto engravings drawn on tablets of adamantine rock.

The people at large are engaged in their various undertakings. One is thinking of building a house; another would like to take a journey; a third plans to garner a rich harvest; a fourth desires to make a fortune in a short time. All these pursuits are similar unto a mirage.

On the other hand the Bahais seek to lay the foundations of the palace of Reality. This shall be the edifice of the Lord—the Tabernacle of Testimony.

### **ON THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ATHEISTS AND THE RELIGIONISTS**

The adherents of all the religions of the world await the coming of a Promised One, and even the atheists anticipate the appearance of a wise reformer. The latter, differing from the religionists who wrap their expectations in fantastic and impossible conditions, believe in nature and her manifestations. They hold that for nature there are two courses: The first runs throughout all the grades of the social structure with its inanimate and animate forms, producing stereotyped organisms, reaching defi-

nite looked-for ends, decomposing and combining with adaptability and resourcefulness. The second takes an unusual and extraordinary course producing, at intervals, human beings who are ultra-nature, super-mundane. At these times, the over-soul is incarnated—the superman is born. So does nature, bored with her own pattern and corresponding resemblances, demonstrate her ability by creating such personages.

The atheists further state that, change being the unchangeable law, nature cannot be conceived of without variety and mutability. The events of a preceding cycle will not correspond with those of a succeeding one. Consequently, in every century, nature, from her hidden fountain, produces a new set of forces and fits them into the new environment belonging to a new generation, the demands of which are greater and the responsibilities of which are heavier.

A philosopher then, according to the atheists, or a Prophet, according to the religionists, appears to readjust, through his innate force, the disorganized machinery of civic, intellectual and ethical life. He lays down certain principles which establish the foundation of a stable and lofty civilization and insure the security and progress of the people. Then, with the lapse of ages, the institution which he has endowed becomes old; hearts are frigid and irresponsive; the letter takes the place of the spirit; the once dynamic life is static and the entire edifice rocks under the burden of dogmas and superstitions. These events in themselves predicate the appearance of *another* Teacher—*another* Architect.

When the morning sun which rose on the Eastern horizon, giving light and heat to all created things, sinks at evening in the West, can we logically say that we do not need another sunrise? Yet, whatever be our affirma-

tion or negation the course of the sun will be unchanged. It will rise regardless of acceptance or refusal.

Hence, even the atheists believe in the appearance of wise and extraordinary teachers whose mission it is to lead their fellowmen to higher altitudes of intelligence and wisdom. In principle they agree with the religionists. The difference between the two simply is a question of phraseology and mode of expression. Truth is one and universal, and the various schools, although applying different methods, aspire to and attain the same end.

### *ON THE FOOD INTENDED FOR MAN AND THE MARCHING ATOM*

Creationally every moving object is supplied with distinctive instruments for the mastication of food; consequently, the category to which each belongs may easily be recognized. For instance, the masticating instruments of the lion, leopard, wolf and seal, being large and sharp, with edges more or less crooked, prove themselves to be structurally adapted to the tearing of flesh. The falcon, likewise, belongs to this order; for its upper beak, curved and projecting over the lower one, shows that it cannot live on grass or grain. On the other hand, the teeth of the group of mammalia, such as sheep, cows, camels, are shaped like scythes, making it evident that their food is grass. Now, the teeth of man are altogether different. He has molars for the grinding of hard substances, incisors for the cutting of vegetables, and canines and bicuspid, obviously not made for meat eating. Thus, it is clear that man is not endowed with carnivorous instruments and that his sustenance should consist of grain, nuts, fruits and sweet fresh vegetables.

Yet, from the standpoint of the modern physicist or molecular scientist, man daily eats thousands, nay millions, of invisible living animals. The bacteriologist

appalls us by revealing, through his microscope, millions of bacteria in all edible things. He taunts the vegetarian, saying: "Come into my laboratory and I will show you myriad moving, crawling animals in a piece of cheese. Now, from a humanitarian standpoint there is no difference between the large and small animals; and although you may deny yourself of the former, you cannot abstain from eating the latter."

There is also another standpoint, which is the philosophic. All the animate and inanimate organisms are subject to the general law of eater and eaten, behind which law lies hidden a deep cosmic wisdom. Thus, every primordial atom may travel through infinite degrees of existence, in each, appearing under a different form, manifesting a particular virtue and, in its upward march, gathering experiences from all the Kingdoms of life. For example, the invisible molecule, setting out in the mineral kingdom, migrates through various forms of mineral life, in each, acquiring certain qualities; then, having completed its apprenticeship and gained the training available in that world, it steps, fully prepared for its new life, into the vegetable kingdom. In this manner, moving slowly, and by degrees, through the vegetable, animal and human kingdoms, it, in every form, gathers distinctive properties and virtues. Thus do atoms march in the way of unlimited progress.

To rehearse: The power of life, innate in the soil, is appreciated by the seeds, and the growth of grass results. Again, the augmentative virtue, latent in the grass, is absorbed by the animals, and the grass, though lost in form, functions in a higher life. So does the death of the one constitute the life of the other.

Now, there is another point to be considered: The inferior is unable to grasp the implications of a superior degree. The vegetable kingdom, lacking the faculties of

hearing and sight, is completely out of touch with animal life. Similarly the animal, steeped in sense perceptions, cannot comprehend the possibilities of intellect. In its own language it may question: Where is the world of intellect? So does the unspiritual man deny the immortality of the soul. Why? Because he is living in an inferior degree. Just as the cow negates the existence of the intellect, so the materialist negates the existence of the soul.

### **ON THE LONG JOURNEY**

Although human eyes are very far from the sun, they yet can see its majesty and glory. Likewise is spiritual contact uncontrolled by space, or even by time. All things are dependent upon capacity.

We have been together in the mineral, and have travelled in one another's company through the vegetable and animal kingdoms, until we now find ourselves in the human kingdom. I hope that we will meet again in that holy and radiant world—that infinite realm which is sanctified from all environment.

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II

WAR AND PEACE

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*I heard him say*

## **ON A UNIVERSAL COLLECTIVE CENTER**

In the matter of World Peace, a great Power is needed which we may name a "Universal Collective Center." In the past, "collective centers" have appeared which, not being general in their various aspects, have given only limited results. These have come into being through the spirit of nationalism, which has brought different tribes and communities into "collective centers" called nations. For example, the petty principalities of Germany, jealously protecting their so-called freedom, worked against one another's interests, until the spirit of nationalism, promoted by Bismark, gathered them into a powerful "collective center." Again, in America, this spirit was demonstrated by Washington, Jefferson and Franklin, who brought about the union of the States; and in like manner, at various periods of history, this same spirit of nationalism, coming to birth, has carried with it the desire for "collective centers."

Now, the advantage of one nation is the disadvantage of another, and as the watchword of the various "collective centers" is patriotism, it is evident that peace will not be obtained so long as these various "centers" are dominant in the world's affairs. Happily, however, humanity has evolved to such a point, that the heritage of this illumined century is the establishment of a "Universal Collective Center" around which the nations, each sacrificing its selfish interests, may revolve for the benefit of the Whole.

## ON THE BAHAI WAR

The glorious maturity of this world depends upon the realization of two things: the establishment of Universal Peace, and the discovery, or appearance of that *hidden science* which shall renovate all the conditions of existence.

There is a recondite wisdom and a divine prescience in all these revolutions and upheavals. God is working out His Plan through sweeping organic changes, through destructive social cataclysms and in the overthrow and downfall of the tenacious old maxims and ideas. The rain, the hail, the snowstorm and the icebound winter must precede the Spring with its balmy temperature, its delectable flowers, its verdant pastures, its fruitful orchards and its myriad flying birds.

When the war has ended the Bahais must declare *their* war. Even as heroic soldiers, they must open fire and assail the enemies of humanity. On their vast battlefield, they must appear with zeal and courage, cooperating with one another in the fullness of heart. Their ammunition shall be the Love of God; their weapons, the Knowledge of God; their armor, the Protection of God; and they must arise and travel and spread the teachings, unfurling the banner of Brotherhood and Peace.

As I journeyed through Europe and America, before the gathering of these clouds upon the horizons of the world, I repeatedly cried: "Oh men! Oh women! Are you so unconcerned regarding your future? Are you completely unconscious of the danger that threatens you? Are you indeed unaware of the horror of war? Oh men! Oh women! Make effort that perchance you may be able to prevent this world-consuming fire." At that time, however, the people were rocking in the cradle of tranquility and my words had no permanent effect upon them; but now that the fair heaven of humanity is

changed, and the birds of conciliation and amity have flown away, they might give ear to the voices of Peace and listen to the councils of Truth.

The Bahai teachers must be prepared for active work in the Vineyard of the Kingdom, so that they may train the children of men in the principle of the Oneness of the World of Humanity and in the lessons of Divine Civilization. Like unto the stars they must shine, and like unto the joyous thrushes they must sing. They must fill the earth with the amber scent of the Word of God and turn the attention of the multitudes to the heavenly outlook.

### *ON THE WORST OF ALL*

The citizens of Tabriz are remarkable for their courage; those of Esphahan for their bluster; while the emotions of the sons of Kashan are seldom disturbed.

It happened in Persia that a company of three, each a native of one of these cities, had set out on a journey; and walking along a mountain pass they were discussing the possibility of being set upon by thieves. The man from Tabriz assured his companions: "If we are attacked, I will fall upon our assailants and kill at least four;" the man from Esphahan asserted: "Very well, you kill four, and I shall brandish my sword and cry loudly 'I will put an end to all of them'," and the man from Kashan said: "I will unpack my bag, spread a feast and begin to eat."

It happened that they had not progressed very far, when a band of brigands rose up from among the rocks and surrounded them. True to his word, the man from Tabriz drew his weapon and rushing upon the intruders, cut down four. Following him, the man from Esphahan started a big demonstration, shouting in a loud voice that he would destroy the entire gang; while the man

from Kashan opened his baggage and, with utmost serenity, began to eat.

Observing these things, the assailants reasoned among themselves, saying: "The first has killed four of our comrades, and second may be even more terrible for he has declared that he will wipe us out; but the third, unquestionably, is the worst of all—*what will he not do when he has finished his dinner!*"

The brigands took to their heels.

## ON A PROPOSED UNIVERSAL PEACE CONGRESS IN EGYPT

*(On hearing, in November, 1914, that the Khedive of Egypt had been deposed by the British government, Abdul Baha recalls a meeting which had taken place between himself and the Khedive at the Palace of Nozhan, Alexandria, in August, 1913, and his own words spoken on that occasion.)*

Today the emperors and kings are so situated, on account of political considerations, patriotic motives, geographical locations and fear of foreign invasion, that they are unable to take the initiative in the Cause of Universal Peace and the reduction of armaments. So long as this mad competition continues, they think that they must increase their military and naval budgets, and pile armaments upon armaments until millions of souls are crushed beneath the sheer weight of them. They argue that in order to safeguard their independence, their vital interests, their honor, they must keep these colossal forces at the highest degree of efficiency; and they believe that peace will be maintained at the point of bayonets, machine guns and infernal engines.

Now, while their minds are thus dominated by spurious theories of state, they are in no condition to propose any all-inclusive method for the confederation of the peoples

of the world and the establishment of the Parliament of Man. Their callings and ambitions preclude them from taking any such impartial steps. On the other hand, Your Highness is most fortunate, in that your country, as an English protectorate, is unhampered by the expenses of standing army and navy, and its population is free from heavy war taxation. Egypt occupies a unique geographical position, the Suez Canal having made of it a golden link connecting the East and the West. Likewise, from times of antiquity, and especially during these latter years, it has been one of the foremost cosmopolitan countries of the world—the ideals of civilization and democracy transforming the face of the land. In view of these significant facts, it behooves you, from among the rulers of the earth, to unfurl the Flag of Universal Peace in this, the Land of the Pharoahs.

You can render a priceless service to Egypt, and to the world at large by calling a Universal Peace Congress to be held here annually, and by inviting to it hundreds of the world's foremost thinkers, scholars, philosophers and statesmen, thus making of it a Parliament of the World of Humanity—a symposium of the East and the West, the North and the South. Such a Universal Congress on this favorable ground—the junction between the Orient and the Occident—would yield untold results, and would usher in the dawn of peace and good fellowship amongst the nations of the earth. I believe that it would be a great mission for you to fulfill in the world!

### *ON COMBINING INTO A SEARCHLIGHT*

It is known that a small area of darkness vanishes when a small light is lit. This room is illumined by one lamp; but, obviously, the lamp is not of sufficient power as to illumine the outside world. There must needs be a great light—a searchlight, if the distances are to be

explored. The obscurity that envelopes the world today is very dense, for it is the obscurity of the realm of nature and of matter. Therefore, men must combine into a penetrating searchlight for the dispelling of this gloom.

When compound ignorance is manifest, compound knowledge is needed to counterbalance its effect. All of you must engage in this world-service, and on this path be ever ready to sacrifice your possessions and even your lives. Then you will have established the fact that you *are the lovers of humanity*. Then you will have attained the station of self-sacrifice.

### ON SOLDIERS

Military rules are worse by far than prison rules. The soldiers are restricted in all their affairs; they cannot deviate one hair's breadth from regulations; they are circumscribed in their eating, sleeping and walking; they do not know freedom and are prisoners in everything save in name.

Because they are *called* soldiers they answer the summons to defend that which the demagogues term the "Fatherland" and willingly submit to all hardships; yet, if it were brought home to them that they indeed are prisoners, they would be unable to endure their situation for one month.

There is a story about a certain old man who, during many years, refused to go out of doors. His friends often tried to persuade him to leave the house, but without any success until, on an occasion, one of them, while discussing the situation, announced, "I have an idea! I can make him go out willingly." His companions did not believe this, but he insisted, saying, "Wait and see."

The next day he called on the old man and, after preliminary inquiries concerning his health, remarked: "My friend! I have sad news to impart to you. The Governor

has received instructions from the Sublime Port stating that on no account are you to leave Syria." At this the old man became very much agitated. Trembling he arose from his seat, exclaiming indignantly, "I have done nothing to merit such punishment. I consider myself free to go to Egypt or any other place. I will see the Governor about this!" and in one minute he was on the street. There his friends, who were waiting, surrounded him and confessed their little trick.

Ignorant are the people! They are willing to forfeit their honor, their wealth, even their lives for the sake of their country; but are unwilling to renounce anything for the sake of God. The meadows of the earth have been crimsoned with the blood of millions of soldiers—all to no purpose. Today no one knows who they were. Yet when one soul sacrifices his life on the path of God his name becomes eternal.

