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command of the Beloved, we all hastened to catch the train; but after all our hurry, Mr. and Mrs. Holbach and a number of the believers did not reach there in time, so we came back home. The Master arrived very late, after sunset.

While we were in the Bahajee, in the morning, Haji Abbas passed away in Acca, and the Master attended his funeral and delivered a short talk on his life. Till noon he received the people, and then lunched with and entertained the few Sheikhs. After a little rest, he came to the Holy Tomb. While today one of our old veteran Bahais died, a son was born to Mirza Abdorra-ouf, who is the son of Mirza Mchammed Goli, the brother of Baha'ollah. When we all gathered in the room, the Master sent for Mr. and Mrs. Holbach, who are going to be his guests til tomorrow afternoon. He spoke to them on the many things he had attended to all day long, which fatigued him extremely. Mrs. Holbach read to him a letter dated March 13, written by Mr. William H. Short, the Executive Secretary of the New York Peace Society. As the said Society arranged a reception for the Beloved while in New York, and Mr. Short met him several times, I may quote his letter herein, that our friends may know how the matter stands.

"I was very glad indeed this morning to receive your letter of February 18, and to be reminded by it of the pleasant acquaintance of the last year, and the interesting, inspiring visit of Abdul Baha Abbas. We, by the way, have his photograph, framed and hanging on the wall of our office.

"His suggestion of a congress of all religions in the interest of international peace is an idea with which I am in full accord. After conference with Rabbi Wise of New York, I made the formal suggestion at the International Peace Congress of 1912 in Geneva. It has not yet led to anything. I should like to see the proposal influentially advocated from any source and could pledge a large amount of support from New York in its favor.

"I shall be very glad to convey to Mr. Carnegie the expression of appreciation contained in your letter on account of his gift made recently to the churches in the interest of international peace. His desire and expectation are of course, that it shall be used directly in this interest, but I think it cannot help but have a strong, indirect influence toward the oneness of Christian Churches. I am in touch with the movement, which has as its aim a world conference on faith and order, and know intimately some of the men who are leaders in the movement. It is one of the signs of the better day but from the larger project suggested by Abdul Baha and referred to above, I should expect even larger results. - - - I am glad that you have found in this movement an enthusiasm that has laid full hold on you and which is commanding your time and service. If I appreciate rightly the spirit of Abdul Baha, and I think I do, he will not value the less my work because it is rendered under a different flag, and my friendship, which goes to him from a camp of another, but not a rival religion. The oneness of mankind and the universality of religion are the great lessons which our age is learning."

Ahmad Sohrab.

April 4, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

The Baháí Cause is triumphant over the hearts, and the hearts are set aglow with the Fire of the Love of God. The Heart of the world is beating strongly in the body of mankind, and mankind is receiving its spiritual sustenance from the Heart of the world. Acca just at present is the haven of rest and the shore of reality. The Home of Baha'o'llah is the focal center of the heavenly Graces; and the Fountain of Everlasting Bounties is at work, watering the arid ground of human capacity. Praise and glorification be unto Him for He hath caused the appearance of refulgent lights and planted the seeds of wisdom in the soul of the souls. From Acca a pure, stream of Teachings is issuing from the golden lips of the Lord of Truth, the illuminator of conscience. He is Power and Majesty. Every day His celestial potency is shaping the destiny the Cause, and it becomes more and more manifest. In Acca he is busy from early morning till late at night. He does not rest for a single moment. The glorification of the Cause is his highest aim, the progress of the Movement is his cherished dream, the establishment of the Kingdom is his noblest aspiration, the oneness of the world of humanity is the desired goal, the spiritualization of the children of men is his ideal hope and the transformation of earth into the paradise of God is his daily prayer. Slowly his inspirational thoughts are moving the sluggish hearts and the various strata of national societies are deeply stirred by the successive waves of the sea of his wisdom. Although Acca is a small town, yet the eyes of all the Bahai world are turned toward it, because the center of the spiritual life lives here, walks through its crooked street, associates with all classes of men and sheds the rays of his Love over all creation. Every day humanity becomes more rich because Abdul Baha is living the life of God on this earth, and with words and deeds is making people happier and more cheerful.

I hurried this morning to the home of the Beloved, and soon afterward he summoned me into his holy Presence. Mr. and Mrs. Holbach were called from their room, and the Master welcomed them with a genuine smile. How happy they must feel to find themselves with the King of Kings and to live in his own home, and partake of his material and spiritual food! How many thousands of people all over the world long touch the hem of his garment to look into his godlike countenance, and yet they are deprived! Happy are those who appreciate the value of these days. After talking to them for half an hour their breakfast was served. "As long as life is in my body I must work!" was his parting word. Then Mofti the Motosarrafi and other officials were announced, and the Master came down to speak with them for more than an hour. As soon as they left he dictated a number of Tablets in Turkish for his friends in Damascus and Jaffa.

Leaving, for a moment, the Master alone in his room, I called on Mr. and Mrs. Holbach; Mrs. Hoagg joined us also and we had a heart to heart talk on the Cause and kindred subjects.

In the afternoon he called them again and the theme of discussion was the importation of the forty Turkish Suffragettes to Acca, and their approaching arrival. These four hundred women, throwing aside the veils, had attacked and stormed the Ministry of War, a number of policemen trying to block their entrance into the building received a sound

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thrashing. The ostensible cause was the summary dismissal of their husbands from their military service. These women objected to this procedure, and not only demanded their reinstatement in their former offices, but they demanded the granting of a number of privileges to their own sex in the Turkish Empire.

As soon as Mr. and Mrs. Holbach left for the station, a young tourist by the name of Mr. Hill, from Scotland, called on the Master. He knew Mr. and Mrs. Whyte, of Edinburgh, and especially their son, who is a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons. He has been travelling through the Holy Land, having heard the name of the Beloved he made up his mind to call on him. The Master spoke to him about general education and the great work done by the American College in Beirut. Then he said: "I am glad to receive one who is a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Whyte. They are real Christians. They live in accord with the Commands of His Holiness Christ. They are free from any prejudice. I love them very much. They were most kind and hospitable to me when I was in Edinburgh, and arranged many meetings. When you see them, give them my heart-felt greeting and affection. I have not forgotten them, and I will remember them always. No sooner had the young tourist left than the Master started for Bahajee, to pray at the Holy Tomb. As I had many things to attend to, he did not ask me to follow him. A number of believers went with him, especially two newly arrived pilgrims from Neyreex, Haji Mirza Ahmad and Sheikh Mohammed Hossein. They have been two months and a half on their way. Five years ago, 18 Bahais were martyred in their city; their homes destroyed and their property pillaged. One of the two pilgrims is the son of a Bahai whose six brothers were beheaded before their father. The executioners sent him the bleeding heads, and he sent them back with the message: "When I offered the lives of my six sons in the Path of God, I did not expect to receive even their heads!" The other pilgrim still lives in his desolate and ruined habitation; but both of them have happy, smiling faces, perfectly resigned to the Will of God.

In the evening the Master called them into his own Presence, and inquired from them the conditions of the Cause in their Province. He spoke about the efficacy of the power of the Word over the hearts of men, and promised them further confirmation and reinforcement if they continue to teach the Cause and diffuse the Fragrances.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Home of Muhammad o'Allah, Acca, Syria.,  
April 5, 1914.

Dear Friends-

A most busy day from before sunrise to midnight for the Beloved. He was out of the house long before I appeared on the scene. Often I wish I could follow him unnoticed at a distance and watch his divine deeds of charity and benevolence. When he returned it was about noon. As he entered the house he said: "I have called on more than a dozen people and also on a number of the believers who live at the Inn. In each case I had to ascend many flights of steps, and thus I must rest for awhile and shake off this extreme fatigue." One of the believers, who was fortunate enough to follow him, told me how he dispensed charity and aided the many needy ones by giving financial assistance. Long have they been looking forward to this occasion, waiting for Abbas Effendi to come, so that they would receive from his hands help and aid. In the afternoon a number of prominent citizens called on the Beloved, and the question of the recent election of a representative from Acca for the Turkish Parliament was discussed. There are two candidates in the field, and for the last few months they have been carrying on a heated campaign in outlying districts to catch the votes of the people.

When they left the house, the Master also went out again, and paid calls on two learned Sheikhs who are here from Constantinople. It was quite late when he returned, and while the believers had gathered in the room, chanting Tablets, speaking about the Progress of the Cause, he ascended the stairs and offered apologies for not being able to speak to them tonight. "Marhaba! Marhaba!" he said. "Praise be to God that you are the old companions of the Blessed Perfection. You have witnessed His Glory and sang the anthems of His Truth. You have been submerged in the Sea of His Compassion and quaffed the Wafer of Immortality from His Hand." With these words, he disappeared from our sight, but his divine picture is engraved on the Tablet of our hearts.

The aqueduct bringing water into the city has a most interesting history, the narration of which may not be out of place here. Jazzar Pasha, who was the Military Governor of Acca about 120 years ago, and who defeated Napoleon's forces after a long siege of the town, is the original builder of the aqueduct. About ten or twelve miles out of Acca, right amidst the encircling mountains, there is a hill called "Kobry", on the side of which there is a little village. From the foot of this hill there issues forth water from three or four springs. The fresh, cold water of the springs bubbles out of the ground, and flows into a reservoir, the top of which is covered. During the summer months it is extremely cold, while in the winter season it is hot. The reservoir being filled, the water enters the aqueduct, now under the ground and again above ground, through a system of tubes running over high arches built of strong masonry. Moss-covered and ivy-grown, these arches are seen through the plain for miles and miles. The surrounding orchards and valleys are irrigated with water from two of these springs, and the third was directed by Jazzar Pasha toward the town of Acca. Huge cisterns were built in Acca, wherein water was stored for the time of emergency, - one for special use was built under the Mosque. The aqueduct supplied water to the city for some time, and then suddenly Napoleon

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and his army appeared behind the gate of Acca. The first thing that the investing army did was to cut the water supply from the town and fill the aqueduct with earth in order to force the besieged to surrender. Napoleon did not dream that the town's cisterns and storehouses were filled to overflowing with water and provisions, so that they could stand the siege for many months. Jazzar Pasha always forced the farmers to pay their taxes in wheat and cereals, and these were in turn stored in the Government's granaries for such rainy days. After several desperate attacks on the town Napoleon had to cease his futile attempts. Then Jazzar Pasha died. By this time, the aqueduct was filled as far as Bahajee, as well as all along the road and the owners received a share of the water. Thus the dreariness of the desert was relieved by these luxuriant and green cases in the midst of the Sahara. In this manner we may assert that a higher power was working toward the fulfillment of the old prophecy: "The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Near "Kobry" Baha'o'llah pitched his tents several times, and lived there peacefully for many days. We may rest assured that the place is impregnated with His all-pervading Spirit.

When Jazzar Pasha died, another man, Abdollah Pasha, a near relative of his, became the Governor of the semi-independent principality. Jazzar Pasha, although totally illiterate, was still a powerful man, and defying the rules of the central government, set up for the time being a government of his own. Abdollah Pasha, desiring to imitate his predecessor, was more than anxious to hand down to posterity more than a mere name, and strove to engrave his name in mortar and clay. Consequently, aside from laying a number of large orchards and building a number of edifices, he laid the corner-stones of two mansions. When they were finished, the larger and more pretentious was inhabited by himself and family, and the smaller one, which is no other than the present palace of Bahajee, was given to his mother. In his own mansion he built a very large reservoir of water, the bottom of which was decorated with wonderful mosaics, and all around it there were most beautiful gardens with shady nooks and romantic surroundings. This great tank of water is seen even today, but the mosaics are gone.

