

up-to-date level of Western civilization. This is of course a slow process and as I told you, they must get hold of this Celestial Power. Then you will observe their magical advancement. Mrs. Starnard, then spoke about her voyage to India: "I believe" she said "that the only way for the salvation of the Zoroastrian people and their glorification is to accept this Cause. There are many generous hearted people amongst them and are anxious to serve Persia but they do not know through what channel." The Master said: "I hope thou wilt become convinced to render a great service in India and guide these people to the shore of Reality."

In the evening all of us gathered in the Beloved's room. He was looking fine. The race question was touched. Then he talked longer than one hour, repeating the contents of his addresses before the Colored meetings and Churches of the United States showing how untenable and <sup>un</sup>reasonable is race prejudice; giving us illustrations from the animal and vegetable Kingdoms and their varieties of colors and shades, yet these things are not made the causes of misunderstandings. "When I was in America and European" he said "I went through some of the Zoological gardens. There I saw <sup>gray</sup> polar bears, savage-looking, black and white. The white bear did not say to the black bear, 'thou art of another race. I dislike thy association. Get thee behind me.' Nor the black ever grudged the whiteness of its fellow. They lived in one cage without molesting each other."

Now can we confess with shame that man, notwithstanding his godlike intelligence is even inferior to these ferocious bears?"

Then he spoke with much love about Mr and Mrs Gregory of Washington and the progress of the Cause amongst the colored people of America. "Mr Gregory" he said "is a true, devoted Bahai. He has a gentle spirit and is continually serving the Cause. I love him very much. He is my son."

Toward the end of his talk he related the story of Esfandiyar, the colored attendant of Baha-Allah. "In his palace my grandfather," he ~~commenced~~ "had many colored maids and servants. When the Blessed Perfection became the head of the family, he liberated all of them and gave them his permission to leave or stay, but if they desired to remain it will be of course in a different manner. However, all of them revelling in their new found freedom preferred to leave except Esfandiyar. He remained in the household and continued to serve us with proverbial faithfulness and chastity. Then when Baha-Allah became known as a Baha and he was teaching the people right and left, the populace arose against him and with tacit consent of the government, our home was pillaged and ransacked, my father was put in the prison and we were persecuted on all sides. For days the rabble in their <sup>penal</sup> fury and rage threw stones into our homes, broke the windows and damaged everything. At that time I was

probably 6 or seven years. Everybody had left us and our family, then consisted of my mother, my sister (~~the greatest holy leaf~~) and Aga Amman. Fearing that the stones thrown into the house may hit one of us, my mother went out and rented a <sup>small</sup> house in <sup>an</sup> entirely another quarter of the city and for fear of recognition, she carried us safely to our new humble quarter by night. On the other hand, the enemies of my Father who had poisoned the mind of the ~~Shah~~ that he harbors secret plans against the throne were convinced that Esfandeyar is the guardian of all the secret plans of Baha-Allah. Therefore they imagined that once they lay their hands on Esfandeyar they will force out of him everything and then <sup>be able</sup> to substantiate their vague accusations with these solid facts. Hence they commissioned one hundred and fifty policemen to find him and bring him before them. Esfandeyar had a chum with whom he passed most of his time. At first they tried to get hold of his chum, thus he may divulge the hiding-place of Esfandeyar but they failed in their purpose. One midnight we arose out of our sleep by the loud knocking at the door. It was opened and lo! and behold it was Esfandeyar. My mother told him with anxiety: "How is it that thou art yet in the city? Dost thou not know that there are 150 policemen after thee? Fly as quickly as thou canst. If they get hold of thee thy life will be in danger." But he smiled and answered: "No. I will not



leave Teheran if a thousand policemen are  
 after me. I am not afraid. I have much  
 debts in <sup>the</sup> Bazaar. I owe money to many shop-  
 keepers and before I leave this city I must pay  
 off all the debts. I do not want the people  
 say afterward that the Negro-servant of  
 Baha-Allah escaped without paying his  
 debts." Then he left us and for one month  
 and half he was walking in broad daylight  
 in the streets and Bazaars and finally  
 succeeded to clear off all his financial  
 obligations. All this time the policemen  
 were after him but could not catch him.  
 Then one night he appeared again and  
 said: "I am now free. I have payed actually  
 all my debts and will leave the city with  
 a clear conscience." He went to Mazandran and  
 the governor who was not a Bahai engaged him  
 in his service, made him the chief of his <sup>army</sup>  
 and protected him from the pursuit of his <sup>enemies</sup>  
 years lapsed and the governor being a religious  
 man desired to make a pilgrimage to the  
 Holy city of Karbala. Naturally he took  
 Esfandiyar with himself who by this time  
 had grown very much in his favor and could  
 not separate from him. When they reached  
 the city of Bagdad, Esfandiyar was overjoyed to  
 stand again in the Presence of the Blessed  
 Perfection because he loved him <sup>Baha-Allah</sup> most  
 intensely. He requested Baha-Allah to keep  
 him with himself; that he rather leave  
 the governor and serve his old Master.  
 But Baha-Allah told him: "You must  
 act in this matter in accord with the

wish of the governor. You owe him a debt of deep gratitude. Because at a time that your life was in danger and no one would have received you he gave you position and stopped the persecutions of your enemies. Now if he is willing for you to remain with us, we will accept you, otherwise you must continue to serve him with the same zeal and sincerity that you have served us in the past." Esfandeyar went to the governor and explained his case. He answered: - "It is impossible. I cannot find in this wide world a nother man as honest and faithful as thyself. Thou must continue to stay with ~~thee~~ <sup>me</sup>. I have grown to love thee and will do everything to add to thy comfort and happiness." Of course Esfandeyar was heart-broken over this decision but he had to abide by the wish of the Blessed ~~Reflection~~ <sup>Prophet</sup>. He in turn consoled him and showered upon him his blessings. Esfandeyar returned to Mazandran with the governor and stayed with him till his last day. Such was the sterling faithfulness of Esfandeyar that whenever I think of him my eyes grow dim with tears. He was a King among men, a glorious <sup>star</sup> in the heaven of humanity. Although his face was black his heart was as white as the snow. He was peerless and had no equal. I cannot sufficiently praise him. I loved him. He was a glory and a jewel on the crown of the colored race. For his life was a noble record of proud achievement and the whole world <sup>will</sup> learn a lesson from it."