### ON THE ARMY THAT SHALL BE VICTORIOUS

*As he stood watching a parade on l'Avenue des Champs Elyseés, Paris.*

The wise man can see that an army possessed of no rifles or cannon shall defeat this army. The day is coming when all these battalions will fall before the Forces of the Kingdom. I remember an occasion in Bagdad when Baha-U-Llah, looking upon the maneuvers of the Turkish regiments, exclaimed: "These armies shall be defeated and routed, but *my* army shall gain the eternal victory."

### ON FIGHTING

What did the people say at the meeting last night? They seemed to be dissatisfied. Did they not exclaim, "Why has this Persian come to Stuttgart? What has he to do with us? We do not want pacifistic principles!

Peace is for the weak, war is for the mighty. Germany is a warlike, demonstrative nation."

This morning, as I was looking out of the hotel window upon the square, I saw a regiment of soldiers passing by. They were ready to fight for the "Fatherland"; yet how foolish and barbarous it is to send men to the battlefield to shoot at others whom they do not know and cut their throats.

But come, my friends, let us talk about our own war. Our grand army consists of the invisible angels of the Supreme Concourse; our swords are the scintillating swords of light; our armaments are the invincible armaments of Heaven. Oh, my soldiers, my beloved soldiers! Forward! Forward! Do not fear defeat. Our Supreme Commander is Baha-U-Llah. From the heights, he directs this dramatic engagement. Rush on! Rush on! Display your strength and scatter the powers of ignorance. Your war confers life; theirs imposes death. Your war brings illumination to mankind; theirs keeps the hearts in darkness. Your war is the source of construction; theirs is the origin of destruction. Your war is victory upon victory; theirs is defeat after defeat. Push forward! Attack the enemy! Rest assured that your efforts shall be crowned with the diadem of Eternal Peace. Look, do you not see this prize already glittering upon the Horizon of the Kingdom?

Christ fought even upon the cross, and his triumphs shall continue throughout all centuries and cycles.

### *ON THE THINGS THAT A CONQUEROR DESIRES*

Following his conquests of Persia, Babylonia, Baluchistan and Afghanistan, Alexander the Great led his triumphant armies toward India; and here news of his coming travelled on before him, reaching many parts and causing grave concern among the various principalities.

Now, the King of a certain independent state, being notified that his country had been singled out for an initial adventure, called his Prime Minister to him and, after some consultation, appointed him as Regent for a period of time. He then ordered his most fleet-footed steed to be led to the palace; mounted in silence, and set off without attendants in the direction of the frontier.

Alexander of Macedon had retired to rest in the imperial tent when his officers entered to inform him that an Ambassador, from the state which he intended presently to invade, waited without. In spite of the lateness of the hour, the conqueror yielded to curiosity concerning the envoy; but what was his indignation when this one, being admitted to his presence, boldly approached and sat down on the couch at his side.

"Be not offended," the Ambassador explained, looking calmly into the convulsed face of his host, "for I am a King also, and rule over that country the treasures of which you so ardently desire."

"If this were true, I readily could hold you for ransom."

"Oh," the King protested, "I do not even think of such things. Not having injured you, why should I fear your vengeance! Rather I have come to you in utter confidence, knowing that kindly association will be the guiding principle of our first meeting. So, on this basis, I now ask you, why has your army come from the ends of the earth to kill and to be killed; and what do you want of me and my people?"

Alexander listened to these words, outwardly amused, but inwardly attentive. Then he said: "These are the arguments of weaklings. The backward nations have ever complained before their valiant antagonists. You, however, have shown the qualities of courage, therefore, I will not insist on war, provided you offer me tribute for seven years."

"Seven years!" the King exclaimed. "That is impossible."

"Then six."

"This also is beyond reason."

"Well then, make it five years."

"My people would be impoverished."

"What if I agree on four years?"

"I cannot."

"Surely you are rich enough to contribute to my national income for three years!"

"Perhaps; but I would be stigmatized with cowardice."

"Granted; then, will you pay me for a period of two years?"

"It would be beneath my royal dignity."

"One year?"

"Surely the conqueror of the world would not condescend to receive one year's tribute!"

By this time, Alexander was laughing. "Then, what am I to do?" he asked.

"I will tell you," the King replied. "Your army has for long been on the march, and your soldiers are foot-sore and weary. Allow them to come as guests to my country where, forgetting all enmity and consorting together as friends and comrades, we will sit at the feasts of joy in perfect understanding and intimacy." The conqueror demurred; but when the time of parting arrived the invitation had been accepted.

A few days later, Alexander with his hosts reached the vicinity of the King's capital, and there he beheld his royal friend coming forth to meet him at the head of a vast army. He looked with some misgiving upon the serried ranks which, as they advanced, spread themselves over the plane, reaching from one horizon to the other, and, as he and the King came within speaking distance of each other, he realized that he stood greatly outnumbered.

"Is not this a breach of promise?" he cried out. "Is your festival of pleasure to be in fact a festival of death; or if not, what was the necessity for assembling these legions?"

"My protestations of friendship have been, and still are sincere," his host assured him. "These few regiments do not represent my army, but simply constitute a guard of honor prepared to welcome you. My army is large, and is composed of veterans of such vigor and prowess that it can well encounter any other in the world; so you can see that it was not fear, or inability that influenced me. As a matter of fact, my concern was in reference to the shedding of so much blood. Would it not indeed be a pity, and a waste to end the lives of these happy young men?" With this the King turned his horse about and the two rulers rode side by side toward the city.

While the soldiers engaged themselves in pitching their tents on the plains, Alexander and his generals were conducted to the palace. Here they entered the magnificent banquet hall lit by countless candles and, in utter ease and enjoyment, and with appetites well in tune, placed themselves around the great table which was set with covered plates of gold and silver. Presently, at a sign from the King, the servants removed the covers and there, sparkling down the length of the board were precious stones—diamond, ruby, sapphire, turquoise, jasper, emerald, topaz, amethyst, coral—filling the dish prepared for every one.

Alexander stared with amazement at the rich beauties, unable to believe in so much generosity; but coming to himself with a start, he turned to his host and objected: "After all, we cannot eat them. We want bread!"

"Ah, no, my friend!" the King arose from his seat, "You have gathered your great army and crossed mountains and deserts, suffering untold privations, for the

simple purpose of acquiring these very stones which at present lie scintillating before you. Now, I give you most freely of the things that you have desired; but if you want bread—you will find it in Macedonia.”

### **ON THE ONLY SOLUTION**

Today the armies of Europe, well drilled, similar unto the waves of the ocean, are pounding upon the shores of Asia. They, not only are the armies of militarism, but also are the armies of economic imperialism; the armies of industrialism; the armies of commerce, of agriculture, of science and art. These disciplined hosts, armed, each in its respective field, with the latest machines and instruments, and gaining, as time goes on, greater momentum, are gathering for the final concerted assault. Asia, pressed on all sides, cannot, in her present state, withstand these legions. Anxiously scanning the horizons for a ray of hope, she sees nothing but threatening clouds.

The only solution for her is the Cause of Baha-U-Llah. Why? Because this movement teaches the Oneness of the World of Humanity and Universal Peace.

The Asiatic nations must unite with one another—not *against* the Occident, nor on a basis of antagonisms or religious alliances; but, forgetting all hatreds and prejudices whatsoever, on the basis of the oneness of all mankind, which is the Reality of this age. Such a union of the nations of the East, established for the furtherance of cooperation and friendship with all races, would be welcomed by the nations of the West.

### **ON WHAT WILL THE READER DO?**

*During a conversation, a pilgrim mentioned the fact that the German soldiers are instructed to read a verse*

*from the Bible every day. Abdul Baha laughed very heartily and said:*

What will the reader do if, in the course of his perusals, he comes across the following verse: "But I say unto you, resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also?"

### **ON A GENERAL STRIKE**

"Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to the man by whom the offense cometh." The present emperors, kings and rulers are directly responsible for the unprecedented calamities of this universal war, and they carry on their backs a heavy burden of crime. The blood of millions is crying for revenge, and the lamentations of the women are rising from the hearths that are turned to ashes. It is now high time that the soldiers bethink themselves, and voice the clarion of protest against their iron-hearted masters. They must go on a general strike and boycott militarism with all that pertains to it. Undismayed by lockouts, on the part of their employers, to force them into compliance, they must declare their position in most emphatic terms, and embody their demands in a bill of rights. Addressing their cruel superiors they must say: "Why should we march to the battlefield? Why should we carry arms? Why are you teaching our children the art of human butchery? Why are you painting the sanguinary arena of violence in such glowing colors? What is the meaning of all this turmoil in the name of patriotism?"

"Why should we fire at men that we have never known and never expected to see? Are they not our neighbors and our brothers also? Have we not been united by the ties of commerce and industry, and by the benignant influences of culture? Are we not fundamentally and

creationally one race, one nation, one religion? Did we not have a community of interests and a oneness of purpose? Amongst us there are no differences. We are not seeking wars. We are at peace.

"Therefore, if you, our emperors, kings and rulers, are at variance with one another, and cannot come to amicable understanding, it is not our affair. Why should *we* be used as pawns on the chessboard of your truculent ambitions? Why should *we* pay the piper with our blood? If you are unable to cool your tempers and act as gentlemen, well—there is the field! Pitch in! Taste yourselves of the dinner of bullets and the drink of blood—there in the open; and so free the world of your tyranny.

"Were it not for your eternal dissensions, mankind would long since have been at peace; for we, the members of the human family, are in full accord—united, agreed. You have been, and are, the original instigators of these animosities, of these racial and national prejudices. It is you who have sown these weeds in the gardens of our hearts and injected the poison of hatred into our veins; and you rest in your palaces or in your royal tents, far from the scene of horror and the pit of débâcle, and send us to the front with imperious command: Kill! Kill! Kill!

"If you are so absorbed, so relentless, why do you not *lead* us into the shower of lead? But no, cowards hiding in this or that corner, you suffer us to kill and to be killed in your names. Then, to crown your heartlessness and cruelty, you sit and philosophize: that the earth needed fertilizer; and what better fertilizer is there, what richer and cheaper fertilizer, than human blood and human corpses—not a thousand, nor a hundred thousand, but millions; that Europe was overpopulated, and a thorough weeding was necessary—was urgent; that the idea of peace and the principle of arbitration were gain-

ing ground, and had to be checked by every illegitimate means; that the common people were in a ferment of social unrest, demanding radical economic reforms, which would have had to be granted had not something been devised to distract their minds and direct their thoughts to other channels; and what more efficient method was there than the setting up of vast abattoirs, where the surplus population could be sacrificed to the Moloch of Iniquity! By such means the basis of autocracy became firmer, the foundation of dynasties steadier; the prestige of thrones was heightened and the inviolability of the sacred personages was secured. Then would these be declared the protectors of empires, the guardians of nations and the defenders of the Faith. Meanwhile the earth, moistened and enriched by mangled bodies, would cover her breast with luxuriant vegetation, so that the imperial children and grandchildren might disport themselves on her green pastures, trampling underfoot the inviolable rights of humanity, until such time as, dissatisfaction again becoming manifest, her "brave sons" would be called to spring to arms once more.

"Vain are you and vainer your thoughts! Let it be known that we no longer agree to shed our blood so copiously for the upholding of your fantastic reasons for war. Rather, we are determined to break your combinations of powers, to hurl down your despotic thrones and to regain the authority that you have usurped and assumed. We are fighting to uproot the tree of your coarse influence; to cleanse our bodies of its tenacious burrs; to destroy their thousand nettled thistles of evil and to promote the ideal of Democracy upon the expanse of the earth. We are fighting to establish the principles of Divine Civilization in the hearts of men and to hold aloft forever the banner of a Universal Commonwealth.

"Lo and behold! We are not asleep. The eastern hori-

zon is emblazoned with the advancing heralds of a New Day. We have seen, we have witnessed, and we are not mistaken. Oh joy! Oh joy of joys! We have arisen at the hour of dawn and offered up our morning prayer at the very Footstool of our Maker."

### **ON THE HOUR OF SELF-SACRIFICE**

The spirit of the age demands the establishment of Universal Peace. No power on earth can withstand it. Let the advocates of Peace work with yet greater zeal and courage, for the Lord of Hosts is their support.

In this radiant century, the ears are opened, the eyes are unveiled, the hearts are awakened, the consciences are stirred. The period of foreignness has ended and the epoch of friendship has begun; the night of darkness has melted away and the luminary of Unity has arisen upon the horizon of the world. This is not the hour for the taking of life; it is the hour for the giving of life—the hour of self-sacrifice for the commonweal of humanity.

### **ON HIS AIMS**

*A stranger asked, "What are your aims?"*

*Abdul Baha:*

My aims are: the setting up of an International Court of Arbitration, and adjustment between Capital and Labor. I make effort for the promotion of a Universal Auxiliary Language; in the teaching of Religion as conforming with Science and Reason; in explanation concerning the Continuity of Prophetic Revelation; in the inculcation of the principle of the primordial Oneness of all Phenomena; in the upraising of the standard of the Solidarity of Mankind and in the creation of a nucleus of the Universal Race. These are my aims. These are my duties. This is my work.

*Stranger: "Are you the leader of the Bahais?"*

*Abdul Baha:*

I do not like the word "leader." I am Abdul Baha. I am the servant of the world of humanity.

### **ON THE CENTURY OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN**

**We must not lose hope and courage. A few drops mark the beginning of a downpour of rain. At early dawn the light comes slowly, showing here and there a few feeble rays; yet, it is certain that ere long the sun will be stationed at the meridian of its glory. Truly I say: *The spirit of this age is Universal Peace.***

In the various centuries, great impelling ideas have been born and have developed. There was a period of scholasticism, and a period in which philosophy and the natural sciences were unfolded. The last period was that of freedom — the epoch of the march of democracy through many lands. But, this Twentieth Century is the century of the brotherhood of man, of the union of religions, of the solidarity of the nations and of the universalization of all the great ideals common to the children of men. All the people are the sheep and God is Shepherd, in a true sense, for He is kind to all. The earth is one home. The man-made geographical boundaries, whereby one piece of land is Austria, another Germany, another France, another England, are imaginary and have no real existence.

### **ON A NEW CODE OF ETHICS**

Wait till the end of this war! Then the New Ideals of Peace which I have nurtured in my mind will be promoted. After this war, new thoughts, new plans, sound

new theories will be essential; while the old thoughts will be good but for the scrap heap.

A new table must be spread, new dishes cooked and new appetites cultivated. The seeds of new flowers must be sown, new saplings planted and new roads constructed. A New Code of Ethics must be set up; new conventions for the amicable settlement of international disputes must be evolved; new capacities and abilities must be trained; new modes of expression must be found; new relations must be established; new worlds must be conquered; new lamps must be lighted and new Truths must be laid bare.