The aqueduct, fallen into a dilapidated condition, Abdollah Pasha repaired it, but only as far as Bahajee and no further. The inhabitants of Acca by this time had forgotten that years ago the aqueduct extended as far as the town. Hence while this cool fresh water was irrigating the orchards two miles outside the gate, the people of Acca drank the salty sea water, sifted through the sand, or the brackish, tasteless water drawn from the wells and sold at a high cost. As a result of this their forms became most grotesque, and their faces were most dreadful to look at. The streets being very narrow, the rays of the sun hardly reached the ground. They were not paved with stones as they are now-a-days, and when it rained they became so muddy and filled with filth that, as an old believer told me, "I had to take off my shoes and stockings to wade through a stream of mud, refuse and rubbish, ankle-deep, nay deeper!" Then as now the streets were infested with dogs, with no one to feed them save the occasional bones and crumbs of bread thrown to them by the inhabitants. These dogs making their homes in the cramped

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streets, added to the general filthiness, squalor, misery and uncleanliness. No wonder the Turkish authorities thought Baha'o'llah, his family and companions, would surely die after three months stay in this rayless, melancholy charnel-house of death - the Siberia of Turkey. The town was so renowned for its pestilential weather that it was said a bird flying over it, its wings would be scorched and it would drop down dead! Such were the doleful and gloomy conditions when Baha'o'llah and His 722 followers were imprisoned in the Military Barrack about 47 years ago. The guards did not permit anyone to go out and bring fresh water, and thus they had no chance or choice but to drink the tasteless, bitter water of the wells. Later on, a grocer in the Bazaar, by the name Osman, became interested in these exiles, and once in a long while would very cautiously send a jar of water from Bahajee for the Blessed Perfection. Five years afterwards, a Motosarrafi came to Acca, and desiring to make himself popular, suggested rebuilding the forgotten aqueduct to relieve the ills of the town. Hence definite steps were taken: a large sum of money was subscribed by all the inhabitants, and the cash was made available to start the work of reconstruction. A small portion of this fund was expended on the preparation of the building materials, and the rest pocketed by the greedy officials. Thus the plan was abandoned, and nothing was accomplished. After a year or two another Motosarrafi, by the name Meyzi Pasha, was sent to Acca. He was a man very high in the official life of the Ottoman Empire, and accredited with executive ability and rare administrative power. No sooner had he arrived than he started to introduce reforms in the local prison, built a wharf in Haifa, another in Acca, created a municipal commission, adding to the efficiency of the teachers in the Mosque, and increased the revenue. He was Motosarrafi only for two months, yet he obliged the townspeople to contribute again toward a public fund for the building of the aqueduct. The work of the laborers was superintended by himself and pushed forward at a feverish haste. Thus in an incredibly short time it was completed. Three or four public fountains were built in the various parts of the town, so that the people might have water without any cost in their homes.

Then a day was set aside for the celebration of the beneficent undertaking, the inhabitants poured out of the town in their gala dress, and the cannons boomed forth the salute.

I have learned that this Motosarrafi called on Abdul Baha many times, but Baha'o'llah did not meet him. It is however, related that He much admired his practical reforms and praised his resourcefulness and ability. A few more words, and I come to the end of this story. The Palace of Bahjeh, after changing hands many times, came at last into the possession of Oudy Khammar. He introduced many changes and practically renovated the mansion. He and his family lived there until the time Abdul Baha rented it from him for five years. At present two shares belong to Abbas Afi, the guardian of the Tomb of the Bab, and one share to a stranger.

Abboud, the then owner of this Home, facing the sea, was the vice-Counsel of Russia, and a very prominent merchant. Only Khammar, his partner, built another house next to it, but now the two houses have become one - belonging to the Cause. Abboud often came into the

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Presence of Baha'o'llah, and while glorious Tablets were revealed he would listen with rapt attention. One day the Blessed Perfection said to him: "Aboud! Thou art now in the position to rebuild this aqueduct and bring the water into the town." But he did not do it, and missed this golden opportunity. Hence it came to pass that the public contributed toward its reconstruction. When the water was brought to the city, then Aboud, at the suggestion of Baha'o'llah, laid a line and brought it to this house, which line exists up to the present day. However, before the water was brought to the town there was a Persian Bahai by the name of Akeem who went once a day to Bahajee, filled two big jars and brought them on the back of a donkey. A few years passed, and another Motosarrafi came to Acca. This man, seeing the filth and dirt of the streets, asked the inhabitants to subscribe toward a fund for the paving of the streets. An estimate was made so that each person would contribute according to the space in front of his house. This work was done quite creditably. Today the narrow streets of Acca are comparatively clean, the water is quite pure and sanitary, the weather is not as bad as in former times, there are men who sweep the streets daily and are paid ten dollars a month, and here and there oil lamps dispel the darkness of the night. The world is changing, even the Acca of today is busier and clearer than the Acca of 40 years ago ..

Ahmad Sohrab.

Home of Baha'o'llah, Acca, Syria,  
April 6, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

Several times during the morning have I stood in the Presence of Abdul Baha, listened to his words of love and affection and drank from the Salsabeel of his utterance. Many petitions from America were read to him, and their glad news imparted to him rejoicing. Praise be to God the believers have reached a certain stage in their spiritual development that they are little by little enabled to solve their own problems and devise plans for the progress of the Cause. Relying on the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha, they are teaching new souls and causing new ears to listen to the thrilling story of the Bahai Revelation. This is a good sign, and it is hoped, while trusting entirely on the help and aid of the Beloved, they will go on working increasingly for the Cause of Unity. When the Spirit of Unity gains control over the hearts of the members of a given Assembly, then they will be enabled to spread the Message; otherwise all their efforts will be entirely fruitless. Before everything else we must put our own house in order and then invite the people to come in. If the least trace of inharmony exists between the various members of a meeting, the principle aim of the religion of God is subverted. First, Unity, then the promotion of the word of God. Without the perfect realization of the first condition, the results of the second step - if there are any results - are temporary and not eternal. As Bahais we must be teachers in the school of Unity; soldiers in the army of Unity; stars in the heaven of Unity; waves of the sea of Unity; roses of the garden of Unity; fruits of the orchard of Unity; letters of the book of Unity; shining lights in the assemblage of Unity and servants in the service of Unity. Unity is Power, and Power is the foundation of every movement. The more the members of an Assembly are united, the greater will be their powers of activity in the promotion of the Cause.

I am afraid these words of mine will have no effect on some people, but I cannot help saying them, because I feel so intensely on the subject. The Master has already written and spoken so much on this subject of importance that it would fill volumes. Now is the time that we must actualize these lofty ideals and practice them in our daily intercourse with the people.

The General and a number of his staff called this morning on the Beloved. They are charmed with his eloquence and wonderful flow of divine wisdom. They cannot keep away from him, and are impressed more and more with his spiritual character.

In the afternoon a number of Tablets were revealed from the heart of the Light of the World. While he was dictating, Aga Hossein Ash-jee entered the room and spoke with the Master for a few minutes. Later on he told me that the scene reminded him of Baha'o'llah's days, because the Beloved was sitting in the exact place of his Father when He revealed Tablets for the guidance of the people of the world. Bringing to a close the dictation of Tablets, he got up from the divan and said: "Now we must go out to take a walk." Ebne Abha, Sayad Ali Afnan and Aga Mehdi, the gardener of the Tomb of Baha'o'llah, accompanied him. He walked outside of the wall, beside the sea, and while he was slowly walking he spoke in



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reference to an article from his own pen published in the Theosophical journal "Theosophy in Scotland":- "Although the Western nations have perfected the machinery of natural civilization, yet they are left far behind in Divine Civilization. My object in taking that long journey through the West, was to awaken them out of this sleep; that they might not grovel all the time in the world of matter, and that they might not think only of eating and drinking. Whenever I spoke on these topics I was myself greatly moved. When a person delivers an address, he must first of all address himself and see whether the recital of these experiences will stir his heart or not. In this manner one's talk will influence the heart and the soul."

While the Beloved was walking along the sea, everyone who passed by saluted him and meanwhile he pointed out to us the signs of the ancient civilization, and how a few centuries ago the gate of Acca was near Bahajee, and the present plain was covered with orchards and houses. Here and there one could see the foundations of old buildings. A big Turk stopped on his way, after the customary salutation of the Master to him, the man invited him to go to his garden a few minutes and rest. He accepted his invitation, and henceforward he engaged him in conversation till we reached the door. Here we sat under the shade of a lovely pergola, and the Beloved continued his talk on the charms of Central Park in New York and the Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, wherein one sees a very large lake over the surface of which are hundreds of tame swans and ducks. Then the customs of the Egyptians and the Lunar Park built in Cairo were discussed, and many other subjects were talked about. From this garden the Master called on an old friend of his who has built a house and laid a garden outside of the gate of Acca. The second man was the neighbor of the first, and thus we did not have far to walk. Here also the Master stayed for half an hour, and spoke with the host on local affairs. Coffee and sherbet were served. Bidding him au revoir, we traced our steps back to the home. The Beloved entered his room to attend to his correspondence, and after an hour he came out. He was guest in the house of Mohammed Effendi Saleh, where a large number of people had gathered to hear him speak. The Koran and authentic traditions were his theme, and for two hours and a half he spoke with great fervor on the inner symbolism of those verses, and where they are liable of two interpretations.

Our dear Miss S. M. Sanderson has just arrived from America. She is now in Haifa, and soon she will receive permission to come to Acca. It will be a great pleasure to meet her in the Holy Land.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Home of Baha'o'llah, Acca, Syria, April 7, '14.

Dear Friends:-

Mr. Shirazi, a young, energetic Bahai of India, who made a tour of the principle cities of that country in the interest of the Cause, lecturing before cultured Hindu societies and attracted many people to the principles of this Movement, arrived today, and found the haven of rest and peace in the presence of the Prince of Peace. A deep love of the Cause, a practical bent of mind and above all a deep-set desire to spread the Cause, are his characteristics. The Beloved was in the course of dictating Tablets for the Persian believers when Mr. Shirazi and Mr. Vakil were announced, and ushered into the room. The former was dressed in long, flowing Cashmere shawl coat, and looked very picturesque. The Master, looking up from a letter which he held in his hand, beamed at him a heavenly smile of welcome. "I have been looking forward to this meeting," the Master said. "I longed always for thy visit. Praise be to God that this is realized. Do not think that because I am not writing everyone I do not know their material and spiritual conditions. I KNOW. Truly I say, thou art sincere and steadfast in the Cause. The trip that thou didst make through India was for the sake of the Cause of God. Rest thou assured that the reward of that journey will be great to thee by the Blessed Perfection."

Mr. Shirazi and Mr. Vakil, as well as the contents of a petition, expressed the hope that the Master might visit India and illumine that land with the light of his face. "India must become prepared", he said. "A center of magnetic power must be created there in order to attract me. If such a center of attraction comes into being, I might come." Then a Tablet was revealed regarding this matter, which will be quoted in a future letter.

A photograph containing the picture of the Karachi Congress, with Mrs. Stannard in the center, was shown to the Master by Mr. Shirazi. He looked through it and seeing the picture of Buddha, he said: "It is really very sad to see how Buddha and Christ are fallen into the hands of the bad people of their respective followers. Without the exact knowledge of their physiognomies, every day they represent them under different forms; now suffering Buddha to sit under the Lotus tree and another day placing Jesus Christ on the Cross! At the very utmost the photographs are for remembrance, and not for worship. If we keep a photograph just for memory's sake, no harm is done, but if we offer to it extraordinary homage, it is pure idolatry. It was for this very reason that I always refused to be photographed. When I went to Egypt, Ahmad Zakki Pasha requested me to take my photograph, but I did not accept. But when I went to London, I realized how impossible it was to ward off the professional photographers. For the first few days I succeeded in eluding them, and hardly went out of the house. But one day there was a meeting in the house of Mrs. Cropper, and I was invited to attend. In order to escape their cameras, I drew my Aba over my head and hastened to the automobile. They had however, taken a snap-shot, and the next day I was surprised to see it in many newspapers. Realizing at last how impossible it was to prevent them, I asked them to come and take at least a good photograph."

