**The Compassion of 'Abdu'l-Bahá**

Told in the words of Lady Blomfield, published in The Chosen Highway, pp159-160

One day a woman asked to be permitted to see the Master.

"Have you an appointment?"

"Alas! No."

"I am sorry," answered the over-zealous friend who met her in the hall, "but He is occupied now with most important people, can cannot be disturbed."

The woman turned away, feeling too humble to persist in her appeal, but, oh! so bitterly disappointed. Before she had reached the foot of the stairway, she was overtaken by the breathless messenger from 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

"He wishes to see you, come back! He has told me to bring you to Him."

We had heard His voice from the door of His audience room speaking with authority:

"A heart has been hurt. Hasten, hasten, bring her to me!"

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Another day, whilst several personages were talking with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a man's voice was heard at the hall door.

"Is the lady of the house within?" The servitor answered, "Yes, but --- " "Oh please, I must see her!" he interrupted with despairing insistence. I, overhearing, had gone into the hall.

"Are you the hostess of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?" he asked.

"Yes. Do you wish to see me?"

"I have walked thirty miles for that purpose."

"Come in and rest. After some refreshment, will you tell me?"

He came in and sat down in the dining room. In appearance he might have been an ordinary tramp, but as he spoke, from out the core of squalor and suffering, something else seemed faintly to breath.

After a while the poor fellow began his pitiful story:

"I was not always as you see me now, a disreputable, hopeless object. My father is a country rector, and I had the advantage of being at a public school\*. Of the various causes which led to my arrival at the Thames\*\* embankment as my only home, I need not speak to you."

"Last evening I had decided to put an end to my futile, hateful life, useless to God and man!"

"Whilst taking what I intended should be my last walk, I saw 'a Face' in the window of a newspaper shop. I stood looking at the face as if rooted to the spot. He seemed to speak to me, and call me to him!"

"Let me see that paper, please," I asked. It was the face of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

"I read that he is here, in this house. I said to myself, 'If there is in existence on earth that personage, I shall take up again the burden of my life.' "

"I set off on my quest. I have come here to find him. Tell me, is he here? Will he see me? Even me?"

"Of course he will see you. Come to Him."

In answer to the knock, 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself opened the door, extending His hands, as though to a dear friend, *whom He was expecting.*

"Welcome! Most welcome! I am very much pleased that thou hast come. Be seated."

The pathetic man trembled and sank on to a low chair by the Master's feet, as though unable to utter a word.

The other guests, meanwhile, looked on wonderingly to see the attention transferred to the strange-looking new arrival, who seemed to be so overburdened with hopeless misery.

"Be happy! Be happy!" said 'Abdu'l-Bahá, holding one of the poor hands, stroking tenderly the disheveled, bowed head.

Smiling that wonderful smile of loving compassion, the Master continued:

\* In England, private schools are known as "public schools"

\*\* Pronounced "Temes". A large river flowing through London.

"Do not be filled with grief when humiliation overtaketh thee.

"The bounty and power of God is without limit for each and every soul in the world.

"Seek for spiritual joy and knowledge, then, though thou walk upon this earth, thou wilt be dwelling in the divine realm.

"Though thou be poor, thou mayest be rich in the Kingdom of God."

These and other words of comfort, of strength, and of healing were spoken to the man, whose cloud of misery seemed to melt away in the warmth of the Master's loving presence.

As the strange visitor rose to leave Him Whom he had sought and found, a new look was upon his face, a new erectness in his carriage, a firm purpose in his step.

"Please write down for me His words. I have attained all I expected, and even more."

"And now what are you going to do?" I asked.

"I'm going to work in the fields. I can earn what I need for my simple wants. When I have saved enough I shall take a little bit of land, build a tiny hut upon it in which to live, then I shall grow violets for the market. As He says, 'Poverty is unimportant, *work is worship*.' I need not say 'thank you', need I? Farewell." The man had gone.