### *ON BEING TOO LATE*

In Europe and America, I have sown the seeds of new ideas—ideas which in time will germinate, pushing forth their heads into the light; and the day approaches when those regions shall be as flowering gardens. The praise of men cannot affect me, neither can their blame touch me. I have done my work.

There once was a farmer whose little field, bordered on every side by large estates, caused him grave concern, because the entire water-supply of the district was appropriated by the rich landowners. Therefore, on a spring morning, he sought out these neighbors of his, one after another, pleading: "I have ploughed my field and planted it with cotton, but now the tiny sprouts are withered by thirst. Allow me, I beseech you, a little water, that they may be revived." But, all turned a deaf ear and precipitated him out of their presence. So, realizing the fact that he must take matters into his own hands, the man, one midnight, slipped out and altered the current of the stream, leading it into his farm; and when morning dawned, rows and rows of little cotton shoots stood, green and smiling, stretching themselves toward the sun.

When the landlords saw what had been accomplished, they seized the daring farmer, placed him in the bastinado and stood by while their servants beat his feet most mercilessly. Throughout this proceeding the man was smiling contentedly and presently he burst into hilarious laughter. "Oh my poor friends, what is the use of it all! Do you not see that you are too late? My field is irrigated; my crop is watered; my harvest is assured!"

### ***ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SUBLIMITY OF THE HUMAN WORLD***

Today the distinguished leaders of nations must sing such a song in the ears of the people that the heart of humanity may be stirred unto cheerfulness; and they must draught such a plan of Universal Union, casting its reflection upon the mirror of the world of existence, that it shall be none other than the prototype of the Realm on High. The principle of the sublimity of the human world is loftier by far than the fictitious heaven; and the light of the luminary of the *Merciful Universe* is more scintillating than the light of the stars.

### ***ON THE TENT OF BAHU-U-LLAH***

*During the World War, the great tent that had been sent to Baha-U-Llah by the Bahais of Bombay, which was of a size that could accomodate three or four hundred persons, was given to Jemal Pasha.*

That sacred Tent which sheltered the Manifestation of God; that Tent, beneath which the *Ketab-El-Akdas* and other Tablets were revealed; that Tent, which it was prophesied would be raised on the plain of Acca and on Mount Carmel; that Tent, in the shade of which the International Congress of Humanity must, in the future, be convened; that Tent whereon shall wave the Flag of

Universal Peace,—is given over to Jemal Pasha, Commander of the Syrian Army.

The Pavilion of Love is set up in the camp of hate. The Canopy of Conciliation is raised on the battlefield. The Tent of the Lord of Peace is given to the god of war. Ah me! How sad I have felt since hearing this news!

### ON GOD'S DECREE

The Flag of Universal Peace shall wave over all. Who can dam the irresistible torrent of Destiny? Who can stand before the Army of Brotherhood?

It is predestined that humanity shall ultimately become One Family. God has ordained that the walls of division be brought down; that the scattered parts be cemented into a Whole; that the truculent rivers join the Most Great Sea. The multicolored flowers shall be gathered into one bunch, and the diverse pages collected into one book. This will come to pass in spite of difficulties. It is God's decree.

### ON A NEW POWER

This world of ours is going through undreamed of changes, and revolutions. It is in a transitory state—shedding off the old skin, building up fresh tissues, and taking unto itself hardy ligaments. The happy and healthy children of a new order of public opinion are being born, ethical laws are in process of radical reformation, while an entirely different code of statutes are about to be legislated, ~~in~~ for international relations and the final consolidation of ~~the~~ ancient and modern nations. No human mind can conceive of the startling changes that God has in store for His people.

It is demonstrated that all the nations have contributed toward the bringing about of the world catastrophe; ~~ever~~

the so-called Christian religion has made of itself a pliable instrument for war purposes, and the governments find themselves possessed of no ~~executive~~ power with which to remove the accumulated load of newly-created rancor. Nevertheless, a power does exist; it is the Bahai Movement!

Unbiased, completely spiritual, this is the only highway upon which the armies of peace can be marshalled. When men turn their faces toward this *Point*, a new light shall illumine their hearts. Then their complicated relations will adjust themselves and their problems will become solved.

The inclusion of a few Bahais in the council chambers of the nations would have marked effect; for these beings, graduated from the stultified state of nationalism and patriotism, and cosmopolitan in body, mind and spirit, would bring into play a virile and wisely propelled public opinion, fitted to turn the current of the blind evil forces into the channels of inter-racial comradeship and world solidarity. They would contribute not only to the establishment of a United States of Europe, but to that infinitely more important measure—the organization of the United States of the World.

### *ON THE PACIFISTS*

The law of peace has come to stay. We are living in the radiant age of peace. The angels of peace are hovering above our heads. We are daily advancing on the path of peace. The army of peace is being recruited from among all nations and peoples. Let the Pacifists know that the unconquerable power of God—that moral, irresistible, ineffable "Something"—is behind them. No government and no nation can withstand them. With this power alone they will be able to defeat all opposition and remove all stumbling blocks. From now on, lesser and

lesser will be the magic spell of war; greater and greater will be the influence of peace. The day is coming when the dove of peace shall reign over all the continents, the laws of peace shall rule all the nations and the resources of war will be expended on that which will be conducive to the spiritualization of mankind. Let all the Pacifists gather their scattered forces and combine their material and moral means. They must look forward, and not backward; above and not below. They are the real benefactors of humanity—the burning torches of bright hope. Just as the heaven is above the earth, so must their ideals soar above the ideals of this age. Unfailingly they must inspire the hearts with peace and concord. With perfect faith and assurance they must toil and labor, knowing of a certainty that the goal is ahead. They shall reach it if they work steadily and resolutely. The Lord of Hosts is reinforcing them. The Sun of Peace is up on the horizon, and its rays are penetrating through the clouds of prejudice and ignorance. These warships will be changed into merchant steamers, binding the nations and countries more closely together. Blessed are those who are enlisted in the ranks of peace!

### III

## EDUCATION AND CULTURE

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*I heard him say*

**ON LEAVING COLLEGE WITH NO RELIGION  
AT ALL**

The doors of colleges and universities must be kept wide open to the youth of all nationalities and the adherents of all religions, so that men and women, from widely scattered countries, meeting therein and becoming acquainted with one another's customs and thoughts, may discard their baseless prejudices. In this manner young people will acquire the ideal of **WORLD PATRIOTISM**.

In the East there are a number of missionary colleges in which dogmatic sectarianism is practised—where the student is constantly taught, side by side with the grandeur of the Christian faith, the falsity of his own. The net result has been woeful failure; for these young people are apt to leave college with no religion at all. Thus, it is shown, that when a missionary tries, either by direct attack or by indirect reference, to undermine the religion in which the student has been brought up, he is at the same time undermining his own Christianity.

Now, in this radiant century, the Sun of Reality has dawned, scattering its bright rays upon all humanity. We are beginning to realize that this globe is One Home; that all men are members of one family, trees of one garden and lamps of one meeting.

Creationally, there are no bad people. All are good. It is only when we subvert the original plan concerning our progress that the result is distorted and abnormal.

The tree of humanity is a single tree—planted by God. The origin is one and the end also is one.

### ON THREE PRINCIPLES TO BE TAUGHT IN THE UNIVERSITIES

In this age the college which is run in a denominational spirit is an anomaly. Such an institution is engaged in a losing fight, for it cannot long withstand the forces of liberalism in education. The universities and colleges of the world must hold fast to three principles.

First: **SERVICE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF EDUCATION**, which is the unfolding of the mysteries of nature; the extension of the boundaries of pure science; the elimination of the causes of ignorance and of social evils; the standardization of a *Universal System of Instruction* and the diffusion of the lights of knowledge and reality.

Second: **SERVICE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF MORALITY**, which is the raising of the moral tone of the students; the inspiring of them with the highest ideals of ethical requirement; the instructing of them with altruism; the inculcation in their lives of the beauty of sanctity and of the excellence of virtue, and the animating of them with the *spirit* of the religion of God.

Third: **SERVICE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF THE ONENESS OF THE WORLD OF HUMANITY**, which is the bringing home to the students of the fact that all are brothers, irrespective of religion or race; and the setting up before them of the ideal of Universal Peace, so that they may become soldiers in the army of peace and servants of the body politic—the *World*.

God is the Father of all. This globe is One Home. The nations are parts of the One Family. The mothers in the homes, the teachers in the schools, the professors in the colleges, the presidents in the universities must teach

these ideals to the young generation from the cradle to the age of manhood.

### *ON THE LIVING OF A FEW DAYS*

Time is very precious; therefore, it must be spent in a precious cause. The study of commerce, agriculture and science is most praiseworthy; yet the mind must not be entirely concentrated on such things. If an individual happens to be a Bahai, let him arise to teach the Cause. He must not be speechless; he must not be lukewarm. He should have life, motion, spirit. It is desirable that man engage in an occupation lest he become a burden on the community; but all his thoughts should not revolve around it. His aim must be a continuous increase in the scale of human and divine virtues. His today must be better than his yesterday; and his tomorrow better than his today. What did you do today? Oh, I ate, I dressed, I walked, I slept. What do you mean to do tomorrow? The same thing. And after tomorrow? The same. How mediocre must be the thoughts of those who satisfy themselves with merely physical pursuits!

Do not for one moment believe that man can obtain joy, serenity, confidence, save through God. No matter how seemingly permanent may be the structure of his material happiness, it will totter and fall if his heart be not attached to Him. He will live a few days, drink a few cups, dance a few steps and then—the voices are lowered, darkness prevails and oblivion spreads its ominous wings.

### *ON THE GREATER PICTURE*

Once upon a time, the King of a certain country prepared a gallery in his palace, as scene of a contest between the artists of China and the artists of Rome. When the delegations representing the two nations arrived,

each was given a wall whereon to express itself; and a curtain was raised between the two, extending down the gallery from end to end, so that both might operate in private.

The Chinese artists immediately began to map out the scheme of their design and then, with utmost intensity and vigor, continued with their creative work—half of the group applying itself by day and the other half by night.

The Roman artists, on the other hand, polished their wall. With equal absorption, with equal energy, they polished. Each morning the attendants thought: now they will begin to paint! But time passed, and the Romans continued to polish the wall.

When the day of award arrived, the King, followed by his courtiers, entered the gallery and passed before the work of the Chinese artists. A vast decoration—a garden of sumptuous colors depicting humanity in myriad aspects, and presented with consummate delicacy. The King exclaimed: "This is life itself! This is the pinnacle of art!" He then, with some diffidence, turned about, and the great curtain was drawn away revealing the opposite side of the gallery. Oh wonder! A wall, of quality so dazzling, that each and every object, animate and inanimate, was repeated in its lustrous depths. The Chinese painting, stretched from end to end of the hall, in all its beauty, in all its intricacy was repeated—lived again.

The prize was awarded to the Roman artists.

### *ON RECEPTIVITY*

When a soul passes under the protection of Baha-U-Llah his receptivity will increase, even as a tree trained by the sun will, day by day, grow and develop. Consider: in the days of Jesus, those who became believers were

of the humblest—fishermen, tax-gatherers, peasant folk; yet, through divine education, they progressed and received a share of the breaths of the Holy Spirit.

When God confers receptivity, spiritual and beatific consciousness is obtained.

### **ON LEARNING A TRADE**

The explicit injunction of Baha-U-Llah is: every boy and girl, rich or poor, high or low, must learn a trade, a craft or an art. A ruling to this effect must be incorporated in the constitutions of all schools. Although, economically speaking, a certain child may be well off, he must, for the sake of adherence to this principle, acquire a profession.

It is incumbent on a Bahai to correlate his words and deeds with the basic principles of Baha-U-Llah, and if these agree he may feel certain that he is on the right track. All our difficulties arise from the fact that our actions do not correspond with these teachings. We sow the wind, and inevitably we reap the whirlwind. We should imagine Baha-U-Llah alive, sitting in his room, and we in his Presence explaining our motives and purposes. Would he be pleased, or would he not? Would he say "Well done! This is good!"?

In this day the study of art is prayer and work is considered as worship. For this reason is it said: "The tradesmen are the friends of God." Reflect for a moment on the blessed reality of the arts and trades, that the practise of them is regarded as prayer! Through the educational laws of attention and suggestion, children must be encouraged and incited to characterize themselves with merciful ethics and spiritual qualities. Study well their moods, and direct their thoughts, through pleasurable enterprises, into inspiring channels. Do not

lose a single opportunity of imbuing their minds with a sense of the beautiful and the perfect.

It was during our confinement in the barracks at Acca, that Baha-U-Llah spoke to us on the necessity for industrial education; and I, hearing these words, began to address myself saying: "How can I learn a trade? I am a prisoner." However, after some inquiry, I discovered the fact that there was a mat-weaver in the town; so I sent for him and made arrangements to become his apprentice. Presently, he had installed his simple weaving machine in one of the prison rooms and there, for six months, I worked under his direction. When I had completed a mat with my own hands, I laid it at the feet of Baha-U-Llah.

### *ON BOTH ASPECTS OF ART*

Baha-U-Llah has said that when we undertake the study of any branch of the arts or crafts, we must strive to master its technicalities and expressions, and perfect ourselves in it; yet, at the same time, that attention to this art must not impede the unfoldment of the spiritual art. Art without the still small voice of the spirit, art without the inspiration of the higher spheres, art without the vibrations of the superhuman, art without the perfume of the anemones and hyacinths of the Garden of Heaven—is not art but artifice. Therefore, acquaint yourselves with both aspects of art and let them complement each other.

The Prophets of God, Masters in the Spiritual Art School, teach men to paint the ideal virtues of the world of humanity on the canvas of the spirit; and, ever and anon, the masterpieces produced in their classes are exhibited on the Mount of Transfiguration, in the Gallery of Sacrifice.

During these latter years, more than twenty thousand of such masterpieces have been displayed in Persia.

**ON THE HEROES AND HEROINES OF THE  
WORLD DRAMA**

This world is like unto a vast theatre in which are produced plays, as numerous and diversified as are the experiences of mankind. The audience is composed of the human race; while the actors function sometimes in the audience, and sometimes on the stage. Each individual must comport himself according to his character and ability. The vast majority is satisfied to remain part of the unnamed, indistinct mass called the audience; others, urged by unrest or ambition, break the fetters, binding them to convention and morbid respectability, and appear upon the stage to fill minor roles. Then the besetting difficulties and tremendous trials devolving upon actors encircle them like unto a whirlwind and, not having been warned beforehand, and not having thoroughly rehearsed their parts, they become bewildered, discouraged, frightened and ere long straggle back, returning to their original positions in the audience.