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Then facing Mr. N. P. Valkil, he said: "In the future the members of your family will honor thy faith and glorify thy name. During his own days Peter was caluminated, scorned, scoffed at and humiliated, but after his death many great personages glorified in his name." Then he related two stories to illustrate this point.

After lunch they left for the Holy Tomb, to visit that blessed spot, and on their return the Master called them again and spoke to them as follows: "May God ever assist and confirm you. Whenever you go to visit the Holy Tomb you must implore and supplicate that God may surround you with his invisible Confirmations. Nothing in this world is accomplished without Divine Confirmation. Even the despatch of small, unimportant matters depends upon spiritual assistance. - - - -Often a very weak man is confirmed with divine assistance and he becomes the first man in the world of humanity. I hope that you may always be confirmed and the protective powers of God may encircle you from all sides; perchance, God willing, you may become the means of the illumination of your people and suffer them to partake of this heavenly food. Do ye not look upon your capability and merit. The Divine Power transforms a mosquito into an eagle, the drop into the sea and the ray into the sun. Rely all of your hope on the Blessed Perfection. Consider how this black soil is decorated with multi-colored flowers through the bestowals of the sun, the downpour of the rain and the blowing of the winds! Although the earth was dark, yet through the benedictions of the four elements it was begemmed with such fragrant roses, and produced such lucious fruits! Therefore in this glorious Cause we must not consider our own capabilities but rather expect the Graces of God. This is the foundation! - -" He gave permission for half of the pilgrims to come tomorrow and spend the day in Bahajee. The rest of the time the Master was very busy receiving the strangers of many classes.

In the evening one of the believers told me that today the President of the Charitable Society of the Catholics told him that Abbas Effendi came to him and donated 25 Ottoman pounds toward the maintenance of their poor. Thus we see with our own eyes he is dispensing charity to all the nations and religions of the world, irrespective of their creeds and dogmas. In the evening, he was a guest in the house of the newly-elected member of Parliament from Acca, by the name of Abul Fattah Sadi.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Home of Baha'o'llah, Acca, Syria,  
April 8, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

"China, China, China - Chinaward the Cause of Baha'o'llah must march! Where is that holy, sanctified Bahai to become the teacher of China? China has most great capability. The Chinese people are most simple-hearted and truth-seeking. The Bahai teacher of the Chinese people must be first imbued with their spirit; know their sacred literature, study their national customs and speak to them from their own standpoint, and their own terminologies. He must entertain no thought of his own, but ever think of their spiritual welfare. In China one can teach many souls and train and educate such divine personages, each one of whom may become the bright candle of the world of humanity. Truly I say they are free from any deceit and hypocrisies, and are prompted with ideal motives.

"Had I been feeling well, I would have taken a journey to China myself! China is the country of the future. I hope the right kind of teacher will be inspired to go to that vast empire to lay the foundation of the Kingdom of God, to promote the principles of Divine Civilization, to unfurl the banner of the Cause of Baha'o'llah and to invite the people to the banquet of the Lord!"

Thus spoke the Beloved this evening to the assembled friends, and I have recorded his words here, feeling sure that they will create the proper atmosphere and inspire the right kind of heart to arise and accomplish the great service. Then he continued: "For the last twenty years I have repeatedly emphasized the matter of spreading the Cause of God. In every city there must be organized assemblies of teaching classes to teach the young how to teach the Cause and prepare them for this most important service. Every Bahai must acquire the lessons of teaching. This will yield results. No other cause is as important as this. The Cause of the promotion of the Cause of Baha'o'llah is the most confirmed Cause. Every time one Cause holds the most supreme importance. There is one season to harrow the ground, another season to scatter the seeds, still another season to irrigate the fields and still another to harvest the crop. We must attend to these various kinds of activities in their proper seasons in order to become successful. Now is the time of seed-sowing, but it seems to me some of the believers are thinking about forgetting. This will give them no results. Whosoever is thinking of any other thing, he is wasting his time. The promotion of the principles of Baha'o'llah is the most dominant issue before the believers of God."

In the morning, Mirza Jalal came down and expressed the wish of going of going to the station to welcome the pilgrims. I also followed him. When the train entered the station, we could see the heads of the believers out of the windows. There were many new faces, eight students from Beirut College, four newly arrived pilgrims and many of the old ones. The Master had told us to tell them to go directly to Bahajee. Except Shoughe Effendi and Rouhi Effendi, the rest started on their walk to the Blessed Tomb of Baha'o'llah? Having entered the house, we found the Beloved engaged in conversation with the believers. immediately afterwards, Doctor Zaki Bey, of the Turkish Garrison, an old friend of the Bahai Cause, called on the Beloved, and the talk was mostly on the efficiency of the administrative offices, that they must be public spirited and have a

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passionate desire for the progress of the nation. "In the world of humanity 'good intentions' is the greatest means of personal development. If a person has 'good intention' he will succeed in all his undertakings", he said at last.

Speaking about the arrival of the Turkish Military officers, he said: "So many important officers have come to Acca. Last night I was invited to the house of Abdol-Fattah Effendi, the newly-elected member of Parliament. Two large rooms were filled with these officers with their chief commandment. Many subjects were discussed and I stayed with them till late at night". Then he dictated a Tablet for Mrs. Holbach, inviting her and her husband to come to Acca and stay a day or two.

In the afternoon the Master rode on his donkey, Khosro holding the reins. I also hired a donkey - round trip for ten cents. When the Beloved reached the rest-house he alighted from the little donkey and when the believers saw him, they rushed out and met him half way. He ascended the stairs and entered the small room built over the rest-house. From the roof, one has a wonderful view of all the surrounding country. Then he sent for the new pilgrims, and the Beirut students. He said to them: "You must be very thankful to God that He has brought about for you such easy means. The President of the College is most pleased with you, and expresses satisfaction with your behaviours. For the present you are studying well and I am very pleased with you.

Then we followed him to the Holy Tomb. He chanted in a deep, spiritual voice the Visiting Tablet, and gave rose-water to each one of the worshippers. Coming out of the Tomb, the Beloved stood on the stairs and asked Badi Boshroyeh: "Dost thou not know all the English language? We need at least one hundred young Persian Bahais who have mastered this language most thoroughly, so that they may travel throughout America and Europe and proclaim the Cause of Baha'ullah. Their weapons must be divine virtue and spiritual sincerity of purpose. I hope that such pure instruments may be created by God. I hope also that each one of you may become a heavenly teacher." Then giving them his permission to return to Haifa, he retired to the house of Aga Sayad Ali.

Altogether it was a lovely day, the Master shedding the rays of his love and affection all around and the pilgrims feeling perfectly happy.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Home of Baha'o'llah, Acca, Syria,  
April 9, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

"I am the servant of the believers of God. I must demonstrate my claim to service with deeds. Words are not sufficient. Were it possible for me, I would have served the believers in the Pilgrims' Home, in the place of Aga Mohammed Hassan. Today I will prepare the dinner for the believers who are coming tomorrow from Haifa to visit the Holy Tomb of the Blessed Perfection." Thus spoke the Beloved, while he was preparing a big sheep to be cooked whole in the oven. With Khosro on his right hand, he worked over the sheep for more than two hours, stuffing it with rice, pine-nuts, saffrön, nuts and other spices. It will be browned little by little in several pounds of butter with not one drop of water. The lid is tightened with dough, leaving no aperture anywhere. It will be sent to the oven tonight - in order that it may be ready for tomorrow noon to be carried to Bahajee on the back of a donkey.

In the morning a number of the pilgrims arrived from Haifa. The Master sent for them one by one and held with each a long conversation. The Pilgrims' Home boasts of nearly forty pilgrims from the various parts of Persia, Turkey, India and Russia, all consorting together, also from Arabia, with perfect joy and unity. A large contingent of them will leave for their respective countries in a few days. Another portion of his morning hours was spent with the strangers who came and went and heard him speak on the various topics of the day. To one of them he said:- "The world and its objects are transitory. Phenomena undergoes change and transformation, but God and his servants remain unalterable and not subject to transmutation. We must attack our hearts to Him if we desire to be eternally happy."

That the English nation has not forgotten the part her gallant soldiers played during the Napoleonic siege of Acca may be well understood by the contents of a marble Tablet built in the wall of a narrow street. The contents is in English and Arabic. I had not seen it before, and I was rather surprised as I looked at it today. The seige of Acca, according to the date contained therein, is peculiarly interesting, for it was in the month of April, 1799, and now again we are in the month of April, 1914, just 115 years. Who would have thought that in the same month, probably during the same days, the Lord of Peace would live in Acca! What a contrast between the two periods! Then the gate was closed, the people were distressed. The noise of drum and warring soldiers was in their ears. But now the gate is open by day and by night; in three places the wall is broken, the cannons are thrown hither and thither, rusty; the inhabitants are peacefully following their trades and professions, and the Teacher of good-will and fellowship is living the Life of Christ. I may quote herein the contents of the Tablet, as a memorial of these heavenly days:-

THIS TABLET

Was erected in the year 1907

by

His Britannic Majesty's Government

In Memory of

Major Oldfield, of the British Marines, aged Forty-three.  
who fell in leading a sortie from the garrison, when besieged by Napoleon Buonaparte and the French Army, in the month of April, 1799. He was

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buried by the French with Military Honours. A soldier "sans peur et sans reproche", he carried with him to his grave the esteem of friends and foes.

And of Colonel Walker of the Royal Marines, who died 1840, aged 68, during the operations which forced Ibrahim Pasha to evacuate Syria."

The Orientals have many stories to illustrate the wiles and seductions of womankind. The following is an example:-

One day the lion of the jungle came across the domestic cat. "Thou art my brother. In every detail thou dost bear a likeness to me. How is it thou hast become so small?" the lion roared out. "Oh!" the cat complained: "I have fallen into the shrewd hands of woman." "Woman! Woman!" he said, "What kind of creature is she? It seems to me that I have never seen her. Wilt thou show her to me, and I will heap upon her head most direful punishment. My poor, weak, oppressed brother! What cruelty she hath done to thee!" "Come along!" the cat answered. "I will show her to thee." Having emerged out of the jungle, they saw a plain peasant woman working in the field. The cat pointed her out to his strange brother. "What hast thou done to my brother? Why dost thou persecute him so much? Why is he so lean? O thou heartless, cruel woman! With what power hast thou imprisoned and domesticated him? I would like to see the instrument with which thou hast captivated my brother!" "Oh, how kind of you, Mr. Lion!" The woman was all smiles and gentleness. "Really you are doing me a great honor. I would love to show you my instrument, but I am awfully sorry it is not with me this morning, but I forgot all about it." "Well done! Go and bring it!" the lion commanded. "I am very much afraid you will run away . . . before I return, in fact, I am sure you will!" The woman courtesied, all suavity. "I run away! Impossible! There is no one here that I should be afraid of. Do you not know that I am a lion, and the lion is always fearless?" "Of course, of course, I know! Gracious me! You are indeed very valorous, very dauntless; but I am sorry to say that I have my own misgivings. I would rather not go, for surely it would be a waste of energy, because- I beg your pardon if I am too emphatic - when I return I will not see even your shadow." "Oh! You impertinent woman! Are you not ashamed to attribute cowardice to me? In order to prove to you that I am not a coward, I will submit to any condition you may suggest." "Now! That's much better. I am sure you are not afraid. Who dares to say such a thing about you! But in order to test your patience I will bind you with this rope to the tree, and return to you in half an hour." "Very well! Come and do your worst!" Without much ado, she binds the lion to the tree and starts to beat him with lashes. He cries out: "What art thou doing?" "Oh! I have already brought my power from home. Dost thou not see it?" The lion realizing his plight writhed in agony, but the woman did not show him any mercy. Finally he looked toward the cat and said, pitifully: "Once she reduces me to thy size, will she not release me?" "I am afraid not!" the cat answered, and took its way homeward."