A third type of men and women, endowed by nature with iron will, adamant strength, unswerving determination, sterling character, dominating personality and passionate desire for good, look upon hindrances and stumbling blocks as so many rungs in a ladder. Through innate knowledge and the power of intuition, these individuals dissipate difficulties and reduce to ashes the stronghold of opposition. By the right of sheer merit, they become heroes and heroines in the world drama; and they play their parts and sing their songs, filling the hearts with unmeasured delight. Their authority provokes instantaneous acknowledgement.

Now, why do these people rise to such heights of fame? Because, in their quest of the pearl of great price, nothing daunts them. They are acquainted with poverty

and riches, sickness and health, heart-ache and delight, anguish and joy, disappointment and realization, deprivation and plenty, confinement and liberty, death and life. Trained through the bitterness and sweetness of experience, they become Masters of their art; and presently, they hold within their mighty grasp the scepter of Glory.

### *ON THAT WHICH JESUS RAN AWAY FROM*

In Oriental literature, there is a story about the Christ which is not to be found in any of the four gospels. It reads thus: One day, Jesus was seen striding with great rapidity down the road, and the people, amazed at his unusual demeanor, followed after him, crying out: "Master! Master! Why this haste? Whom are you escaping from?" Jesus ignored them, continuing on his way. But they insisted: "There are no wild beasts in this vicinity, no lions, panthers or wolves. What has put you to this precipitous flight?"

Then Jesus answered: "I am flying from the fool."

"But are you not the Christ! With the power of the Holy Spirit, you can blow upon this man and he will become wise."

Jesus said: "I blew a breath of the Holy Spirit upon the ignorant, and he became learned; I blew a breath upon the blind, and he gained his sight; I blew a breath upon the dead, and he was quickened into life; but I blew a thousand breaths upon the fool, and he remains a fool. Consequently, I am running away from him."

### *ON THE POWER THAT DISTINGUISHES MAN FROM THE ANIMAL*

Today, as I was being slowly driven along the boulevards (Paris), I looked searchingly into the faces of the people; but I did not discover the least trace of spirituality. All were submerged in the sea of nature and en-

gulfed in the ocean of materialism. I observed the men and women, busy as bees, intent on assembling the means of their livelihood and comfort. Now, the bees are ready at birth to occupy themselves with their duties; but men must, from childhood, train themselves for their various vocations. Thus, the summit of economic independence and happiness, which man strives so hard to scale, is attained without exertion by the bee.

The bee builds its hexagonal home with precision; its food is the extract of flowers and its independence is so complete that, requiring assistance from no one, it provides even for others by supplying of its own sweet honey. But, man studies the rules of architecture for years; then plans and works day and night to build a house and, at the end, prepares a table less perfect than is the honeycomb. So is his highest ambition as low in scale as are the instincts of the bee.

The bee alights on one bush after another, thoughtless, carefree, inhaling the sweetness of the variegated flowers. If this is the state to be striven for, then the bee is more joyous and more virtuous than is man.

One day in Acca, as I was sitting in the garden, my attention was drawn to a spider which was weaving its web. I watched its dexterous movements and beheld its creation of paralleling lines, triangles and designs—balanced and flawless. With all his instruments, an architect would unquestionably have required two days to produce the same effect. Then I thought: How cultured is this spider! Let all the geometricians come and learn from it!

Civilization doubtless is beneficial; perfection of line is to be desired, but natural civilization must not prevent us from acquiring the graces of spiritual civilization. The happiness of the individual and the eternal prosperity of the people are dependent upon the ideal perfections. If

men attain unto these virtues, they are superior to the animals; otherwise they are inferior to them.

God has deposited in the human race a power which is the discoverer of the reality of phenomena — a power which transcends the regulations of nature and dominates the forces of the physical world. Through this gift, man is distinguished from the animal. Is it not then to be regretted that he misses his great opportunity by neglecting this power and crawling, even as the worm, deeper and deeper into the earth?

I hope that you will prove the means of the quickening of these souls and of the spiritualizing of their susceptibilities, so that the world of morality may be illumined, the perfections of humanity revealed and the divine attributes manifested. I will pray for you.

### *ON REVOLVING AROUND THE CIRCLE*

Oh worshipper of Reality! The majority of people worship superstitions and are submerged in the creeds and dogmas of their ancestors — remaining wholly deprived of the inner divine mysteries. Even as the donkey of the mill, their motion is circular. Starting from one point, they revolve around the circle; and thus continue over and over again, taking not one step past the circumference of rotation.

In this manner most men do not attempt to travel beyond the limits of the earth, but persistently turn around the world of nature. Praise be unto God, that you have broken from the limits of matter and are moving perpendicularly toward the Kingdom!

### *ON BECOMING A LIGHT-GIVING BODY*

There is a certain station destined for man in which, if he reaches it, he will realize that all phenomena is conversing with him. For example, when he looks upon the

sun, he will hear it addressing him thus: "Oh son of man! Behold, how light is good! I, a body composed of mineral elements, have no importance in the mineral; but, in the fact that I am *light-giving*, I am important. I am educator to the world. I develop all the minerals in the bowels of the earth and produce the vegetation on its surface. I am the sustainer of life in the animal and human kingdoms; and these services I am able to render because I am illumined.

Oh man! Strive, therefore, to enkindle yourself, that you likewise may become the means of the *illumination* of the world of humanity!"

### **ON THE BOY WHO HAD LOST THE CHANCE OF LEARNING ANYTHING**

One day, as he was walking along the streets of a town in the district of Suleymanieh, Baha-U-Llah observed a little boy who was weeping as though his heart would break.

"What is your trouble?" he asked; and the child answered:

"My father sent me to study in the school, but when the teacher saw me, he said: 'Boy, you are so ugly that I cannot look into your face. Go home and do not let me see you again.' So, I have lost my chance of learning anything. That is why I weep."

"What is your name?"

"Azziz."

"Come with me, Azziz. I will be your teacher."

The child studied with Baha-U-Llah, and as he was exceedingly intelligent and receptive, he, in a short time, became the wonder of the town in Suleymanieh.

## **ON THE SONG THAT IS SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHERS**

Last night a Hindu sang for us, accompanying himself on his instrument, the vina; and as he continued, we no longer noticed the sound of a piano which was being played on the floor above, although we heard it again afterwards. This illustrates a lesson, namely: that when we listen to a great song we must forget those that are inferior. A music-lover, who has been charmed by the harmonies produced by an accomplished master can no longer be satisfied with the efforts of a pupil. Let us suppose that the foremost artist of Paris has, in this room, inspired our hearts with immortal songs. Shall we then go out into the streets and delight in the crude notes of a hand organ? If we do so, it will indicate the fact that we were unappreciative of the genius of the master.

In the world of today innumerable melodies are audible. From various studios divergent strains come floating on the air. Many of these are ancient tunes which, through repetition, have deteriorated to such an extent that the original themes are entirely obscured. Added to this the singers of this music have grown old and lost their voices. Thus, have the Songs of Life been altered with time, so that one can scarcely recognize them.

Other tunes are sounded also—untried ones lacking the essential characteristics of true harmony; and yet others, the effects of which may perchance be detrimental.

Now, if we listen to a medley of music, played by inferior artists, we will hear nothing but discord. If we want to run after such distracting sounds we will be lost in the wilderness of deprivation. We should have discriminating ears so as to catch the Melody, the sweet strains of which will stir the world of humanity and

make men dance for joy—the Melody that will be taken up by the angels and carried to the Supreme Concourse. In such case, we shall obtain universal results. Then we will receive fresh life. Then we will become illumined.

It has been proven that whenever this Melody is raised, the world of being is quickened with new vibrations and the realm of existence endowed with new life. The sphere of thought is rejuvenated, sciences are renovated, morality is resuscitated and mankind is ushered into a new era of civilization. Again and again this has occurred, with effects that are records in history.

Let us, therefore, search and find out the One Glorious Song that, with its countless entrancing accompaniments, has run throughout the ages, changing millions of human beings; the Song that produces harmony and exhilaration, that develops the spirit and unfolds the inner potentialities of life—The Song That Is Superior To All Others.

### *ON THE MANSIONS OF GOD*

I have come to your country to see men rather than piles of bricks and clay. Buildings are many; men are few. I have come to see men.

Palaces built by ancient kings retain not even a stone to tell the story of their fall; and so will the great piles, rearing their heads in these cities, go through the same process. But, the divine palace shall never crumble—the indestructible palace, which is the reality of man. Every heart is a site for the erection of such a structure, of which ideals are the cement and noble deeds the bricks. I am searching, throughout the world, for the souls who are engaged in building these mansions of God.

The mansions of God are high, and in them one can only love, and love more. When the aerial mariner steers his ship skyward, little by little, inharmonies and incongruities are left behind. Vast, wonderful, serene, the

panorama of nature spreads itself below—the Creator's work, flawless from this height. Even so does the path of Reality lead to the summit of Love, from which ugliness is not discernible, or any misfit whatsoever—where man contemplates the world of humanity with the vision of the seer and the Prophet.

### ON THE LAND OF BAHA

*Abdul Baha:* "You, my friend, who have journeyed to many parts, may now consider visiting the Land of Baha."

*Young Traveller:* "I have never heard of that country."

*Abdul Baha:* "Nevertheless, thousands have been there, and returning, have given glowing accounts of their experiences."

*Young Traveler:* "Have they written any books?"

*Abdul Baha:* "Some of them have; yet none could find adequate words in which to describe the things that they had seen."

*Young Traveller:* "Have you met any of these people?"

*Abdul Baha:* "Oh yes."

*Young Traveller:* "What do they say?"

*Abdul Baha:* "Thy tell us that that land is not affected by the heat of summer, nor by the forlorn conditions of autumn, nor by the frost of winter; in fact they report that perennial spring reigns in that region. There, the gardens are abloom with imperishable flowers, and fountains ever play while the birds continually sing. Also, the day is not followed by night, nor the night by day; but the stars twinkle and the moon shines full in a heaven where the sun never sets."

*Young Traveller:* "How wonderful! And in what manner do the natives speak to one another?"

*Abdul Baha:* "In a language which all can understand."

*Young Traveller:* "Could I go there?"

*Abdul Baha:* "I will be your guide; for I am well acquainted with that land. I will show you its universities and palaces, and lead you along its boulevards, shaded by living trees. At your side I will climb the slope of the Mountain; teach you the secret of the ever-changing, ever-changeless life and reveal to you the panorama of the Infinite."

*Young Traveller:* "When may we start?"

*Abdul Baha:* "Now."

*Young Traveller:* "Perhaps my brother would like to accompany us. Shall I go and fetch him?"

*Abdul Baha:* "I will wait."

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**IV**

**ATTITUDE AND DEPARTMENT**

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*I heard him say*

### ON CANDLESTICKS

Men are like unto candlesticks. Here is a candlestick in which the candle burns brightly; there, another bears a candle which has not yet been ignited; a third stands empty for its candle is burned out and a fourth, likewise empty, has never held a candle at all. Similarly, there are some enkindled souls, the very presence of whom illumine a meeting; whilst the horizon of the minds can be smirched by the smoke clouds emitted by others.

My counsel to you is: Never allow the candle of your heart to become extinct; but constantly feed it with the oil of wisdom, so that its power may increase and its radiance envelop the creatures. An empty candlestick! Ah me! A body without life, a pearl without lustre, a sheaf without wheat, a garden without flowers, a mine without gold!

### ON CONDUCT

You are like unto tender plants, trained according to the wisdom of the gardener. From now on you must strive to beautify the moral aspect of your lives. Advise others with utmost consideration, and daily watch your own words and deeds—thus, you will characterize yourselves with divine ideals. These ideals are: humility, submission, charity, loving-kindness, annihilation of self and perfect evanescence. So, dying in self you will live in God.

You must be exceedingly compassionate to one another and to all the people of the earth. Serve humanity simply for the sake of God, and not for any other reason; and may the foundation of this service be spiritual love and divine assurance!

Again, be most careful lest a single word contrary to truth issue from your lips. One falsehood hurls man from the highest station of honor unto the abyss of disgrace. Continuously guard yourselves against this enemy, so that your every statement may correspond with actuality. At all times supplicate at the Court of God and ask for assistance and confirmation. Make effort, that you may win the good-pleasure of Baha-U-Llah. If you gain this prize, all the elements of the world of creation will stand ready to do your bidding. They will find their attainment in, and through you. In other words, you will become the fruits of the garden of existence.

Exalt your thoughts. Magnify your endeavors. Enlarge the circumference of your ideals. Spread the wings of spiritual vision. Let your hopes be in the accomplishment of great deeds, the results of which may immortalize your names.

Men are holding fast to a mirage. Praise be unto God that you are under the protection of Baha-U-Llah! I will always pray for you and, with utmost humility, ask for extraordinary progress for you.

### *ON THE CRITERION*

In all his affairs, great and small, a Bahai must conform to the good-pleasure of Baha-U-Llah. This is the criterion. For example: before he takes one step forward, or backward, he must consider whether or not such a step will constitute a service to the Cause. If this be not the case, it were better to stand still.

The people of the world are thinking of, and for them-

selves. They are attending to their selfish interests and to the promotion of their small causes. Each soul is attached to some hobby; and he beats his own drum, soaring the while in the atmosphere of his own desires. If he speaks, it is for a personal motive, either concealed or apparent; if he walks, he is impelled by some ambition; if he eats and sleeps it is in order to gain strength for the advancing of his ideas. All his operations are dictated by self-interest; and he lives, moves and feels like unto the animal—self-occupied, self-satisfied, seeing nothing, believing in nothing beyond the five senses.

Now, the good-pleasure of Baha-U-Llah must be the mainspring for the activities of the Bahais. Their thoughts and deeds must be dedicated to God. If they eat or sleep it must be for the purpose of renewing life so that they may serve the Cause with greater power and efficiency. If they function in this manner their lives will bear great fruit; otherwise all their efforts will be to no avail—simply a few profitless years will have been spent, leaving behind no trace.

### *ON ENJOYMENT*

You must eat in moderation. Overeating is the cause of many diseases. Always rise from the table before you are quite satisfied. One must have retrograded to a low point if one finds oneself in a state of satiety with eating or sleeping.

Man has two aspects, the physical and the spiritual. The physical side is sustained as it is in the beast; but the spiritual side is nourished by faith, assurance, ideal qualities and the knowledge and love of God. More attention must be given to the latter than to the former; and as a result, enjoyment will come through the unfolding of the intellect, the virtues of the world of humanity and the divine characteristics.

## ON SLEEP

I have passed a cheerful night for I slept five hours. One of the greatest gifts in the world of humanity is that of sleep. Those who have been, or who are afflicted with insomnia can appreciate this fact. If you place all the favors of God in one scale and sleep in a second, this second scale will outweigh the first.

If a man in prison is possessed of a loaf of dry bread and sleep, he is better off than a king in a palace with all luxuries at his disposal *except* sleep. Once, I visited a sick man who, besides suffering from other troubles, was a victim of insomnia and he, with an expression of utter weariness, said: "I wish to God that I could experience sleep for one hour; then open my eyes to feel the restoring effect and die peacefully." His prayer was answered; he slept for an hour, after which he looked about him with an air of relief and passed over the borderland land.

When I awoke this morning it was four o'clock. I could not believe that I had slept so long. I went to the window and could judge, by the position of the stars, that I had the correct time. I was very much pleased; and that is why I feel the joy of living today and breathe the fresh air with a new delight.

As a young man I never slept on a mattress. I would read until late then, when I became drowsy, would stretch out on the floor, place the book under my head and cover my body with my aba. How soundly I would sleep! I can yet remember the enjoyment of those nights.

## ON PRAYER

Those persons who are cognizant and conscious of truth, obtain joy and spirituality when they obey the laws of God. For example, there is no state in the world

of existence sweeter than is that of prayer. It produces mindfulness, begets the attractions of the Kingdom and engenders the susceptibilities of the Higher Intelligence. The supreme attainment of Moses is set forth in the words: *"God conversed with Moses."*

What is prayer? It is conversation with God. If man concentrates his attention he will, at such times, be aware of the fact that he indeed is in communication with the Divine Power.

Often, at night, I cannot sleep and thoughts of the world weigh heavily upon my mind. I toss uneasily from side to side; then I arise and converse with God.

Prayer and supplication are so effective, that throughout the following day the heart is lifted up and a condition of supreme serenity is realized.

### *ON COMPLETING THE SENTENCE*

Religion without prayer is not religion; for work and worship must go hand in hand, each accentuating the other. There are some, however, who maintain that, if they consistently apply themselves in constructive effort their deeds are accepted as prayer. These persons resemble a certain individual who was one day asked by the Mullah: "How is it that you do not pray?" The man answered: "Because, in the Koran, the law of prayer is abrogated."

"Strange, I have never heard this."

"Oh yes! Have you not read that verse in which Mohammed says: 'Do not approach prayer.'"

"Certainly, but why do you not complete the sentence? — *"while in a state of intoxication."*

"Oh, I cannot remember everything."

"Unfortunately, you simply remember that which is useful to your own purpose, and forget the rest."

## ON HAPPINESS

The star of happiness resides in every heart. For us, it is to dispel the clouds that envelop it, so that it may radiantly shine forth. Happiness is an internal condition which, when well established, will cause man to ascend unto the supreme heights of bliss. A truly happy man is not subject to shifting eventualities; for like unto a king he sits firmly upon the throne of fixed realities. He is impervious to outward, changing circumstances, continuing through his actions to impart happiness to others.

A Bahai must be happy, for the blessings of God have been conferred upon him.

## ON FREE WILL

Fidelity is a great attribute. In the case of the dog, it is natural; but true fidelity is of the kind that is volitional. The beauty and fragrance of the rose are natural; but if these properties were volitional, how grateful everyone would be to the rose. Although the sun shines upon all phenomena, we are not grateful to it because the sun *must* shine—it is in its nature to shine. The rain falls upon the earth, causing luxuriant vegetation, and no one says “thank you;” yet if a person gives a cup of water to a thirsty one, he is thanked. Why? Because that person has a will—a free will, to give or not to give. The free will which God has created in man is an adornment. Therefore, it is your *privilege* to be kind to one another and to help one another.

## ON A REBELLIOUS WEED

With the discovery of America, the tobacco plant was brought to the Old World and use of it, by degrees, became prevalent in many of the countries of Europe and

Asia. In Turkey, however, such a firm stand against it was taken by Sultan Salim, that the people, the officials and especially the members of the imperial family found themselves obliged to follow his lead in the matter. Now, it happened that one of the royal princes had developed a taste for the forbidden weed and this youth, being forced to observe court etiquette in public, made it a practise to retire in the evenings to his apartment, where he would indulge himself to his heart's content.

On a certain occasion, one of the ministers, whose duties had brought him to the family wing of the palace, took it into his head to visit the prince; and he, opening the door, beheld the young man lost in enjoyment, while a column of smoke circled upward, coming from his person. Amazed and indignant, the minister began to deliver a lecture on obedience; but the prince, with utmost composure, bade his visitor be seated, saying that he would present the case as he saw it. Then he said:

"When our holy Prophet announced his divine mission to the world, all the animate and inanimate objects prostrated themselves, offering him their allegiance, save one accursed plant—and the plant, which in this manner denied its rightful Lord, was Tobacco. For this all-sufficient reason, and as just punishment for such an execrable attitude, I have made it my mission to subject the rebellious weed to smoke. Therefore, as one believer to another, I ask you if I am not justified in so doing?"

The minister listened to this argument with much attention, and at its close, exclaimed with sudden heat: "If this is so, then I will smoke it, too—and thus gain the reward of Paradise!"

### *ON THE THREE PATHS*

There are three paths leading to spiritual happiness. The first is the path of ordeal, trial and difficulty. Here

the traveller is beset by pain and torment, and his feet are wounded by thistles and thorns; yet through it all, he reaches his destination. The second is a pleasant path: slowly but surely, the cheerful determined traveller advances; and though the journey is long, he yet attains the goal. The third is the path of faith: here with one bound, the traveller enters the Kingdom; in less than the twinkling of an eye he passes from the world of negation into the world of affirmation. We have seen this with our own eyes.

### ON THE INTERPRETER OF THE HEART

Utterance is the interpreter. Conversation revolves around the pivot where the heart dwells. From a man's words, one can be informed regarding the world in which he travels—as to whether he is looking upward toward the realm of light, or downward toward the nether world; as to whether he is mindful or heedless, awake or asleep, alive or dead. Even so said Ali: "*Man is hidden behind his tongue.*"

Out of the fullness of heart does one speak. There are persons whose words are joy-giving, life-imparting. In their company, the faded become refreshed, the sad happy, the extinct enkindled. He who is submerged in the sea of doubt and hesitation is saved by the current of their assurance; and he who is riveted to this material world is, through them, severed and freed. On the other hand, there are persons whose very breaths extinguish the light of faith. Companionship with such distracts attention from the Kingdom of God. If you pass by a rose garden, you will inhale a tender fragrance; if you skirt a tannery, the effect will be nausea.

Those souls which are permeated, through and through, with spiritual vibrations are the manifestors of God's mercy, the educators of the nations and the vivifiers of

the world of humanity. They are the Guardian Angels. Glory unto them!

### *ON DISEASE AND PAIN*

God has endowed the herbs and plants with healing properties and created each object to the end that it may command definite results. Fire, for example, has the effect of burning. A person cannot enter a fire, repeatedly stating the while: "I am not burning, I am not burning!" He will burn in spite of what he says. One of the followers of a certain school came to me, asserting: "There is no pain. Pain is a phantasm of the brain!" I answered: "Very well, I will get a walking stick and beat you on the back. By this actual demonstration we will find out if there is such a thing as pain." The man did not submit to the experiment.

A lady, very demonstrative in this belief, conducted a long argument with me until I finally remarked: "I observe that your eyes cross a little. Why do you not say: 'There is no such thing as cross-eye, there is no such thing as cross-eye!' and we will see if this repetition does away with the actual ailment."

Now, I am not contending that prayer has no effect on disease, for, in truth, it produces great results in certain nervous and spiritual conditions. Disease is a disturbance of the equilibrium between the various organisms of the body. Healing is a restoration of that equilibrium. Likewise, when the measures of the various elements required by a healthy constitution are improperly balanced, sickness results. A course of treatment which will re-establish the normal standard of these elements will be conductive to health.

Again, thirst is a physical condition. When the quantity of humidity in the constitution is sub-normal, water is required. However much you may think and try to

prove that you have no thirst, it will be useless. Also, in the case of hunger, thoughts and demonstrations are not satisfying; rather you would prefer a roast chicken or a gooseberry pie.

In brief, there are physical diseases and spiritual diseases. The former should be treated with medicine and prayer; the latter with prayer alone.

Nevertheless, there are occasions when men rise above the contingencies of the material world. Once, at a meeting in the city of Kashan, a Bahai was invited to speak; and he, arising, addressed the people on the history of the Cause. This subject, however, was not to the liking of the audience and the host made repeated attempts to silence him—all to no avail. The man said: "I cannot stop. An invisible force impels me. I have lost myself. I have forgotten conditions." Then, someone in the crowd cried out: "If you are unconscious, put your hand in the fire." The speaker immediately approached a brazier of live coals, which occupied the center of the room, and thrusting his hand into it, proceeded with his explanations. His hand was burning and the people began to scream: "It is enough, it is enough!" but the Bahai answered: "Let it burn! This is the day of my happiness! Let me continue the story of Baha-U-Llah."

This man, for the time being, was so immersed in the sea of spiritual susceptibilities, that physical pain seemed unimportant.

### *ON SPIRITUAL HEALTH*

Perfect tranquillity or composure are not destined for man in the material world. In one way or another he is attacked by depressing conditions. He may be ill, physically or morally; he may suffer from anxiety or affliction, or even be surrounded by enemies, either visible or invisible. In short, if you search throughout the East and

the West, inquiring of each one as to whether he is completely happy, you will find that every person has been, or is unwell, or grieving, or mentally confused, or laboring under financial strain, or disappointed in some of the struggles of life. History does not bear record of a single instance free from human frailties.

The law of change works mighty transformations in all the departments of existence. When I came to Acca, I was in the prime of life and many here were at the apex of strength and virility. Now, all of them are stricken with age; their backs are bent, their faces are lined, their forces are disintegrated. Some are dead and their voices are heard no more. Their stars are set; their breezes hushed; their flowers withered. Consequently, the condition of health or sickness, in a life subject to such rise and fall, to such beginning and ending, is of small importance.

Therefore, when I inquire about your health, I refer to your *spiritual* health. That is a subject fraught with supreme significance, to the same degree that the subject of physical health is of no significance.

### **ON THE CORNERSTONE OF NATIONAL GREATNESS**

Marriage is a holy covenant; therefore, in order to fully partake of the responsibilities of life, it is advisable to enter this state of physical and spiritual relationship. The young man and woman must bring to their union pure *bodies*, pure *thoughts* and pure *motives*. This is the richest settlement on the part of the one, and the most priceless dowry on the part of the other. Through the inculcation of a thorough knowledge of hygiene, humanity can be freed from countless diseases and ailments. Parents must teach their children the laws of life so that these, being prepared to avoid temptations

and evil, may grow and develop to healthy and robust maturity. Then, indeed, will they hand down to posterity a glorious heritage.

Every couple should bring with them to their new home that quality of love and devotion that is solid and permanent. Their attachment should not be based on the uncertain foundation of personal attraction; but rather on the laws of spiritual companionship and cooperation. Under such conditions their respect and fondness of each other will be increased with the passing years. Hand in hand, they will go forward unfolding the subtle tenderness of wedded life, and revealing the rich significance of the ideal family. It is an axiomatic fact that all lasting and beneficial reforms *begin* at home; therefore, let both father and mother contribute to the idealization and sanctification of the hearth. It is the cornerstone of national greatness.

### ON INTERMARRIAGE

It pleases me to see intermarriages between men and women of various nationalities. In my own country, there are many nomadic tribes, living their lives in the open, which have inherited age-long feuds, one for another. These tribes have pillaged, fought and killed; but, if a disinterested outside influence attempts to reconcile the two contending parties the standard method will be adopted: The son of the Chief of one tribe will marry the daughter of the Chief of another; and immediately enmity will be changed into amity, hatred into love.

Now, if the Persians and the Americans give their sons and daughters to each other, the bonds between the East and the West will be reinforced. How sweet to see the French marrying the English, and the English the German! May such happy events hasten the day of the Oneness of the World of Humanity!

Any movement which increases affection amongst the children of men is a divine one, and any movement which creates alienation or ill-will is diabolical in origin. In reality, the people of the world are one family; but these ignorant fellows have divided themselves into French, Germans, Austrians, Italians, Persians, Arabs. So, I am most gratified with intermarriages. God has created all phenomena male and female; and as a result, marriage is a natural and divine state. There is no celibacy in the Bahai Cause.

### *ON A BUSINESS MAN*

In all our pursuits we must use common sense. The reason which God has given us is to be applied, not stowed away in a drawer. A sagacious man will wade through the stream only at times when it is fordable. A person who neglects to exercise his intelligence, in the transaction of his natural and spiritual affairs, is like unto a man who purposefully closes his eyes while walking—the result will probably be a fall into the ditch, or to use other words, a business misfortune.

Wealth is similar unto the sand hills in the desert, the locality of which it is a physical impossibility to keep fixed. Today they are piled here; at midnight a furious windstorm arises and they are removed miles and miles away. So are the hills of wealth subject to sudden transference from one to another. Wealth is whimsical, fickle and wayward, and loves to disport herself in most cold-blooded manner with her long train of suitors.

A business man should be satisfied with a limited amount of success. If he goes beyond the danger mark he will either bring ruin upon himself, or else invite the displeasure of the public. A rill of steady flow constitutes inexhaustible wealth.

Years ago a certain Bahai, named Ostad Esmael, lived

*In a grotto on the slope of Mount Carmel. He had a box in which were kept needles, pins, thimbles, thread, combs and other little things; and every morning he would take this box to town, call at various houses where he had customers, and sell a few of his modest wares. When he observed that he had made three piastres (about seven cents) profit on the sales, he would stop business for the day and return to his delightful grotto. Here he would place a kettle on the fire and prepare tea, of which he drank cup after cup, watching the while, in supreme contentment, the matchless panorama spread at his feet. He never wished for more than three piastres a day, and God provided him with that amount. How satisfied he was! How happy and serene! And this, in spite of the fact that he had been a rich man at the time of his banishment from Persia.*

### *ON MAKING FRIENDS*

Consider what a wonderful love is this, that has been established amongst us through the power of Baha-U-Llah!

The Shah of Persia came twice to Stuttgart (Germany), and was officially received according to long-established custom; but he did not make one friend. Yet, when *we* came, we who had been Persian prisoners for forty years, how many sincere souls greeted us, and how many hearts became cemented to ours in an affection that will be lasting! These things have come about through no ordinary power.