Ahmad Sohrab.

Home of Baha'o'llah, Acca, Syria,  
April 10, 1914.

Dear Friends:—

The party of Persian students and about 20 other pilgrims, including Mr. and Mrs. Holbach, arrived this morning on the train. The pilgrims started immediately for Bahajee, while the rest of them walked toward the Home of Baha'o'llah, where His Great Son is living and spreading the Gospel of Peace. While we were waiting for the arrival of the train, a regiment of soldiers, headed by a band playing martial music, marched out of the gate of Acca toward its vast plain, there to manoeuvre.

From early morning the Beloved has been receiving people and giving interviews, because he will leave tomorrow afternoon for Haifa. Thus when the students arrived he had already seen many people. He met them only for a minute, and told them to join their friends in Bahajee. He excused himself for not being able to go, because he had so many other things to attend to. The dinner which he had prepared for them was sent without letting anyone else touch it. The sheep was taken to them that thus they might serve it themselves. He told them to return at 2 P.M. so that there would be time for a meeting, especially for the students who were going to leave tonight for Beirut; to give a chance to the three other parties that are waiting to come, one after the other. The Persian girl students, nearly ten of them, have also come, and thus there is the spirit of a general holiday in the air, stirring the heart with joy and contentment.

In a personal talk with Mr. and Mrs. Holbach, the Beloved said: "My happiness comes from the Kingdom of Abha! My joy is from the Delectable Paradise! My health is gained through the rays of the sun of Heality. My spirituality descends from the world of lights. My attraction is vouchsafed from the mainspring of all truths. My life is maintained through the fraternization of all mankind, the progress of the Cause of God and the unity of the friends. — — — I have nothing to do with other people's thoughts and activities. I am the Divine Gardener; I am the heavenly farmer. God commands me to plant trees in the garden of humanity, to sow the seeds of knowledge and wisdom in the field of the hearts. He tells me: 'Do not be worried about their growth and development. I will pour over them the rain of My Mercy, will make to shine upon them the Sun of My Wisdom, and will waft over them the Breeze of My Providence!' You are two trees which I have planted with my own hands in the garden of Abha. I hope that your growth and fructification will be extraordinary, and your services in the Cause manifold."

Just about three o'clock P.M. the students and the pilgrims having arrived from Bahajee, the Master sent down word that he would receive them; but as the reception room is not large, they might be divided into three parts. I went in with the first party and stayed through to the end. The Master received us in one of the rooms of the first home, facing the sea which is calm and lovely. He was sitting at the end of the divan, and now and then looking out of the window toward the ocean. The reflection of the rays of the sun on the surface of the sea made a most illusive picture. The Master was dressed in his soft brown Persian coat, his silky, white locks falling behind his shoulders, his deep seaching eyes illumined with the light of tender benevolence. His smiles and inimitable gestures



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of the hands were most attractive. Altogether he looked more like a noble, divine Patriarch of old than any other person. He was feeling well and the effect of his well-being worked like magic over our mental and spiritual condition. How truly wonderful it was to be in his presence on this Good Friday, held so dear and sacred by the Christians. It was doubly significant to be in Acca, in the Holy Land, enjoying the Bestowals of the Father, and being encircled with the Breaths of the Holy Spirit.

Our faithful Khosro behind the Samovar dispensed the tea and served the believers with such joy as is seldom seen in any other soul.

To Mr. N.R. Vakil the Master said: "Thou art a tree which is planted with the Hand of Grace in the ground of Love. Thou art now watered with the showers of the Clouds of Divine Bounty. I hope thou mayest be ever protected and guarded from the contrary winds and become a mighty, fruitful tree. I shall pray in thy behalf that thou mayest live in accord with the good-pleasure of the Lord."

The third party consisted of the students. In the morning he had given permission to each of them to translate one of the petitions just received from America, in order that he might find out which one had made the most progress in the art of translation. Having finished the translation, Shougi Effendi proffered them to the Master. He read one or two, and then said each translator must write his own name at the bottom of the page. Then he gave them a short, powerful, stimulating talk which will appear in full elsewhere.

In the morning I was told by the Master to accompany Mrs. and Mrs. Holbach to the Garden of Rizwan; so we started immediately after the meeting. The Rizwan was in the height of its glory, all manner of flowers growing therein. Abul Gasem was the embodiment of hospitality and prepared tea for us. We made a round of the garden and the gardener offered us little lovely bouquets of violets roses and carnations. During the spring months the Rizwan is frequented by the inhabitants of Acca and its door is opened to all. Hence we found a large number of Effendis loitering under the shade of the mulberry trees, beside the cool stream of water; while we were drinking our tea, the Motosarrafi came in and Abul Gasem was all attention toward him. The gardener was sorely distressed because the Master had not been in the garden during all this time. "All the flowers and trees are weeping because they have been deprived of the Face of the Beloved! They are disconsolate and will not be calmed till they look on the countenance of their Ideal Rose! What can I do to bring him here for a few minutes?" He begged Mr. and Mrs. Holbach to intercede in his behalf before the Master, and beg him to visit the Rizwan at this time of the year. It was just a few minutes before sunset when he came out of the garden and walked toward Napoleon's Hill. Its surface is level and very large. Everywhere corn is planted, and thousands of pretty red poppies add to the charm of the rye fields. White and yellow daisies, as-podels, mignonettes and other wild flowers abound. When we reached the top of the hill, the surrounding valley, the distant chain of mountains, Acca ..

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with its single Minaret, the calm bay between this historic town and Haifa, and the glorious sun setting in the West, added to the indefinable beauty of the scene. We sat down for a few minutes, holding silent communion. Here the Crusaders fought with the Saracens. Here Christian Emperors and Mohammedan Kings entered into the longest religious war for the possession of the Holy Land! Here Richard Coeur de Lion, Napoleon Bounaparte and their hosts pitched their tents in the different periods of the world's history! Here Baha'o'llah upraised the flag of International Peace! Methought I heard the voice of the muffled drums of the weary soldiers bivouacking all night before their log fires and then the clarion voice of Baha'o'llah, the Prince of Peace, rung through my ears, clear and strong, calling to all nations to lay down their arms, arbitrate all their disputes and wage war no more. These and other kindred thoughts passed through my mind and when I opened my eyes I saw Mrs. Holbach writing a short note of the description of the place in the dim light of the after glow of the sunset. I will quote herein what she wrote:

"Acca from the Turon of the Crusaders. A vast, green plain stretches like a sea all around the Mount. The wind sweeping through the field of waving rye makes a soft rustling in my ears. The whoosh sweep of the Bay of Haifa, its nearest shore girt by palm groves is before me, with Mount Carmel bounding the further shore, a long ridge of mountain half veiled in mist. The sun is setting over Acca, and the old, fortified town with its slender Minaret proclaiming the Faith of Islam, is silhouetted against the light. Acca is built on a promontory running out into the sea, the Mediterranean stretches on both sides of it, the dwindling coast line on the right leads to Tyre and Sidon, the historic towns of old Phoenicia. Around me is a carpet of wild flowers and the magic beauty of the sunset hour illumines all the scene."

On our way back home, we passed by the moat and the fortifications, and as we looked behind, the full moon was slowly ascending, flooding this magic scene with its silvery lights.

In the evening the Master gave a most interesting talk about his childhood days in Teheran after the imprisonment of Baha'o'llah in the Government prison.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel,  
Haifa Syria, April 11, 1914.

Dear Friends:4

It is past midnight, and I am waiting this letter to you from my Nest. The room was locked, and when I entered therein I saw all my flowers - roses - have withered. I emptied the vases, filled them with fresh water, and Aga Hamhatullah brought to me two large bouquets of roses and carnations from the garden of the Tomb of the Bab. Again they have filled my room with fresh fragrance and I am happy. Oh! How I love the flowers! Wherever I go I like to surround myself with them. They convey to me the gentle aspirations of the friends and their perfume is a symbol of the spiritual lives of the believers. Of course you too love flowers. I do not claim this as a privilege, for each one of us shares in it equally and enjoys their association with the same enthusiasm and fervor. Flowers more than anything else speak to us of subtle, lofty emotions of the heart and convey to us the charm and beauty of friendship. Again I was glad to walk on Mount Carmel while bathed in the moonlight.

For the last few days the believers in Haifa were not quite happy, because the Beloved of their hearts was for a time away; but having heard last night that he would come today, their faded hopes revived. This morning we got up early, and Aga Hossein Ash-gee had already prepared tea. Mr. Shirazi was also his guest, so together we walked to the Home of the Master. The Acting Governor was in his Presence, holding a long interview. When he left the house, the Master came down and asked the believers into his Presence. In answer to the pleading of Mr. Shirazi about his journey to India, he said: "India must become a magnetic center of spirituality, so that I may be drawn to its shore. If the fragrances of God waft incessantly over the people of India, it will attract me." Then he left the house and was not in till noon. Mr. and Mrs. Holbach left for Haifa this morning, knowing the Master would take the afternoon train.

About 2 P.M. the Beloved left the house to call on the Commander of the Garrison, a few other officials and visit the Rizwan in order to fulfill his promise to Mrs. Holbach. He told us to join him at the station. While we were walking toward the station, just outside the gate, we saw a large number of black shrouded women weeping very loudly. Not knowing the cause of it, and thinking that probably one of their nearest relatives was dead, I inquired into the nature of their lamentation. I was informed that these are the mothers of the sons who are being forced against their will into military service by the Turkish recruiting officers. They have gathered here to have the last view of their sons and bid them farewell. It was really one of the most heart-breaking sights that could be witnessed anywhere on the face of the earth. How much cruelty is committed in the name of the country to satisfy the insatiable desire of the god of war!

After awhile the Greatest Holy Leaf, Monavar Khanom, Shougi and Rouhi Effendi arrived and took their seats in the train. After a few minutes, the Master appeared from the direction of the Garden of Rizwan, riding on his donkey, with Khosro walking behind him. He entered the waiting room and immediately a number of Sheikhs and officers surrounded him and saluted him. Many Acca believers were also in the station to receive the Master's last words of blessing. The Commander was also going to Haifa; therefore the Master invited him most graciously to share his compartment.

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All along the road they were talking together. The three sons-in-law of the beloved and a few other believers and pilgrims were in the station at Haifa and Isfandeyar had brought the landeau. Bidding farewell to the Commander, Abdul Baha walked toward the landeau, entered and rode away to the house. We had walked just half way when we saw Isfandeyar coming back with the landeau. The Master had sent him to pick us up. How thoughtful of him! A large number of the pilgrims had gathered in the rose garden to welcome the Beloved back. It seemed to me the garden never looked so beautiful! There is a big, wide bed of gentle pink flowers, very similar to daisies, but they open with the dawn of the sun and close with the setting. This flower is called in Persian "Naz" - coquettish or capricious..

In the evening, most naturally all the pilgrims and resident friends filled the large reception room and eagerly watched the coming of the Master. As soon as they heard the sound of his footsteps, they were on their feet. He welcomed them as he entered the room. "How are you? I hope everyone is feeling well. I have returned from Acca to meet you. Praise be to God that you are under the Shade of the Blessed Perfection. His Bounties and Favors are perfected for you. You must appreciate the value of these Bestowals. . . . Then, because while he was in Acca he had ordered tombstones to be put on the graves of two of the oldest Bahais, Aga Mirza Mahmud and Aga Reza, he spoke a great deal about their services to the Cause during the life-time of the Blessed Perfection..

As our dear brother, Ebne Abhar, has two sons and family will leave on Monday, I may translate herein one of his many interesting conversations. He said this morning:

"In every person a power is hidden that once it is revealed, the teacher of the Cause through this power will be enabled to speak with the seekers in accord with real wisdom and attract him to the spirit of the Movement. This power is developed in man through the inculcation of the qualities which are like unto two wings or two feet. The one is sincerity in the Religion of God, and the other, virtue in deeds which proceedeth from him. When a teacher of Holy Things is unselfish in his motives and virtuous in his actions, with the assistance of these two qualities he will wing his way to the highest apogee of perfection or walk till he reaches the goal of his desire. Whenever an interested person comes in touch with such a teacher, no sooner does he look at him than the right kind of talk will flow from the core of his heart. The hungry will be fed and the thirsty one will quaff the water of life. Little by little, a teacher of the Cause will become like a skilled physician, who by a simple look at the patient, or merely holding his pulse, will diagnose his malady and then prescribe medicine accordingly. The teacher is always supported by Baha'o'llah. We must turn our faces toward Him and beg the Confirmation of His Kingdom. Then and not until then will we be accounted as His real servants."

In these days the good news of the progress of the Cause in all parts of the world is the means of the happiness of the heart of Abdul Baha. Praise be to God that the teachers are leaving no stones unturned to proclaim the Message of Abha. Continuity of service is essential to the advancement of the Cause. The stream of happy reports from America, Eng-

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Iran and Germany, confers upon him real rejoicing. Let them not be discouraged because they receive no answer. Their reward is with the Blessed perfection. Let the news be forwarded most regularly, so that there may be no break in the wonderful system of spiritual correspondence established between the East and the West. Each letter brings with itself the fragrance of Love and Unity. Like a lamp, it sheds the rays of joy and spiritual intoxication. Now that Abdul Baha lives in Haifa, he loves to hear the victorious news of the believers of God and those letters that are the carriers of good, cheering news, are the white-winged messengers of assurance and faithfulness. Let the room of the beloved be filled with them! Let him inhale their soul-refreshing odor! The hosts of Light must become again active to dispel the forces of darkness..

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest , Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 12, '18.

Dear Friends:-

The sun is just rising from the eastern horizon like unto a blazing globe of fire, flooding the crest of the Mountain of God with its iridescent rays and heralding the glorious dawn of another day. Those who are sleeping in their beds at the foot of Mount Carmel are beginning to awake to take up the thread of their daily work. To many the wonders of God's creation and its awe-inspiring scenes have no significance. Like the giant troglodyte they are contented with their dark homes in the holes of the mountains or the caves of the hills. They live a subterranean life and never raise their eyes upward. Their forefathers winged their way to the refulgent summit of inspiration, but like grovelling worms they are satisfied with the crevices and fissures of the earth. For them the sun is never rising, the world is not yet renovated, the fresh spring never returns, and nature with all its wonderful colors is veiled. They live in the mist of past ages. The surface of the mirrors of their hearts is covered with the dust of generations, nor have they ever tried to polish them. They cling to the past, live only in the present and never worry about the future. The accumulated weight of dogmas and priestly authority has so bent their backs that they do not even make a small attempt to break these iron bonds that have held them so long in captivity and slavery. They go on from day to day, from month to month, year to year, never thinking, never reasoning, never independently investigating. O men! who are almost drowned in the sea of sleep and negligence! The Sun of Truth hath arisen from the horizon of sanctity; why do ye not open your eyes? Through its penetrative rays the earth of human possibilities is carpeted with unfading amaranths of knowledge and the imperishable asphodels of wisdom. Do not let the clouds of your own imaginations and fancies rise toward the heaven of your consciousness and prevent its illumination! These clouds have no outward existence; they are made in the factory of your own minds. Just as the vapors rise from the earth toward the sky and hinder the sun, similarly the clouds of pre-conceived ideas and notions rise from the mind and check the downpour of the rays of the Sun of Reality. The sun has had neither ascent nor descent, a rising nor a setting, but is stationed in its zenith of glory. The dark wandering clouds are our own misguided conceptions and erroneous and faulty imaginings. Through the Divine Teachings we must dispel these fantastic clouds of ignorance from our horizon of intellect and let the Sun of Truth shine unimpededly. The Prophets of God and the Divine Messengers have come for no other purpose save this. The mirrors of our hearts must be cleansed, old ideas must be discarded, old institutions must be thrown into the dust-heap, old cogitations are of no avail, old trees must be uprooted and thus new trees be transplanted. Those who desire to conjugate the past tense are left behind; we must think of the present and our spiritual needs. We must reflect over the state of the future progress of humanity and how we can further it and bring it one inch nearer the goal. Let us break the golden bars of the cage of self-complacent life and soar toward the heaven of mighty achievements. Let us come out of the caverns and dens of imperfections and engage in those things that will benefit mankind and the progress of the cause of God. Praise be to God that the Bahais are alive to the importance of these facts,

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are enthused with the fire of the world's anthem of fraternization, realize more than other communities the need of religious and moral culture, are imbued with the spirit of brotherly feeling and general co-operation, are defining the principles of union and ignoring points of difference, have surrendered the human will and chosen the Divine Will, are inspired with the holy determination of service and are working day and night for the promotion of Truth.

The laws of the material world are opposed to the laws of the Divine World. In the former there is the struggle for existence, injustice, rapacity and defects, while in the latter one observes forgiveness, justice, liberality and perfections. The one is satanic; the other angelic; the infernal terrors are the postulates of the first; divine splendours the rules of the second. The jangling, discordant music of the one jars aesthetic nature, but the seraphic melodies of the other ravish the hearts of men. Therefore the spiritual laws of the divine world must become predominant and gain victory over the material laws of the natural world. The Divine World is illumined with the rays of the Sun of reality; the material world is beclouded with the dark clouds of prejudices. Only through the power of faith will we come out victorious. Only through the inculcation of divine precepts will we become worthy of the Heavenly Bestowals. Every person must make a worthy attempt to represent the Cause in all its grandeur and majesty and embody the divine principles of the Kingdom.

This morning the steamer arrived from Beirut and brought seven more Bahai students. The Master received them and welcomed them with wonderful, spiritual cordiality. Hardly had he spoken a few words than Raza Bey, a Turkish Officer of Beirut, was announced, and Abdul Baha spoke to him the rest of the time. He spoke about Saladdin and the Crusaders and the bloodshed of cruel men on both sides. Then he related several stories to show the kindness and humanity of Saladdin. Acca fell into the hands of the Crusaders only for four years, and was taken by the unified attack of the Mohammedan hosts..

Then the Chief Commander called, and the beloved started to speak with him on other subjects, and we retired from his presence. In the afternoon by the arrangement of the Persian Students, two of the Professors of Beirut College called on the beloved, and I was so fortunate as to translate his words to them. He spoke mainly on Universal Peace, and because the name of the book "The Great Illusion" by Norman Angel, was mentioned, he dwelt on the follies of wars and the benefits of arbitration. Then he eulogized America and its ideal institutions of liberty and civilization. "Every state is an independent sovereignty," he said, "and freedom rules over the hearts of men. Every American considers himself responsible to hold aloft the ideals of humanity and as such they are the guardians of the right of man. Their splendid isolation entitles them to interfere with the internal affairs of other nations. They are not imbued with the ruthless law of landgrabbing! I was most pleased with the results of my trip to America. I found a wonderful spirit of Peace hovering over that vast continent. The people are inspired with the thoughts of Peace. I will ever pray for their success. Today this is the most great service to the world of humanity."

In the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Holbach came in, and Abdul Baha talked with them for more than half an hour. They were refreshed by the downpour of his words and the beauty of his advices. Then Sheikh Mohammed Ali was

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called, and in the course of conversation the Beloved said: "The more the believers of God associate and consort with all the nations of the world, the more I shall be pleased with them. This is the clear text of the Book of the Blessed Perfection. The more the Bahais are kind to other communities, the nearer will they be to the Threshold of God."

Today the wife of Aga Mehdi, the gardener of the Tomb of Baha'o'llah, passed away into the higher Life. She is leaving behind one son of probably five years. Therefore the Master called him into his Presence and consoled him on account of his bereavement.

We did not have any meeting tonight, so we ascended the Mountain toward the Pilgrims' Home..

Ahmad Sohrab.



Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria.  
April 13, 1914..

Dear Friends:+

"Make an Aeroplane and take me with thee to India. This is at present the only way thou canst kidnap me!" said the Beloved to Mr. Shirazi, when he asked him again about his long expected trip to that country. He laughed heartily and wished the believers in India to proclaim with great power and energy the Word of God, so that an irresistible magnet may be created to draw him to that land. "Now", he said, "I want to send you back to India and see what you can do in that direction. Praise be to God that thou art a lion. The Bestowals of the Blessed Perfection have made all the believers to be fearless lions. When thou returnest to India, thou must roar in order that I may hear thy voice here in Haifa. They must sing the music of the Kingdom and attract the souls to the Paradise of Abha. Tell the Zoroastrians: Our aim is to increase your number and not decrease it. The Bahais of all parts of the world will join their intellectual and moral forces with yours, and thus suddenly you will find your number increased to a hundred thousand fold. - - The good news from India has made me very happy. Soon the Cause will advance greatly in that country. The beauty of Truth will be revealed to those people. Have a little patience! Have a little patience!" For more than an hour he walked through the lovely beds of the garden, expounding the doctrines of His Holiness Baha'o'llah and explaining the teachings of the Prophets. The pilgrims were standing in two long rows with utmost reverence and respect. As he walked to and fro through the charming flowers, the eyes involuntarily followed his light, quick, majestic steps, and the ears were strained to hear every word. Here indeed was a miniature Congress of Religions and Nations, the wolves and lambs drinking from the same fountain and grazing in the same prairies. I could see here a number of ancient Zoroastrians from Bombay, there a number of old Jews from Hamadan; modern Christians from Europe and America were not missing; Mohammedans from many cities of Persia were prominent; Ashkabad and Bakou were represented. Here was a Hindu from Navarsi, there a Persian from Karachi, another from Rangoon; Turks from Constantinople, Arabs from Alexandretta - every one looking in the face of the other with the light of love and harmony. Such is the magic and divine power of Abdul Baha! Like unto the magnet he draws unto himself people from the ends of the earth and unites them together in one harmonious whole. IN no other part of the world does one find such representative gatherings as in the Presence of Abdul Baha. With the Elixir of Love he causes humanity to associate with each other with perfect joy.

After this beautiful Congress of Religions and its unofficial session in the garden, the Master quietly retired to his room, leaving us in a state of spiritual bliss and divine ecstasy. In the afternoon he sent for me, and told me to call on Mr. and Mrs. Holbach at the German Hospice and convey to them his greeting and love. I found them sitting in the large orange grove. Mrs. Holbach was writing a letter to Doctor Moody, describing her experiences among the Bahais of many lands, gathered together at the foot of Mount Carmel. It was such a divine afternoon, and we sat there for more than one hour, speaking on the high themes of the

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Cause and enjoying spiritual communion of the soul. Meanwhile the Master was dictating heavenly Tablets to Shougi Effendi for the American and Persian believers. It was just about sunset when we left the German Hospice, and Mr. and Mrs. Holbach had the privilege of meeting the Master and speaking with him concerning certain phases of their forthcoming book. The Master said: "When I returned from America I found that a number of Missionaries had spread false ideas. They said that while in America, when I went to the churches to deliver my talks I adopted surplices and church vestments, and that I always commenced by saying: 'O ye Concourse of Christians! I was a Mohammedan, but have renounced that faith and embraced Christianity!' These missionaries say that is why I was invited to speak from so many Christian pulpits of various denominations. When I heard this, I had to send for some of the newspapers from America and Europe, to show the people that I always wore the same clothes there as I do here."

When Abdul Baha came out of the house, there was a tall Arab, very like a giant, waiting for him. He is very much devoted to the Master, and adores him for his many kindnesses. "May I beat thee with my cane?" the beloved asked him, laughingly. "I will be honored!" he answered. Then he brought down the cane on his back three times; the third time with such force that the cane broke. The Master walked out of the garden, and the chastised man followed him, quite meekly and happily.