### *ON THE GERMAN BAHAIS*

In many respects the German Bahais are unique and peerless. They are faithful, strong and firm. Their attraction and enkindlement, together with their genuine

spirit of hospitality and kindness are an example. They are brilliant stars in the heaven of Baha. I loved them very much; and, whenever I think of them a wave of joy sweeps over me.

### **ON A MEAL WITH THE THORN-PICKER**

About twenty-one miles from the city of Bagdad, there lived a thorn-picker who was a Bahai; and this man once invited me and a number of friends to visit him. We went afoot, starting at midnight in order to cover the long distance, and arrived before noon, quite exhausted, at the small bamboo hut. The sun was shining brightly and the sands were very hot; but the cordial hospitality of our host caused us to forget whatever discomfort we felt.

The thorn-picker ordered his wife to prepare the mid-day meal. "On my eyes, my lord!" she responded cheerily, bringing forth a few handfuls of flour from a corner of the room. This she proceeded to knead into dough, added a few dates and rolled it into a ball, hard as a cannon shell. Then she made a fire out of thorns, in a primitive earthen oven that stood in the center of the room, and threw in the cannon ball.

From a human standpoint, we had barely been able to endure the heat of the Arabian desert; but now the temperature within the bamboo hut was worse by far. However, we chanted songs and Tablets and made light of the discomfort.

After the lapse of an hour, the woman took the bomb-shell out of the blazing fire, placed it on a wooden tray, cut it in two and, with natural grace, set it before us. This was our meal—a lump of half-cooked black dough, which we ate with our fingers. At evening, we dined on the same fare; after which we said "Goodbye" to our kind host and started homeward.

The thorn-picker was the flame of the love of God and I can yet savor the taste of his food. I have attended many banquets and have partaken of various delectable dishes, but his was better than any of them. I have not, and shall never forget it.

### *ON A RICH MAN*

The poor are God's trust to us. Although lowly in the estimation of the plutocrat, yet are they dear to Him. Thus, one of the appellations of Baha-U-Llah was "Dar-veesh," meaning poor; and Jesus, who himself lived in deprivation, said: "Blessed are the poor." Now, although he did not say: "Blessed are the rich," nevertheless, of a rich man who looks to the interests of his less fortunate brothers; who devotes his income to the betterment of their condition; who serves them, giving sympathy as well as money; who contributes toward the progress of the Cause, I say that this rich man is greater than the patient poor man, for by his generosity he has become the manifestation of virtue and a center of bounty in the world.

### *ON THOSE WHO ARE CONTENTED WITH VERY LITTLE*

A certain story is told about two of the followers of Mohammad. Once upon a time Salman called on Abouzar, and when lunch time came around the host brought out his entire stock of provisions, which consisted of two loaves of bread and some salt. Then Salman, as if talking to himself, murmured audibly, "I wish that there were a little cheese!" At this Abouzar, feeling somewhat embarrassed, left the table and issued forth to sell his only goat. Having made the transaction, he bought some cheese, hastened home to his guest and laid it before him. Sal-

man helped himself plentifully and, at the termination of the meal, raised his hands toward heaven exclaiming: "Blessed are those who are contented with very little!" Here Abouzar, feeling the superfluity of such an announcement, remarked mildly, "If you really *were* a contented fellow I would, at this moment, have my goat in the house."

### *ON INANE COMPLIMENTS*

In the Orient, the shopkeepers have a habit of insistently shouting after the passersby, using most flattering terms, in order to tempt them to stop and buy their wares. Now, as a child, I was one day taken through the bazaars of Teheran and there I noticed an aged woman—probably eighty years old, with bent back and wrinkled face, who, as she hobbled along, was the object of much attention.

"Oh, Khanoum," the different shopkeepers called out, "Oh, beautiful one! Oh, thou never-fading rose! Come and grace my shop with thy lovely presence! I will reduce the price for thee, and sell cheaper to thee than to the rest. Oh, youthful maiden, stop a while." And the old woman nodded and smiled, accepting with satisfaction everything that was said.

How many people are there who, in the same way, love the inane compliments laid to snare them?

### *ON THE HUNTER WHO PAID NO ATTENTION*

In Bagdad we knew a hunter who was such a crack shot, that while his horse was galloping he could bring down birds on the wing. On one occasion, this man was riding behind us and, as he lifted his gun, Baha-U-Llah exclaimed: "Do not kill these innocent birds!"

The hunter, however, paid no attention. He fired—

and missed. Then, throughout the day, he continuously shot at various birds, but never with success. Finally, we caught sight of a crane—a large one. The man became elated and, as the bird slowly left the ground, he aimed most carefully and fired off his gun. Missed again! Then six shots more; but the bird was high in the air, and the hunter never reached his mark.

### *ON BUYING LAND*

Years ago, I was planning to buy one-half of a certain village and, although there was another would-be purchaser, the papers were drawn up in my favor. So, I went to the government house and, in the presence of the judge and other officials, took some money out of my pocket and began to count it. While so engaged, the door suddenly opened and one of the believers entered with a message from Baha-U-Llah. The message was: "Leave the earth to the people of the earth." I arose, tore the documents into pieces, and said: "Whosoever desires to buy this land may do so without any interference on my part." Then, to the amazement of those present, I left the room. Since that time I have not been interested in buying land.

Leave the earth to the people of the earth. That is divine advice. Let men lighten their loads and dispel the clouds of care and anxiety. Then the sun of repose and serenity will shine upon them.

### *ON THE ROYAL PATH OF SIMPLICITY*

We must as far as possible simplify our lives and reduce their accumulated complexities. Originally, our needs were very few but, with the advancing tide of modern civilization, our ancestors have, bit by bit, added to our burden of superficial obligations. If we desire eman-

icipation for ourselves and our children, we must throw off the heavy weight of external demands and live independent, generous, liberal and beautiful lives of democratic simplicity.

When many divergent elements center in the composition of a single existence, the natural consequence must be an antagonistic clash of interests. Therefore if, by the grace of God and by your own effort, your life is simple, do not allow it to become complicated and entangled; and if, through various causes, it is a skein of intricacies, try your utmost to unravel the confused mass, to find the silken thread of life and start again on the royal path of frank and artless simplicity.

Furnish your minds with the valuable ideals of this and of past ages; adorn the galleries of your hearts with the master-thoughts of the poets and philosophers; illumine your souls with the electrical concepts of the sages and beautify the gardens of your understanding with the sweet flowers of every clime.

### *ON THE DURATION OF LIFE*

From his earliest years Basheer served in our household. He had a happy disposition and was loved by friend and stranger. His death, sudden and unexpected, was yet surrounded by happy auguries.

The duration of life is not important, be it a hundred years or a few; the definite accomplishment is what counts. If the tree of a man's life does not yield luscious fruits, though he has lived for a long, long time, the purpose of creation is not realized. On the other hand, if he has lived but a few years, and the tree of his life has borne fruit, he has gained spiritual success.

For example, this stone has existed ten, twenty or thirty thousand years, yet it has not progressed beyond the mineral kingdom. It has not achieved development.

Again, a merchant may go to his office every day; he may plan commercial enterprises, organize large companies, undertake vast schemes and at the end of the year acquire no benefit. Another merchant, however, by a single stroke may make a handsome profit in one day.

Now, Basheer in his short life obtained great results. He served everyone irrespective of their station. How cheerful he was, how kind, how courteous! What a lovable character he displayed under all circumstances, and what a firm faith!

He was never cross. Some times I would punish him, but this did not make him sad or disconsolate; rather he loved me the more because he knew that my object was to train him. Yet, there are some who become offended if I greet them with a tardy "Marhaba."

Herein lies the test. The reality of a man bursts forth when he is surrounded by trials and ordeals. For this reason Ali, addressing the Almighty, said: "Oh, God! If Thou dost correct and punish me for a thousand years, still, day by day, my supplication and entreaty at Thy Threshold will increase."

### ON DEEDS RATHER THAN WORDS

People, as a rule, are not impressed by the words of a Divine Manifestation; but they will immediately respond if they hear of his actions. If the Bahais actually *live* in accordance with the exhortations of Baha-U-Llah, kings and rulers will be humbled before them. For example, what a vast gulf exists between the man who *speaks* about generosity and he who dispenses it! How widely separated is the individual who *proclaims* justice and equity from him who embodies these principles in his life! How different are the two persons, the one *discoursing* on illumination, the other himself illumined! If we become the incarnate expressions of the educa-

tional ideals of Baha-U-Llah, then our words will have effect even upon the stone. Baha-U-Llah endured all trials and hardships that we might become confirmed in deeds—not in words. The sun, each morning, dawns upon the Eastern horizon to the end that people may engage in various works—not in speech-making. In like manner the Sun of Reality has shone forth from the *Eternal* Horizon in order to assist mankind in the accomplishment of deeds—not in the formulation of words.

It is written "Come to Us with deeds if thou art of the sincere." It is not written "Come with words."

There are many who are nimble of speech in considering self-sacrifice; but who are all too reluctant when it comes to helping their brothers in time of need. A few, however, fulfill the requirements of the verse, abandoning wealth, honor, fame, name, rest and life on the path of love.

A person environed with comfort and tranquility may, in all earnestness, long for opportunities to engage in practical service; yet, when the occasion arises he is likely to cast away the precious chance of self-expression and self-development. Consequently, there is great disparity between the theorizing dreamer and the practical humanitarian who at all times is ready to deny himself for his fellowmen. The Bahais must lessen words and increase deeds. In this manner, they will adorn themselves with the crown of practical achievement and veritable accomplishment.

### *ON ROSES*

Be a distributor of roses! There is no higher station in the world of humanity. Many varieties of the rose exist, but this one is the most fragrant. From it the extract of the rose is taken. Baha-U-Llah delighted in these roses; large bowls of them were always kept in his

room at Bahjee. The perfume of this rose has a refining effect upon the human constitution. Baha-U-Llah loved perfume and ever wished to have the attar of rose near him.

The physical susceptibilities of Baha-U-Llah were very great. His sense of smell was keen, as was his eyesight. Up to the very end of his life, he read the finest type without the aid of glasses. Even in their physical aspect, the Manifestations are distinguished from, and superior to, the rest of mankind.

### *ON FAITH AMID DIFFICULTIES*

The degree of faith becomes manifest amid difficulties and strait circumstances.

When the storm broke in Teheran, all our properties were pillaged, and Baha-U-Llah, enchained and manacled, was thrown into prison. My mother with her children was homeless and penniless. In those days any person suspected of being a Babi was immediately arrested and executed without the least compunction.

Now, there was a certain youth, approximately sixteen years of age, who had been the servant of the celebrated martyr Suleyman Khan; and this young man, on account of his position, had become acquainted with all the believers in the city. Therefore, he was arrested and ordered to divulge the names and addresses of the Babis; and so, every day, followed by a troop of police, he passed through the streets and bazaars pointing out the houses and shops of the followers of the Faith.

It was in the heart of winter that Baha-U-Llah was banished from Persia. All of us were very thinly clad, in the pinching cold weather which was a material symbol of the manner in which we were treated along the roadside. Words fail to describe the hardships which we endured, amid the driving snow and hail storms, on that

journey to Bagdad. Yet, in spite of outward circumstances, we were happy, with a happiness that never could be duplicated. Yes! Those days on the march from Teheran to Bagdad were the happiest of my life.

We reached our destination with empty purses and for a time were beset by great difficulties; and presently the cup of our misery overflowed when Baha-U-Llah suddenly departed to the mountains of Soleymanieh, where he stayed for two years.

During this period we knew nothing of his whereabouts and had no news of him; and when we walked through the streets the populace would scoff at us and deride us. However, all this ridicule was not disturbing, for we were in a state of radiant acquiescence—and then one day Baha-U-Llah returned from the mountains and, like unto the good shepherd, gathered about him the depressed flocks. I remember I was wearing at the time a very thin robe of cloth. It once had been blue, but many washings had rendered it white.

### *ON THE RELATIONSHIP EXISTING AMONG THE STARS OF THE PLEIADES*

The primal object of life is the relationship, in an ideal sense, of the hearts, one to another. Now, there are two kinds of relationship—the material and the spiritual. The former, the equilibrium of which is disturbed by the slightest mishap, is not important; but the latter is permanent.

How many irrefragible treaties have been established among the nations; yet as soon as material interests come into conflict, the contracts made are nullified. Likewise people, linked merely through the material, are separated by reason of the slightest causes; while those connected by spiritual ties remain together—their relations being ever-existent.

Consider the flowers, in their loveliness gathered into a bouquet, yet disunited when the petals fall; and then the stars of the Pleiades, clustered and held through the ages and cycles. My hope is to establish relations, such as exist among the grouped stars of the Pleiades, between the peoples of the East and the West.

### ON ACCOMPANYING HIM TO THE END

*When his secretary joined him, as he was walking to and fro upon the deck of S. S. Celtic, Abdul Baha asked:*

*"Do you wish to get tired?"*

*"I am happy to follow the Master."*

*"Then, you must not lag behind; but must accompany me to the end."*

### ON LOVE

Let us have love and more love. A love that melts all opposition; a love that conquers all foes; a love that sweeps away all barriers; a love that abounds in charity, large-heartedness, tolerance and noble striving; a love that triumphs over all obstacles; a boundless, resistless, overwhelming love. Ah me! Each one must be a sea of love, a star of love, a haven of love, a pearl of love, a palace of love, a mountain of love, a world of love, a universe of love. Hast thou love? Then thy power is irresistible. Hast thou sympathy? Then all the stars will sing thy praise.

V

**THE CAUSE**

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A person may claim to be a Bahai, or may be known as a Bahai, and at the same time have no conception as to what being a Bahai really means. Likewise, another person, who has never heard the name, may be possessed of the qualifications essential to a Bahai. You will know the tree by its fruit.

This Movement is an all-inclusive one, embracing the teachings of the various schools. The Christian, the Jew, the Mohammedan, the Buddhist, the Zoroastrian, the Theosophist, the Free Mason, the Spiritualist finds his highest ideals in the Bahai Cause; while the Socialist and even the philosopher beholds his theories fully developed therein. This cannot be said of the religions.

May the power of the Spirit make Reality evident. Then, Reality being *one*, all of us will become one!

### ON THE BAHAI GARDEN

The Bahai Cause is like unto a luxuriant garden, wherein you will see again the lovely flowers of other gardens, as well as a few rare specimens which are to be found nowhere else. So does the Bahai Cause include the Teachings of the other Revelations, while it discloses certain distinct principles of its own—principles adapted to the requirements of *this* age.

### ON THE STATION THAT IS NOT ALWAYS APPARENT

I will relate a story which demonstrates the fact that spiritual value is often concealed by outward appearance.