In the morning, Ebne Abhar and eight other pilgrims left for Persia. The Master met them before their departure, and gave them a farewell talk. He said: "You must be so quickened that through you the breath of life will be blowing over the dead souls and quicken them with a new spirit." All the believers went as far as the wharf to bid them good-bye.

In the evening, we were privileged to sit in the Presence of the beloved and listen to a wonderfully moving talk on the life and vicissitudes of Baha'o'llah. Many believers came late and they had to stay in the corridor until he finished speaking. Then one of the friends chanted a prayer, another sang a Bahai song, and the delightful meeting was brought to an end.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai West, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 14, 1914.

Dear Friends:\*

Mrs. A. Burke, a Virginian, taught by Mrs. Hebe Struven of Baltimore, arrived last night from Port Said, and was privileged to meet the beloved in the afternoon. She presented to him the love and greeting of Mrs. Struven and Mr. Roy Wilhelm, and praised their loyalty and devotion to the Cause. The Master said: "They are pure souls, and kind to everyone. I know them well. I have great confidence in them. They have no thought of their own. The foundation of this Cause is love and good-fellowship with all mankind. Those who embody these qualities in their lives are true Bahais. This is the basis of the progress of the world. This is the new spirit wafting over existence. This is the cause of the illumination of this dark world."

She asked about the Bahai books and literature. Abdul Baha said: "The Book of Ighan, revealed by Baha'o'llah in Bagdad and translated in America, is one of the most fundamental Bahai works. Then the "Hidden Words", likewise the "Tajalleyat", "Iskrakat", "Tarazat", etc.; also the books of Mirza Abul Fazl. All these works will explain to you the full meaning of this Revelation, and its importance. When you return to America, you can easily get these books and study them very carefully. Then you will be fully informed with the principles of the Bahai Cause. The talks that I have delivered in London, Paris and America will also greatly assist you in this direction. The Teachings of Baha'o'llah are like uncut diamonds. The more you polish them the greater will become their brilliancy. On your way back to America, associate with the believers of God. In London there are many blessed souls, such as Lady Blomfield, Miss Rosenberg, Hahmatullah from India and many others. I hope that you will meet all of them and by association with them you will become acquainted with the detailed history of the Cause." Then the Master proceeded to tell how, previous to the appearance of Baha'o'llah, the eastern horizon was dark, and how Baha'o'llah rose like a glorious sun and scattered the clouds of ignorance and prejudice, and how under the influence of His word people of many religions are united. She said she attended the Bahai meetings in Cairo and was struck with this very fact. "The meetings in Cairo are like many drops, but the assemblages in Persia are like so many seas. The Fire of the Love of God has burned away all the superstitions and cemented all their hearts. They are the members of one family. Baha'o'llah proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity and invited the people to the independent search of Reality. He suffered all the nations of the world to be ushered in under the canopy of Unity - - - Thank God that thou hast heard the call of the Kingdom, didst find the Light of Truth, listened to the heavenly Call, and wert attracted to the Beauty of the Beloved. Now is the time that thou mayst become full of happiness and joy and be enkindled with the Fire of the Love of God. It is assured that thou wilt attain." Then he took her hand and led her to the Anteroom to meet the members of the Holy Family.

In the beautiful rose garden of the beloved I was walking this morning, admiring the wonderful lilacs and geraniums, when word was brought by Basheer that the Master wanted me. I hastened to his room. He was sur-

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surrounded by many letters just received from Europe and America and after welcoming me he started to answer them one by one. Lady Blomfield of London was honored with a long Tablet. Another one line Tablet was written by the Beloved to Dinshaw Namkar, a Zoroastrian believer of Crawford Market, who has requested permission to go from Bombay to America: He wrote: "To the American believers! O ye believers of God! This person has permission to go to America. Should he ever come to those parts accept him. Abdul Baha Abbas."

As the beloved was speaking, I took out my note book to write down his remarks on the Astral body, when he waved his hand laughingly toward me and said: "Don't write this!" Then he turned his face toward Haji Mirza Heydar Ali and said: "This Mirza Ahmad has become the 'recorder of my deeds'. As soon as I open my mouth, he takes out his note book. If I make a joke, it will be spread all over Europe. If I smite the face of Abul Gasem, all America will know about it. He writes in his note book that on such and such a day and such and such an hour, Abdul Baha laughed. What can I do with him? O Hajji! O Hajji! Canst thou not deliver me out of his hands? (He laughed very heartily.) But I am afraid we cannot send him away, and he will not go away himself. He has become a fixture in Haifa."

Then he sent away the believers and the strangers came in. While he was talking to them, he dictated a number of Tablets for the American and Persian believers, and asked them to speak to him on current events. Then he wrote several short Tablets with his own blessed hand for those pilgrims who are going to depart in a few days.

In the evening, our new pilgrims from Abade found their way into the holy Presence of the Beloved. They were weeping tears of joy and they fell at his feet. The Master raised them, and held them in his arms, and kissed them on both their cheeks. They have been travelling for 30 months, via Esphahan, Teheran, Hasht, Russia, etc., and they presented the Master the love of all the Bahais in these various cities. "How are the believers? How are the servants of the Blessed Perfection? Ere long the Cause of God will advance greatly in those parts. This mighty Cause is like unto a great over-flowing fountain, the source of which cannot be dammed. If you block its path, it will make a gap for itself unexpectedly in another direction. The flow of the water cannot be stopped. It will always find a way for its progress. So it is with the Cause of God. No matter what they do, it will advance the principles of the Kingdom." Then for more than an hour he spoke on the life of Baha'o'llah, and how with each successive exile and imprisonment, the heat of the Fire of the Love of God became greater, and the voice of Truth filled the ears of the people of the East and of the West.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai West, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 15, 1914..

Dear Friends:-

Last night the third party of students arrived from Beirut, with three fine pilgrims from Abade, Persia. The second party left for Damascus by rail. This morning the newly arrived students were called into the Presence of Abdul Haha and he spoke to them as follows: "I hope that while you are studying in this college, you may so excel all other students in the various branches of knowledge taught therein, that all of them may testify that the Bahai students have another power, are inspired with another effort, are imbued with a nobler ambition and are stimulated by higher motives and wider and deeper exertions than others. If you do not surpass the others, then what distinction will there remain for you? Therefore you must strive to be superior to them, so that everyone may bear testimony of this fact. You are now like the tender plants that are trained according to the knowledge and wisdom of the gardener. From now on you must strive to beautify the moral aspect of your lives. Advise each other with the utmost consideration, watch daily your words and deeds; thus from the very beginning you may characterize yourselves with divine ideals. The divine ideals are humility, submissiveness, annihilation of self, perfect evanescence, charity and loving kindness. You must die to self and live in God. You must be exceedingly compassionate to each other and to all the people of the world. Love and serve mankind just for the sake of God and not for anything else. The foundation of your love toward humanity must be spiritual faith and divine assurance. Again: you must be most careful that, God forbid, not one single word contrary to truth issues from your mouths. One falsehood throws man from the highest station of honor to the lowest abyss of disgrace. Always guard yourselves against this enemy, so that all you state may correspond with reality. Forever supplicate and entreat at the Court of Majesty and beg confirmation and assistance. Make ye an effort that you may win the good pleasure of the Blessed Perfections. All the natural and supernatural advancements in the human world revolve around this one problem. If you attain to this supreme goal, all the elements of the world of creation will be ready to serve you at your bidding, i.e. they will find their highest attainment in you and through you, or in other words you will become the fruits of the world of existence. The evolution of the perfect man is a fruit of creation, just as the evolution of the trunk, branches, leaves and blossoms of the tree is the fruits thereof. Exalt your thought. Reflect over all your affairs. Magnify your endeavors. Enlarge the circle of your ideals. Open the wings of spiritual wisdom. Let your hope be the accomplishment of most great deeds, the results of which may immortalize your names. All that the people are holding fast to, are as the mirage and will not last. - - - Praise be to God that you are under the protection of Haha'o'llah and His Bounties have encircled you. I will always pray for you, and with the utmost humility beg extraordinary progress for you."

Miss Burke was invited to lunch and again the Beloved spoke to her about teaching the Cause. She is a sweet, spiritual woman, and much attracted to the principles of the Movement. In the afternoon a number of

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the pilgrims were loitering around the garden were summoned into the presence of our Lord. Because our brothers from India were there, Theosophy and its allied branches, the theories of Astral body, reincarnation, the mystery surrounding the secret doctrine of the 'White Lodge', etc, were discussed. Again Mr. Shirazi asked about the probability of the Master's trip to India. Two Tablets concerning this matter were revealed, the translations of which will appear later on.

Altogether I was in his holy Presence for more than three hours. An Arab Sheikh came in. The Master wrote for him a letter of introduction to some important personage. Before leaving, the Sheikh begged Abdul Baha to assist him financially. An English pound was put in the palm of his hand. Another Arab was ushered into the presence of the Master. He had a letter in his hand. Without taking the letter, the Beloved said: "I know! I know! What thou desirest." He was also given money and sent away. A poor man in rags met him as he walked out of the house to take his accustomed walk. Some money was put into the palm of his hand. He tried to kiss the Master's hand. "No! No!" the Master said. "Do not kiss my hand. It is not permitted. We must not kiss anybody's hand. It will bring pride and inspire one with a feeling of superiority." Such are the holy events which are constantly transpiring in this Blessed Spot.

In the afternoon the clouds covered the sky, and an abundant rain flooded Mount Carmel. The lightning flashed and the thunder boomed forth. Thus all the trees and flowers were washed with this vernal shower, and nature became expressive of the beauty and verdancy of paradise. Hand in hand with our Hindu and Zoroastrian brothers we ascended the Mountain, singing the songs of thanksgiving and glorification. Our former religions did not permit this unrestricted, divine soul-union, but through the heavenly Teachings of Abdul Baha we have broken the old fetters of dogmas and are walking together in the broad highway of universal brotherhood. We are made one, no matter how different our customs, environments and conduct. We are no longer led blindly by conventional, bigoted leaders, but have hearkened to the voice of the Heavenly Messenger. We have seen the true Shepherd and have recognized Him with our spiritual perception. The light of Truth hath illumined our dark paths.

Abdul Baha.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 16, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

The unexpected happened! Like nineteen hundred years ago, the Master sat around the table with his disciples in the Bahai Pilgrims' Home on Mount Carmel. The hosts were Mirza Ahmad and Sheikh Mohammed Hossein, both of them from Neireez. There were more than one hundred guests, all men, old and young. Since our arrival from Egypt we have had no feast exactly of this nature. Several times the believers attempted to give a mid-day lunch, but it was not accepted; The food consisted of pilau, roast meat, sour milk, etc. In the center of the hall a long table was set around which there sat 29 believers. It was a rainy day and the weather looked most gloomy, hence no one expected the Master would come. I was in my own Nest, reading and talking with Mirza Ali Akbar of Russia. Now and then we looked out of the window, to see if there was any sign of the Master's coming. From behind my table I could see the wonderful court of the King of Kings, and watched to see if there was a carriage waiting for him. Suddenly someone from the Pilgrim's Home shouted to us that the Master had already come and was in the house of Abbas Goli. We hurried across and no sooner had we entered the Home than the Beloved also entered, with his Aba drawn over his head to protect him from the rain. He sat at the head of the table and asked other believers to join ~~him~~. He praised the cook, Mirza Habbibollah, for his service, and then said: "This is an ideal day for giving a feast, ~~and it is a blessing to have it on Mount Carmel.~~ While our table is adorned with the material feast, God is causing to descend from His Heaven the spiritual sustenance in the form of rain. The farmers were praying for it, the poor people were longing for it. Each drop of rain falling from heaven in their eyes, is like a lovely white pearl, inestimable in its beauty and charm."

He did not speak more than this, but the great hall was filled with the light and wonders of his baptismal spirit, and everyone was filled with the spiritual blessing of His Presence. Having finished his food he arose from his seat, and everybndy else also arose. Another group of the believers, amongst which was myself, sat around the table, while the Beloved retired to his room in the house of Abbas Goli to rest. When I came out, I heard someone calling to me. Looking toward my Nest I saw to my surprise the Master standing on the porch. I was so extremely happy that I did not know how I ran, but I was there as quickly as my feet could carry me. I opened the door, and the spiritual nightingales entered therein. Strange to relate, when I arose in the morning I thought I would dust and clean my room and fill my vases with fresh roses, stocks, carnations, etc., which I did with much pleasure. Of course at the time I did not realize that the Master was coming, but I think I felt it sub-consciously. On the long stems of the roses I had placed a few small photographs of the German believers, just received. The Master, looking at them, smiled and said: "What a lovely place for one to be always, perched on the high stems of lovely roses!" Then looking around the room, he rapturously exclaimed: "How charmingly sweet and quiet is this little room! I told them to prepare a room fit for a Dervish, but this is the palace of a King!" I said: "As long as thou art here, the latter statement is true; but the former is also true when thou art absent!" He sat near the window and took out of his pocket a large number of letters from America, to be read and answered. He would open them himself, examine the paper and ~~the~~ the writing, and then hand them on to me to read to him.

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Some of those who were honored with Tablets were as follows: Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, Mr. Mountfort Mills, of New York City; Mrs. Hincle Smith of Philadelphia; Mrs. Mae Cumming, of San Francisco; Mrs. Louise Waite and Mrs. K. Bail Bage, of Cleveland; Philadelphia Bahai Assembly, and Spokane Bahai Assembly. As the Holy Words descended from the heaven of Divine Revelation the names of these dear friends were conjured upon in memory, and how they are remembered by the Beloved of our hearts on this afternoon, high on the Mountain of God! Are they also thinking of the Beloved? Are they occupied in his service? Are they spreading the Teachings of the Blessed Perfection? Are they fired with sacred enthusiasm? Are they united as a regiment of soldiers to destroy all the obstacles? Are their hearts the treasure-houses of the jewels of the Mysteries of the Kingdom? Are they working for the Cause of Universal peace? Are they the shining lamps of the Assemblages of the world of humanity? Are they the stars of the heaven of righteousness and sanctity?

When he finished dictating Tablets, he laid himself down on the canopy to sleep for a few minutes. I covered him with my overcoat, and came out of the room very quietly. I sat on the porch, looking at the wonderful, ravishing panorama, before my eyes. In half an hour the Master was up and desired to have a cup of rose water and sugar. The doctors have advised him not to drink tea. Then leaving the Nest he walked toward the room where all the believers had gathered and were waiting for him. As soon as they heard him coming, they were up on their feet. He sat on a chair and bade them all be seated. The hosts of the afternoon were Mr. and Mrs. Holbach. They had requested the Master for permission to give this tea. The dishes were filled with oranges and cakes, and were distributed by Mr. Vakil, Mr. Shirazi, Badi Boshroueh and myself. Although Mrs. Holbach had gone to Acca with Mrs. Hoagg, Miss Sanderson, Miss Burke, and others, yet she arrived just before the Master started to speak. It was a philosophical and spiritual explanation of Trinity, the opinions of the Sufists about Divinity, the doctrine of Pantheism and the belief of the Bahais on this important subject. Mr. and Mrs. Holbach were the only Westerners present. I had seldom seen so many Bahais gathered on Mount Carmel. They were actually more than one hundred. After the talk we went to the Holy Tomb of the Bab, to chant the Visiting Tablet. Then the Beloved walked to the Pilgrims' Home and from there rode in the carriage driven by Isfandeyar. It was a most happy time! There were two feasts, given by the representative Bahais of the East and the West, and their deep significance was heightened by the Presence of the Beloved.

Ahmad Sohrab.



Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 17, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

For a few moments let us put on the wings of abstraction and soar toward the blue heights of Holy Inspiration, and while soaring catch a few glimpses of the starry hostes of spiritual revelation. Or let us put on our divine helmets and dive into the depth of the ocean of divine ideals, and gather a few shining pearls of celestial thoughts.

To a believer in Boston the Master of Truth says:

"The letter contained most cheering good news and indicated the oneness of spiritual state that exists amongst the believers! - - His Holiness Baha'o'llah, may my life be a ransom to His believers! spent the days of His Life amidst infinite hardships and afflictions. He quaffed from every cup of trials, and tested every poison of persecution, so that the Flag of the Oneness of the World of Humanity might wave over all the regions, especially amongst the believers. Now, because in Boston the candle of Unity and Concord is ignited, it has become the means of the commendation of the dwellers of the Kingdom of Abha and the cause of the happiness of my heart. I hope that through the Bestowals of the Beauty of Abha this love and unity may become more revealed day by day, the rays of the Sun of Reality may become more inter-penetrative, con firming thee to become the bright candle of the assemblage of Unity and assisting thee to raise the call of the Kingdom of God.

The friends of God must sacrifice their lives for the sake of each other, to such an extent that the pöpple may become astonished and exclaim- what love and amity flow from the hearts of the Bahais for each other!

To a number of believers in Augusta, Georgia, he writes:

O ye blessed souls. Thank ye God that ye have heard the melody of the Kingdom from the Orient. The effulgence of the sun of Reality hath dawned from the horizon of the East, illumining the court of the heart. The Heavenly Bestowal was revealed and ete nal life attracted. You have attained to perennial joy and secured everlasting immortality. You have sat at the Table of the Kingdom and parteken of the imperishable food.

To a friend in State College, Penn., he says:

"In thy letter thou hast stated the news of the holding of an Educational Conference. In reality such conferences are conducive to the progress of the world of humanity and the means of the promotion of civilization. Consequently in the estimation of God they are acceptable and beloved and material advancements are obtained therefrom. But, were you able to organize a Bahai educational Conference, that the souls of mankind may receive the instructions of the Kingdom, obtain ideal perfections and become the manifestators of merciful susceptibilities - that is, the spiritual and material virtues may join hands and the forces of the natural and heavenly civilizations may be linked together - then out of the deliberation of such a conference there will issue far-reaching and universal results. The objects of such a conference will be the glorification of the world of humanity and attainment to the image and likeness of God, which is related to the world of Morality. Then and not until then the individuals of the human race will become wholly abstracted from the defects of the material world; the virtues of the Kingdom will be revealed to them; they will receive the Heavenly Bestowals, be baptised with the Holy Spirit and attain to eternal life and everlasting felicity. These are the results of the Divine Conference."

To a believer in the State of Washington he says:

"I hope that the light of guidance may become ignited in the lamp of thy heart with utmost brilliancy, so that mayst become a real Bahai. Likewise thy beloved son, whom thou lovest better than thy life, may ob-

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tain a seeing eye and a hearing ear, in order that he may listen to the melody of the Kingdom of Abha and with the utmost joy and happiness, develop and grow through the showers of the Cloud of Providence and produce most delicious fruits."

To a "seeker of Reality" in Washburn, Maine, he writes:

Praise be to God that this Heavenly Melody reached thine ears. Thou didst hear about His Holiness Baha'o'llah and how He unfurled the Flag of Oneness of the world of humanity in the Orient and like unto the sun shone forth upon all the regions. Today the Cause of Baha'o'llah is world-encircling and its ringing voice has reached all the countries of the globe. Praise be to God that thou didst hear the Divine Call in that town and didst advance toward the Kingdom of God."

To a little boy of eight years, in Cleveland, Ohio, he says:

"O thou son of the Kingdom! I read thy letter with the utmost joy, and hope that thou mayst grow and develop like unto a young tree through the out-pouring of the Clouds of Providence; thus thou mayst bring forth fruits most luscious and most delicious."

To the Bahai Assembly of Cleveland, Ohio, he says:

"O ye birds of the rose-garden of the Kingdom! Your letter of congratulation like unto the song of the nightingale thrilled the hearts and became the means of the happiness of every pure spirit. It was perused with exceeding rejoicing and then we proffered thanks at the Divine Threshold, that, praise be to God, blessed souls have appeared in that city who are summoning the people to the Kingdom of God, are promoting the Heavenly Teachings, and are showing forth generosity in contributing toward the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. It is assured that the Confirmations of His Holiness Baha'o'llah will descend upon you, His Bestowals shall encircle you, the ocean of His Favors will become tempestuous and the showers of Life will pour down from the cloud of His Mercy."

To a believer in Roxbury, Mass. he writes:

"Thy letter was received. From its contents it became evident that praise be to God, the highest hope of the believers of Boston is good-fellowship, unity, love and concord. Today in any city wherein perfect unity exists among the believers, i. e., harmonious mingling with each other like unto honey and milk - the Call of God will be raised and the Lights of the Kingdom of Abha will be diffused"

To another friend in Washington, D. C., one who is "thirsty for the Water of Reality" he says:

"Thank thou God that thou art confirmed in listening to the Call of the Divine Kingdom, hast found the Fountain of the Water of Life; thus thou mayst allay the thirst of every thirsty one. Thou hast approached the Mountain of Spiritual Effulgence, so that thou mayst hear the Call of God from the Burning Bush in the wilderness of Sanctification. I hope that thou mayst attract unto thyself infinite Bestowals from the bleaming Flame of Tor and the refulgent Light of Truth. Mayst thou take in thy hand a shining torch, travel through that vast continent, call the people to the Kingdom, and become the cause of the guidance of innumerable souls."

To another friend in Cambridge, Mass., he writes:

"This is such a Universal Cause that the refulgent Light has enveloped the Continents and established the Oneness of the world of humanity; It is the cause of the unity of all the nations and the strongest tie of communication between the inhabitants of the earth. Unquestionably it

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will enlighten the human world, breathe into the hearts new life, give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, quicken the dead souls, transform this world into another world, and make this terrestrial earth a mirror of the realm of the Most High!"

To another friend in Washington, D.C., he writes:

Thy detailed letter was received. Truly, it was pure joy, for it contained the particulars of thy trip to Augusta, Georgia. It explained the delivery of an eloquent talk by thee; that thou hast summoned the people to the Kingdom of God and hast spread the Divine Teachings. Consider how every soul who has arisen to serve the Word of God will be confirmed with the heavenly Cohorts. Therefore, bethou happy because thou art assisted with such service! Ere long in that city a great multitude shall enter the Kingdom of God, The Flag of the Oneness of the world of humanity will cast its shade over that country and the Song of the Supreme Concourse will be raised from its glens and dales. The fountain of the Water of Life will gush forth and the birds of the rose-garden of God will break into rapturous songs of glorification of the Kingdom of Holiness in the most wonderful Melody. This trace will become eternal and will be continued throughout the future ages and cycles."

The following message is addressed to the London Bahais:

"Praise be to God that this Cycle is the luminous Cycle. This is the century in which the Divine Spirit prevails and pervades all things. This is the Age of Reality. The Sun of Reality will shine with such intensity as to entirely dispel the darkness of dogmas. Contention and strife, hostility and animosity will be completely effaced from amongst mankind. For they are all the sheep of God. God is the real Shepard. He is compassionate toward all. Therefore the members of the world of humanity must embrace each other with the utmost love and conciliation and under the protection of this Shepard these sheep may graze in the Meadow of Clemency, and while they grow and develop, acquire infinite joy and happiness."

Concerning the books written on the Bahai Revelation in this day, he says: "During the lifetime of His Holiness Christ, no book was written about His Cause that gained any importance; but consider how many important ones there are at this time. The Books which are composed and published on this Bahai Cause in this age shall ere long be seized and passed from hand to hand like leaflets of gold."