Following the ~~mar~~<sup>arrest</sup> of the Bab, the believers turned for leadership toward the First Disciple, Bab-ul-Bab (the Gate that leads to the Gate), rendering to him supreme reverence and homage. Now, during the early days of the siege of Tabarsi; when the little company of

three hundred and sixty Babis were holding their own against the picked troops of Persia, it happened that two of the Disciples were among the besieged—the First Disciple, the beloved Chief, and the Last Disciple, practically unknown. No one considered the Last Disciple—Quddus, as he was named—and he went his way, showing friendliness and courtesy to everyone and a deference, even more marked than was that of the others, for Bab-ul-Bab before whom he never sat.

One day, two or three of the Babis, entering a room, came upon the Disciples deep in conversation; and they observed that Quddus was sitting, while Bab-U-Bab was standing in utmost humility before him. Then the Chief, appreciating the bewilderment of his followers, addressed them, speaking in a low voice:

"I did not realize the station of Quddus, but at present I know that I am less than the dust at his feet."

### *ON THIRST*

There are certain souls whose thirst is never allayed; while others are satisfied with a single drop. A large vase has great capacity; but a small one is quickly filled. When the Christ appeared, the Jews said: "We have sufficient water in our vases. We do not need the fountain of Jesus. We have, in the course of our history, been blessed with many Prophets; then shall we, who have tasted of the pure water from the hands of these divine Cup-bearers, turn to a new spring?"

Others, however—blessed they were and glorious—drank deeply at the fountain of Jesus, and yet continued thirsty. Baha-U-Llah has said:

"Though you drink all the seas of the earth, no trace of dampness should remain on your lips. The more the circle of your acquaintance widens, the greater must be the impetus of your search. Through this open attitude,

you will become perfect; while the one whose cup is filled with a few drops can never become perfect."

### *ON SEEING BAHU-U-LLAH IN PRISON*

I was a very young child at the time of the uprising against the Cause in Teheran, during which Baha-U-Llah was arrested.

Baha-U-Llah was imprisoned in an underground cell, which was connected by a flight of rickety steps to a small door. This door was the only aperture to the place. The jailer, a native of the city of Kazwin, named Aga Bozork, who in the past had received many favors and bounties at the hands of Baha-U-Llah, called one day at our house and took me with him to visit my Father. When we reached the prison, he unlocked the door of the cell and I descended the steps, peering into gloom. I could see nothing. The place was as black as pitch. Suddenly, I heard the marvelous resonant voice of Baha-U-Llah: "Take the child away. Do not let him come in!" Obediently the jailer drew me back and, leading me to the yard, he said, "Be patient, and wait here. At noon the prisoners will be taken out and then you can see your father." I sat down. A little after twelve o'clock the prisoners emerged from below—amongst them Baha-U-Llah. A great chain called "Garé Kahar" the thickest and heaviest of the time, was fastened to his feet and dragged behind him on the ground. His neck and hands were fettered. A common hat, the top of which was worn into soiled fringes, was on his head. Mirza Mahmud, a devoted follower, was chained to his side. I cannot describe the anguish that took possession of me when I saw my Father thus.

**ON THE PURPORT OF THE TEACHINGS OF  
BAHA-U-LLAH**

It would be a mathematical impossibility for a soul to *comprehend* the purport of the Teachings of Baha-U-Llah, and then arise to oppose them; for the student will come to realize that these principles are as remedies for the sick body of the world, and as ointment for its bruises and wounds. The darkness covering the face of the earth will not disappear save through this Light.

**ON THE FEAST DAYS OF THE LORD**

Those persons who, during these days, are firm in the Faith shine like unto the brilliant sun, conferring tranquility upon the hearts; while those whose souls are not set aglow with the fire of the love of God are as fruitless branches and honeyless bees.

After the enemies of the Cause had pillaged our house in Teheran and confiscated our properties, my mother rented a small dwelling in a remote section of the city for the purpose of keeping our whereabouts secret. My sister and I were children at that time.

One midnight I heard a knocking at the door and having hastened to open it, beheld one of the believers. The man entered and stood looking into our faces, with fire flashing from his eyes; then he asked, "Why are you so quiet?" "What are we to do?" I returned. "Oh dance. Be happy; for these are the feast days of the Lord!" And so he, himself, danced and chanted and sang until the sun appeared upon the eastern horizon; then he left the house.

On that very day he was arrested and martyred.

**ON APPARENT DEFEATS WHICH WERE  
VICTORIES**

Since the inception of the Cause, and notably dating

from the banishment of Baha-U-Llah from Teheran, the events which have transpired in connection with the Movement, although outwardly fraught with pain and sorrow, were yet based upon the consummate wisdom of God. For example, on the eve of our departure from Persia the believers were weeping tears of blood. After the persecutions, trials and martyrdoms that had been endured, they flinched under this culminating blow—thinking that the Voice would be hushed, that the Light would be extinguished and that the Truth would die. However, the wisdom that was back of this move was revealed afterwards; for a sojourn of eleven years in Bagdad resulted in an immense widening of the circle of the Cause.

In Bagdad, we received the Firman of exile to Constantinople, and the hearts of the believers were torn to pieces anew; and once more, having been transferred to Adrianople, when we learned that Acca had been picked out as the place of our final banishment, the floodgates of unutterable grief were opened to an extent that cannot adequately be described by tongue or pen.

With time, it became clear that these apparently crushing defeats were in fact victories. The diffusion of the fragrances of the Teachings throughout Orient and Occident was mainly due to the successive exiles and imprisonments of Baha-U-Llah. Minus these, the Cause might not have passed beyond the frontiers of Persia, and the words of the Prophets, concerning the raising of the Voice of the Lord from the mountains and hills of the Holy Land, would have been unfulfilled. Should you to-day inquire of anyone, who is acquainted with the facts, as to whether or not the banishment of Baha-U-Llah from Persia was conducive to the expansion of the Cause he would answer in the affirmative; but no one ventured to predict any such thing on the eve of his exile.

**ON PERSIA**

The future grandeur of Persia shall eclipse her glorious past. How pure is the air on the mountain of Yazd! Rest assured of the progress of Persia.

Persia is like unto a garden which has been deprived of the care of the gardener. Its meadows are upturned, its trees are leafless, its flowers are trodden underfoot and wild animals stampede in its pastures. To the extent that it was a rose-garden it now is a patch of thorns. However, when the gardener again takes possession, it will resume its former aspect of beauty, and indeed exceed it. The dumping ground shall become a bed of hyacinths and roses.

Do not heed the doleful prophesies of the malcontents, for the progress of Persia will be great. God has opened every door before the faces of her sons, verily, the doors of heaven and earth. I will make illustration by the following example, and the point will become clear to you.

On the surface of this globe there is no soil as unproductive as is that of Mecca—situated in the barren Sahara, by stark black crags on a torrid desert. There are no springs in Mecca. Drinking water is brought in from a remote place.

Yet, because this area of shifting sands, these fearfully shaped mountains constituted the birthplace of Mohamad, the eyes of the Islamic world are focussed upon it. Every year, nearly three hundred thousand pilgrims journey to Mecca to kiss the black stone. From this you can estimate the future of Persia — the birthplace of Baha-U-Llah.

The climate of Persia is delightful, its soil is rich, its waters are salubrious, its gardens are entrancing, its topography is varied. Reflect upon these things and many mysteries will be revealed unto you.

## ON THE PROOF OF THE SUN

The proof of the sun is its own existence. It is not necessary to make proof by means of the light of the moon, nor by the growth of plants, animals or men. The evidence of the sun is its own rays. That is sufficient. Similarly, the proof of the Manifestation of Baha-U-Llah is his own character, his deeds, his words and his works. The evidence is clear, the light is shining, the argument is irrefutable. All other proofs, although valid in their own spheres, are secondary.

## ON CHINA

China, China, China—China-ward the Cause of Baha-U-Llah must march! Where is the illumined Bahai who is to carry the Message to China?

China has most great capacity. Its people are true-hearted and truth-seeking. Their teacher must be imbued with *their* spirit. He must know their sacred literature and have studied their national customs, so that he may speak from their standpoint and in their own terminology. He must entertain no thought other than on the spiritual welfare of that people. Such a teacher in China would train countless divine personages — each one becoming a bright candle of the world of humanity.

China is the country of the future. In truth, I say that its men and women are free from deceit and hypocrisy, and are possessed of ideal natures. I would that I myself could have undertaken the journey to China; but, let us hope that the right person will be inspired to travel to that vast empire to promote the principles of Divine Civilization, to unfurl the banner of the Cause of Baha-U-Llah and to invite the people to the Banquet of the Lord.

**ON WORKING IN THESE DAYS**

The Cause is encircled by dangers. During his lifetime Baha-U-Llah trained us to the end that we might protect this Light which the Hand of the Almighty has set up in the dark world. Such is the plain duty of all Bahais; for if they fail no sign or trace of the Movement will remain.

It is said that the followers of Mohammad one day, asked him: "Was Khalid, who lived many years before thee, a Prophet?" Mohammad answered, "He was a great Prophet, and he instituted many laws; but, after his death his followers grew lukewarm, losing the enthusiasm of their Leader. Thus, the Faith disappeared and the Standard of Truth remained furled." Similarly, if we do not protect the Cause, if we do not work for the propagation of its ideals and renounce everything for its sake, this Light *also* will become extinct — especially after me.

Oh, beloved friends! The spiritual Forces are with us; the divine Angels are supporting us; the invisible Cohorts are continuously assisting us; the Favors of Baha-U-Llah are surrounding us; the Confirmations of the Holy Spirit are hovering above our heads! Then, if we do not work in these days, when shall it be that we will work? I will pray on my own behalf and on the behalf of every one of you. Let us strive day and night, surge like the sea, roar like the lion, move like the wind and spread the Teachings of the Cause far and wide, according to the best of our abilities. Praise be unto God, that we were selected, from among all men, to accompany Baha-U-Llah in his prison and to share his ordeals and sufferings! If we thank Him every moment, we shall not have thanked Him sufficiently. The duration of our lives is only a few days. Consider! When we entered this prison we numbered seventy-two persons; but now, only a few of us are left behind. We also will pass away . . .

## *ON BAHA-U-LLAH'S LOVE OF NATURE*

For nine years Baha-U-Llah did not see a green leaf; and he loved nature so much. In later times, he often would order us to prepare tea five or six miles away, because of a certain patch of grass or a tall pine. All his physical perceptions were greatly developed; his touch notably so—his finger tips being the most sensitive parts of his body. Likewise was his power of smell keen. I have seen him cut a cucumber in halves and, instead of eating it, enjoy it by simply inhaling its perfume. His faculty for observation was miraculous. If he had walked along this avenue, although his mind had been occupied with other thoughts, he would, on arriving home, have been able to relate the slightest details concerning the throbbing life of the city.

While dictating at a rapid rate to his secretary, he would himself write on a quite different topic and at the same time, when occasion offered, carry on conversations with those who were present—and then, all of a sudden, he would raise his head and point to a noble tree far distant.

## *ON SERVICE*

The religion of God is for the equalization of rights, and not for the gradation of classes and the distribution of privileges. It is the leveler of all social inequalities and the destroyer of all sacerdotal distinctions. There are no offices or positions in the Court of the Almighty. Brotherhood? Yes. Spiritual Fellowship? Yes. Humility? Yes. Sacrifice? Yes. Extinction of self? Yes.—Classes? No. Preferences? No. Privileges? No. Titles? No. Spiritual Superiorities? No.

In the Cause of Baha-U-Llah all are servants and maid-servants—brothers and sisters. If a man comes to

consider himself as a little better than the rest, he is in a dangerous state and, unless he casts away the seed of such a thought, he is unfit for the service of the Kingdom.

The religions of the past fell into decay because of self-seeking leaders who, in the course of time, appropriating unto themselves all rights and powers, looked down upon their co-religionists as ignorant and deprived of the knowledge of God. The Bahais must ever be on the alert lest they tumble into this pitfall. They must keep the Cause pure and uncontaminated—a safe harbor for the shipwrecked, a sanctuary for the despondent, a divine antidote for the sick, a torch of light for those who are groping in the dark and a spiritual democracy for the downtrodden and the outcast. Service—spiritual, moral and intellectual, must be their sole profession. They must clothe themselves in the robe of service, sit around the table of service, eat the food of service, drink the elixir of service, discuss the problems of service, commune with the King of Service and crown their heads with the diadem of Service.

### *ON THE MISSIONARY WHO WAS NOT SATISFIED*

Some years ago there lived in Acca, a Scottish missionary who was working most earnestly to spread about her the Christian religion. The results acquired, however, were negligible. Now, although this lady did not like us, I always on meeting her inquired after her health; so, one morning, as I was sitting in the bazaar with a Jewish Bahai, I greeted her as she passed by. Then I said, "Do you see my companion? He was born a Jew and had no regard for the Christ; yet today he believes in him and loves him." Is this true?" the missionary exclaimed, astonished, "Then, may I be permitted to ask him a few questions?" "Certainly," I an-

answered, "you may ask him as many questions as you wish." Whereupon the lady turned to the Jew and inquired, "Do you look upon Jesus as your Lord?" "Yes," answered the man. "And how did you come to do so?" she pursued. "Do you want scriptural proof or rational proof?" "Scriptural proof." Then, during nearly half an hour, the Jew spoke very eloquently, advancing quotation after quotation from the Old Testament to prove the validity of the claims of Jesus. Presently, he was asked for rational evidence, and this phase also he was able to treat with equal force and fluency. When the man had concluded, the missionary remained silent for a moment; then she said, "This is indeed a most wonderful thing—a miracle; yet I am not satisfied. If only you had kept him at the fountain of the Christ; but instead you have made him believe in Baha-U-Llah and all the Prophets."

This missionary could not appreciate the fact that it was the words of Baha-U-Llah that had made of the Jew a follower of Jesus.

### *ON THE GROUP THAT IS BAHAI*

There are large numbers of people who are in sympathy with the principles of this Cause and desire to see them disseminated. There is another class which considers Baha-U-Llah as a very great personage, classifying him along with contemporaneous spiritual thinkers; and then, there is a third group which believes that he is the Manifestation of the Will of God in this age—the Promised One of all nations, and which applies itself to the spreading of his Teachings by deed and word.

This third group is called Bahai.

**ON SECRETS AND MYSTERIES**

In a Bahai meeting spiritual discussions must be the rule. Addresses should deal with the rising of the Sun of Reality, the grandeur of the Cause, the potency and penetration of the Word of God, proofs and evidences related to the Holy Books and logical and intellectual demonstrations. Such a program will be the means for the spiritualization and illumination of the hearers. Other discussions save these, and similar ones, will bring about no results.

In a meeting you must have no secret, and on the board of consultation you must engage in no conversation, the disclosure of which might harm or cause pain to any heart. The deliberations must revolve around the central and primal object, which is the promotion of the Cause of God. Under such circumstances there will be no secret to be divulged by any person; because there will be no secrets.

It is a mathematical impossibility that a secret be kept when the so-called secret is known to many; and it has been said: "Every secret that goes beyond two persons is already promulgated." Each individual present has unquestionably one intimate friend and, feeling himself at one with him, places upon him his entire trust. In like manner, the second person also has a confident and so, little by little, the circle is enlarged until, presently, the secret is found upon the lips of all men. Consequently, it is better and more acceptable to have in your midst no secret and no mystery. Let all the secrets be sacrificed for the Secret of Baha and all the mysteries be a ransom to the Mystery of Baha—and the Secret and the Mystery of Baha are: sympathy for the down-trodden and benevolence toward the broken-hearted, and severance and freedom from this mortal world. When

these secrets and mysteries are fully revealed they will be the tokens of everlasting Life.

### **ON SECRET MEETINGS**

In the Bahai Cause there is no secret doctrine, and there should be no secret society, or secret club, or secret meeting. I want to impress upon you the importance of this point. If such gatherings are held, even though the intentions of the organizers be pure, it is not good. The doors of the Cause must remain open.

### **ON FROTHY PRETENSIONS**

Truly I say that it seems unfaithful and disloyal, now after the departure of Baha-U-Llah, that any should utter even a word conveying the slightest implication of title, station, position or superiority. It avails us less than nothing to put forward any claims. Praise be to God that Baha-U-Llah has opened before our faces every door of bounty and glory. The gates of celestial Paradises are, for our sakes, thrown ajar and the banquets of rejoicing prepared. He has conferred upon us all gifts and has left nothing unsaid or undone.

How childish it is on our part to hold fast to showy emptiness. What was the end of those who spoke presumptuously in the name of the Lord and of the many who claimed to be the Manifestations of God! Bayazeed Bastami, the celebrated Sufi, cried out: "I do not see in my coat aught else save God!" What did he acquire by such fantastic speech? A host of Sufis and Illuminati have set forth like claims. Through severe discipline, they worked themselves into a condition of trance and then burst into pompous and vain assertions. Where was the benefit in such frothy pretensions?

Likewise today there are many people, living in various

parts of the world, who pronounce themselves to be God or sparks of God. Such idiotic, baseless statements are made by the shallow-brained and the fools. They have sought to make the station of Divinity very cheap.

After the martyrdom of the Bab there came to view twenty-five individuals, each claiming to be the fulfillment of "Him whom God shall Manifest." Wherever one turned, one came across such persons, all bent on exaggerating their egos. There was a vendor of sweets in Teheran, a hasheesh smoker in Esphahan, a baker in Bagdad and so on. Yet, when Baha-U-Llah appeared, all repented and confessed their error.

Actually, in this age, the glorious diadem of the world of humanity is *Servitude*. Until the lapse of one thousand years all the holy and inspired souls who come into the light of day are under the shadow of Baha-U-Llah. There must lurk no thought or ideal in the mind, nor must utterance or word be spoken by the tongue other than servitude at the Holy Threshold. We must forget all other stations. We must serve. We must work. We must strive. We must spread the principles of the Cause. With pure hearts, with illumined thoughts and merciful concepts we must display indomitable courage and unswerving allegiance in the promotion of the Religion of Absolute Reality. This is the divine Sovereignty. Other titles and stations shall not avail.

### **ON THOSE WHO THINK THEMSELVES TO BE SOMEBODY**

Were it not for Baha-U-Llah no one would attach any importance to us. However, there are some who forget this fact and become proud and haughty. In their utter blindness they think themselves to be of note. Then they fall from their pedestals and great is the noise thereof.

Humility is the hallmark of faith. Just as soon as a

Bahai feels himself to be superior, in the least degree, to others, all unconsciously, the beginning of his spiritual decline has begun.

There are no officers in this Cause. I have not, and do not appoint any one to perform any special duty; but encourage *everyone* to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of the Cause is pure spiritual democracy, and not theocracy. I acknowledge and confess my own weakness and inability, and know that all outward confirmations are the favors of Baha-U-Llah; but, there are some who think, and little by little come to believe, that spiritual successes come through, and by means of themselves.

### **ON TEACHING ONE NEW SOUL IN A YEAR**

We are sorely in need of teachers. All the Bahais must be teachers of the Cause. Teaching is accomplished, not merely by the tongue, but through deeds, conduct, good disposition, happiness of nature, kindness, sympathy, comradeship, trustworthiness and purity of ideals. Every Bahai should, at the very least, teach one new soul in a year. Then the Cause will advance very rapidly.

During the last twenty years I have consistently emphasized this matter. In every city, classes must be organized, where the young may learn to become teachers. All Bahais should take advantage of these lessons. This is the most important point.

There is a season for the harrowing of the ground; another for the scattering of the seeds; yet another for the irrigation of the soil, and finally one for the harvesting of the crop. In order to achieve success, these various activities must take place, each at the proper time; and today the season is that of *seed-sowing*. It seems to me, however, that many of the Bahais are considering crop-

gathering. This will bring no results. The promotion of the Principles of Baha-U-Llah is the dominant issue at present.

### ***ON THE FUTURE OF THE BAY OF HAIFA***

In the years to come the land between Acca and Haifa will be built up, and the two cities will clasp hands, becoming terminal sections of a mighty metropolis. As I look upon the scene I see it, so clearly, as one of the first emporiums of the world. This long, semi-circular sweep of the Mediterranean will be converted into a magnificent harbor. Great vessels will come to this port bearing countless men and women from every section of the globe. Modern buildings will appear on the mountain and the plain; institutions and industries of a philanthropic nature will be founded; gardens, orchards, groves and parks will be laid out and the culture of all nations will blend their fragrances with one another.

The city will be lighted by electricity. At night the harbor, from Acca to Haifa, will be one path of illumination; powerful searchlights, to guide incoming ships, will be placed on both sides of Mount Carmel, and the Mount itself, from top to bottom, will be submerged in a sea of light. Those standing on its summit and the passengers on the decks of the steamers will behold the most majestic, the most sublime spectacle in the whole world.

Indeed, the ways of God are mysterious and unfathomable! What connection outwardly existed among Shiraz, Teheran, Bagdad, Constantinople, Adrianople, Acca, Haifa! Yet, through this succession of cities, God worked patiently, step by step, according to His own definite, eternal plan, to the end that the golden thread of promise running through the Bible, concerning the Messianic Millennium, might be fulfilled. Not a single word of this will be found meaningless or unrealized.

## *ON THE SEA OF THE CAUSE*

We are living and moving in a Cause which is like unto an ocean. We must immerse ourselves therein if we are to gather the pearls of the Mysteries of God's Kingdom. If we do not this, the waves will carry us, even as splintered wood and debris, to the shores of remorse and regret. They who swim on the surface of this sea will be cast off; but they who dive to its depths will become its eternal inmates.

## *ON THE PILGRIMS WHO WERE STILL A LITTLE DOUBTFUL*

About thirty-eight years ago a certain steamer anchored in the Bay of Acca, and a group of Persians, returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca, came ashore. Their first remark was an inquiry as to whether any of their countrymen lived in these parts and, in response, one of the townsmen offered to bring them to me. Their state was pitiful, and as soon as their eyes fell upon me they began to weep. Then they related their story. While in Medina, a false accusation had been brought against them, and consequently they were attacked by the Arabs with clubs and swords. Six of their number were killed; and they themselves, after being stripped of their belongings, were left wounded and unconscious upon the ground. Later when they had revived, they were detained by the authorities, who protected them from the fury of the mob until news concerning them was received from Constantinople, and the charges were dismissed. Then, penniless and with unattended wounds, they begged their way along until they reached Acca. "When we arrived here," one of them said, "we decided to disembark, thinking that perchance we might find some compatriot who would be willing to assist us. We are at the end of our rope, stand-

ing in your presence hungry, naked and destitute. You may deal with us according to your sense of justice and sympathy. Yet, we plead for your mercy, and ask for at least one touman (\$1) to take us to Beirut." Thus he spoke and I realized that he was telling the truth.

As the steamer was anchoring one day in port, I kept them for lunch and dinner, and meanwhile arranged for their transportation to Persia. During the evening meal one of them asked, "Who are you, and why are you living in this desolate spot?" I answered, "We are prisoners." "Prisoners! Impossible! For what reason?" Then I told them that we were Bahais. "Never! Whosoever says that you are Bahais commits an unpardonable sin. You are very good people. You have treated us with hospitality and generosity not equalled even by the Mussulmans. We do not accept this. You are joking with us!" I said, "My friends, we are Bahais. Hearken, and I will tell you why we are here." So they became silent, and I related to them the history of the Cause and described the events which had led up to our incarceration. They were very much impressed; nevertheless, when night came they left Acca, still a little doubtful as to whether we *really* were Bahais.

### ON BELOVED ACCA

When I reached Los Angeles I realized how far away I was from Acca and from my people whom I cherished with such passionate earnestness. On the second night after my arrival, as I was lying wakeful in bed, I spoke, as if to myself, saying "Oh thou my Acca! Oh thou my beloved city! Oh thou my peaceful prison! How far away am I from thee. I stretch out my arms, but thou dost elude me.

"Was I not reared within thy precincts? Are not thy people my people, and thy afflictions my afflictions? How

fair art thou in my sight! Will I ever again see thee with my mortal eyes, and walk along thy narrow streets? Thou art the city wherein Baha-U-Llah lived. From thy precincts he ascended to the Supreme Concourse. Truly thou art the Mother of all the cities in the world, and art blessed beyond the imaginings of men. Thy spiritual station is very great and thy fame shall reach the uttermost parts of the earth."

## **ON THE MANIFESTATIONS AND ABDUL BAHA**

Tonight I will speak to you on a most important subject, trusting that you will keep record of my words on the tablets of your hearts—even as engravings on adamantine rocks.

The Divine Manifestations are unique and peerless. In their own ages and cycles they are the archtypals of the celestial virtues. Standing on the summit of the Mount of Vision they foreshadow the perfections of evolving humanity.

In the time of Moses there existed none like unto *him*. He surpassed all the holy souls that followed during that dispensation, including the hosts of the Prophets of Israel. Similarly, those who lived in the cycle of Jesus were in the shadow of *his* spiritual authority. He was the Sun: others were the lamps. He was the center and focal point of the mighty forces. In the age of Moham-mad, *he* was the Unique and Peerless—the orb, whilst others were the stars. Men caught the light from him and were enkindled through his fire. In the epoch of the Bab, *he* was the Matchless; the rivers gained their impetus from that source; and finally in the day of Baha-U-Llah and until the time of the next Manifestation, which shall not be for at least one thousand years, the appearances will be in the shade of *this* most great Appearance—as stars of guidance, they will gather around

this fountain of Life, becoming illumined with the rays of this Sun.

I am Abdul Baha and no more. I am not satisfied with him who praises me, using any other title. I am the servant at the Threshold of Baha-U-Llah, and I hope that this servitude of mine will be acceptable. Any name, whatsoever, save this, will not please me at all. I am Abdul Baha and no more.

Since the departure of Baha-U-Llah and until the appearance of the next Manifestation, there is no higher station than that of *Servitude*—servitude, fine and absolute—servitude without qualification, condition, or interpretation. The balsam to my wound is servitude. My spiritual temple is servitude. My shining crown is servitude. I am Abdul Baha and no more!

### *ON THE CAUSE OF GOD*

The Bahai Cause is like unto a great ocean; or rather, the great ocean, with its mountainous waves within itself, is a symbol of the Bahai Cause. How thoughtless are the people who try to dam the ocean! With their puny efforts they construct ramparts around it, fortifications, embankments; but the perennial waves beat against these obstructions and slowly, surely, unmistakably, wash and absorb them — leaving behind no trace. Such is the power of the Cause of God.

The Great Ocean of the Cause is in agitation at all seasons. It has its hurricanes, whirlwinds, cyclones and gigantic swells. Nations, religions, individuals may aim to lower its high level, to nullify its influence and encumber it with degradation. Alas! They are not aware of the fact that the Cause of God shall overcome all these hindrances and control all these forces. Nassir-ud-din Shah and Sultan Abdul Hamid strove with their available resources to dam this Great Spiritual Ocean. Where are

they now? The cohorts of the Islamic ecclesiastical orders endeavored mightily to stem the flow of this turbulent tide. Yet, that tide is rising higher, ever higher—gathering impetus, velocity. It is roaring, clamoring, battling. Do you hear its thunderous voice? Do you feel its power? Do you? Do you?

### *ON LISTENING TO THE INCOMING NEWS*

My work is done. The tree of my life has yielded its fruit. I have lit a fire in the world. Now, it is your duty to add to its flame. My sons! You are young. Your blood is pure; your intelligence is keen. You can bear the brunt of this life. It is your turn.

I would like for a while to remain silent and listen to the incoming news of those who are striving to scatter the Divine Fragrances. In what manner will they raise the melody of God and by what means will they promote His Word? How much will they accomplish? Yet, this we know: Baha-U-Llah is with them and they will, with their own eyes, behold his confirmations, even as I beheld them when I addressed the people in the churches and synagogues. Yes! I saw them hovering about me like birds of paradise.

1. The first step in the process of creating a business plan is to conduct a thorough market analysis. This involves identifying the target market, understanding the needs and preferences of potential customers, and assessing the competitive landscape. A detailed market analysis provides valuable insights into the opportunities and challenges of the industry, which are essential for developing a realistic business plan.

2. Once the market analysis is complete, the next step is to define the business's mission and vision. The mission statement should clearly articulate the company's purpose and the value it aims to provide to its customers. The vision statement, on the other hand, should describe the long-term goals and aspirations of the business, providing a clear direction for the organization's growth and development.

3. The third step in the process is to develop a detailed financial plan. This involves estimating the startup costs, determining the pricing strategy, and projecting the revenue and expenses over a period of time. A thorough financial plan is crucial for understanding the financial viability of the business and for securing the necessary funding to launch the venture.

4. The fourth step is to create a marketing and sales strategy. This involves identifying the most effective channels for reaching the target market, developing compelling promotional messages, and establishing a sales process. A well-defined marketing and sales strategy is essential for attracting and retaining customers, and for achieving the business's revenue goals.

5. The final step in the process is to implement the business plan and monitor its progress. This involves setting up the necessary infrastructure, hiring the right talent, and launching the business. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the plan's performance are essential for identifying areas of improvement and making necessary adjustments to ensure the business's long-term success.