Prefacing a very recent, long Tablet to the American believers concerning his own station, he says:

"When the Sun of Reality shone forth from the horizon of Sanctity, it flooded the world with the rays of the oneness of thoughts, the oneness of opinions, the oneness of ideals and the oneness of Truth, so that mankind, as regards doctrines and articles of belief, might converge toward one common center, differences, contention and discord be entirely effaced from the world of humanity and the Unique Light which has branched forth from the Sun of Reality might illumine all the hearts. For the realization of this complete unity and perfect good-fellowship, the Blessed One suffered all manner of hardships, trials and afflictions, to such an extent that the eyes are weeping and the hearts are burning, now and forevermore. - - -"

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When I came down the mountain this morning, the Beloved called into his Presence five pilgrims who had received permission to leave today. Among them was Mirza Azzizollah Khan, from Nour, and distantly related to Baha'o'llah. The Master gave him his brown silk "Aba", which he wore in America and Europe, and many other valuable mementoes. "Convey", he said, "my loving, longing greeting to all the friends and the people of Nour. Tell them you have greatly strengthened my hope as regards the future of that Province. It was very hard on me not to hear the ringing voice of Truth from the Native Town of the Blessed Perfection. I hope that day by day this voice may gain in volume and richness and depth. May I ever inhale these holy Fragrances of spirituality from Nour; thus the Province of Nour may become in reality the main-spring of our (light of glory) and illumine all the neighboring provinces of Mazandaran and from there spread to other climes and countries.

Then Miss Burke paid her last call, as she was going to leave in the afternoon for Beirut to join her travelling companions. The Master gave her an interesting talk on the Teachings, and sent her away with his heavenly blessings, hoping that she would become a herald of the Cause of God and a messenger of Light.

Then he dictated a number of Tablets for the teachers in Persia, to be carried with the pilgrims leaving today. A number of prominent men from Arabia were his guests at Lumbheon. To them he spoke on the decadence of Islam and the means whereby it can become regenerated and rise again out of the ashes of decay. With them he went to the Mosque and demonstrated to them the spirit of true worship and reverence.

In the afternoon he called the departing pilgrims for the last time and said: "You are going to leave today for Persia. You must go out and work and teach. Praise be to God that you have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and you have spent many blessed days in the Holy Land. Today the most important affair is service to the Cause of God." The leave-taking was very effective. Hot tears fell copiously from their eyes, and the Beloved held each one in his divine arms, surcharging him with spiritual electricity.

In the evening, he sent for the Bahai students from Beirut College. Young, enthusiastic and hopeful, the Beloved inspired them with the highest ideals of manhood and the noblest standards, showing them in a clear and simple manner that their whole future progress depends upon the purity of their lives and the strength of their characters. "I hope," he said, "you are feeling quite comfortable in Beirut and that ~~nothing is~~ ~~happening~~ you are not meeting with any difficulties. May you ever live in the utmost joy and fragrance. In the College of Beirut you must become the shining candles of moral precepts and spiritual ideals, and be the means of the illumination of others. Clothe your bodies with the robes of virtue. Characterize yourselves with the characteristics of the people of divine morality. Shun all manner of vices as you shun a poisonous snake or a leper. Let the corps of professors, and the students, be impressed with the purity and holiness of your lives, so that they may take you as paragons of worthiness, examples of nobility of nature, observers of the moral laws, holding in subordination the lower element by the higher spirit. Become the conquerors of self and the masters of wholesome vital forces in all the avenues of life. Strive always to be at the head of your classes through hard study and true merit. - - - Persia is today practically ruined and the majority of the students who return to their native country

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from Europe, instead of trying to save Persia hasten the day of its fall. Although they have studied the physical sciences, yet they lack moral stamina and essential leverage to accomplish the regeneration of their country. Along with their studies they have learned the moral vices of European nations, and are afflicted with their social sins, thus precluding any good they might have been able to render Persia. Instead of benefitting the nation, they have become as parasites and a source of menace ----- Be ye always in a prayerful state and appreciate the value of everything. Entertain high ideals and stimulate your intellectual and constructive forces. The young men of this generation must ever strive to adorn their inner beings with moral laws and humanitarian deeds. Their chief aim must be the glorification of mankind and the fructification of the tree of existence. Their lives must be crowned with the brightest gems of natural and divine accomplishments. They must dedicate their lives to the service of humanity and never harm a single soul. They must constantly work for the improvement of their own moral fibre and that of others, and imbue themselves with the attributes of the spiritual ones. They must become the incarnations of the virtues of God. What are God's virtues? They are these: Trust, faithfulness, kindness, love, charitableness, humility, compassion, real devotion, purity of mind and body and the perfections of the world of humanity. This is the cause of the progress of man! This is conducive to the enlightenment of the material civilization with the morning light! This is the means of the elevation of the moral nature of humanity! Become ye celestial, merciful, divine and spiritual. Then your characters will be transmuted into the quintessence of light! All the people are pleased with you, and are praising you for your worthy strivings and everlasting examples. - - - - -"

Ahmad Sohrab.

News of the Báb

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 18, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

"God has not created rest for me. How can I rest, while so many tasks surround me from all directions! While I am sitting here, I am submerged in a sea of thought. When I walk, I think. When I talk, I think. When I sleep, I think. I am enveloped in an atmosphere of thoughts, unutterable thoughts, resistless thoughts, weighty thoughts. The ocean of thought rolls on and on; its tides are rising higher and higher, its ebb and flow are continual and its waves ascend to the starry dome." Thus spoke the Beloved to Mr. and Mrs. Holbach this morning, after a long talk on the spirit of the Bahai Movement and its reflex motion in the world of existence. When he came out of the house a large number of very poor people, men and women almost in rags, were waiting in line to receive alms from his holy hands. A Bedouin Arab, most picturesquely dressed in his long, white, flowing robe, had just arrived from the interior peninsula to meet him. Abdul Baha asked Mirza Hadi to entertain him till he would return from a few calls. On his return he took his giant-looking Arab by the hand and while the air was dancing with the ripples of his laughter, they entered the house.

About eleven o'clock he walked out of the house, followed by our dear Shougi Effendi, and entered the luxuriant garden, laden with the fragrance of lilies. He sat on a sofa and dictated a number of beautiful Tablets - spiritual flowers with which the nostrils of far-away people are perfumed. Then he dictated a long Tablet for the believers in the United States concerning his own station, with the instructions to publish and distribute it amongst all the assemblies. In the afternoon there was a large tea party in the rose garden, given by the two believers from Beirut. A photograph was taken afterward, with the Beloved on the steps of the house. The landau was made ready by Isfandeyar, and the Master took a ride through the streets of the German Colony and out into the country. On his return a short visiting Tablet was revealed for Mrs. Rouff in Stuttgart. It was written with his own hand. I may quote it herein:

"O Almighty! Endear this maid-servant of Thy Threshold, Mrs. Rouff, in the Kingdom of Holiness and submerge her in the sea of Lights. Forgive her shortcomings and confer upon her Bounty. Grant Thou purity and impart upon her eternal life in the Court of the Paradise of Abha and suffer her to become a manifestor of the Favors of infinite Effulgence in the Meeting of Transfiguration. Verily Thou art the Generous, the Forgiver and the Compassionate!" (Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

In the evening all the believers and the pilgrims found their way into the drawing room and were pleased to hear the voice of the Lord of Servitude welcoming them. Mr. N.R. Vakil asked a series of questions concerning the Holy Writs of India, and received satisfactory answers.

"Are the Holy Books - the four Vedic sacred books - inspired from God?"  
"They contain many inspired utterances, but through the lapse of time human ideas have crept in and afterwards men have come to believe that they are all in their totality the revealed Words of God. Similarly, the Christian theologians up to the last century believed that the Pentateuch was written by Moses, but modern criticism of the Bible by scholars and thinkers has shown otherwise. There are so many historical discrepancies in

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these books that they are simply bewildering. Only the Decalogue and a few other utterances are from Moses; the rest is written by Hara, the Priest. With a critical, spiritual eye, we can easily distinguish the heavenly Words from the human ideas."

The question of the invention of writing characters was asked. Abdul Baha said: "Compared with the ancient history of the world, the invention of writing is of quite recent date - only a number of thousands of years. According to the theories held by the Anthropologists and the students of ancient languages, when the world of humanity was in its aboriginal state, many wild, savage tribes roamed over vast stretches of desert without the instinct of habitation. When a member of these tribes died, they buried him under the ground and planted a tree over him so that they might recognize the place in the future. This ceremony was practiced, of course, only for their chiefs. This was one of the first steps in the formation of sign language. Later on, in order to find out their way in the desert, they planted guide posts at the end of every several miles. This and other concomitant ideas led the way for further progress. Later, instead of planting trees over the tombs, they placed pieces of carved woods. For example, if the deceased was brave, they would carve the crude form of a lion; if crafty, that of a fox, and if blood-thirsty, that of a dragon. Another monumental advancement was achieved when they started to carve these pict uses with some improvements and more artistic taste, on the bark of trees, and placed them in the grave with the dead. As humanity slowly forged ahead, gaining mastery over nature step by step, monuments of triumph were built over the tombs, describing, in their limited way, the victories wrested from the enemies by the heroes and the braves. Probably many generations rolled on, and the savage tribes continually expanded and outgrew their former barbaric conditions, and new ideas for the perpetuation of the records germinated in the minds. The world was populated, the people increased in number and resources, and many species of cattle were domesticated. Thus they carved the figures of these animals on wood and stones, each animal representing an idea. In order to increase their vocabulary they dissected the animal, making each part of organ represent a sentence. Out of this wonderfully complicated system grew the hieroglyphic writings of Ancient Egyptians, well preserved on papyrus and tablets of stones. The Egyptians were so clever in this science that they made every bird to stand for an idea. The eye of the cow, the horn of the deer, the head of the monkey, the beak of the sparrow, conveyed to the reader distinct meanings and thoughts. All these mysterious writings are now easily translated in modern languages through the indefatigable labors of European scholars and archaeologists. The Cuneiform letters as represented in the old ruins of Persia and other parts of Asia, has another interesting development. When Alphabetic letters were invented by the Phoenicians, they were soon adopted by other nations, and thus the very great miracle was performed on the stage of the then-known world. This is only a very short outline of the march of human intelligence through the land of darkness and ignorance towards the light - the light being no other than the miracle of self-expression."

Many more questions were asked about the ancient history of India, mythology, evolution of religion, progress of civilization, etc., to all of which the Beloved gave most illuminating answers. I may wind up this

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letter by the translation of his rather significant remarks concerning the "House of Justice".

"Generally the people of the past have forgotten the foundation of their religion and have clung to some superficial doctrines, causing differences and quarrels and creating wrangles. But the Blessed Perfection, praise be to God, has shut all the doors to these probable differences, for He has said that whenever two parties in the Bahai Cause differ on any subject, both of them are wrong; although the first party may be right. Because the result of their discussion and controversy has been inharmony, neither is right. God willing, such occurrences will not transpire in this Dispensation. He has caused the revelation of such spiritual Teachings as will be conducive to the illumination, spirituality and exaltation of the world of humanity. All the civic affairs and the legislation of material laws for the increasing needs of the enlightened humanity belong to the House of Justice. This, the House of Justice, will be not only a body for the legislation of laws according to the spirit and requirement of the time, but a board of arbitration for the settlement of all disputes arising between peoples. When the universal house of justice is organized, the members will do their utmost for the realization of greater cordiality and comity amongst the nations. The Laws of Baha'o'llah are the unchangeable, organic laws of the Universal House of Justice. They are the very foundation upon which the structure of additional legislation is built. If the Universal House of Justice were in existence, the first person that would have obeyed its laws would have been myself. As regards the places for the convening of such a general body, it will be decided by the members. The Universal House of Justice has only the legislative function; the executive power belongs only to the administrative department of government. At first, National Houses of Justice will be established in every country, and they will elect in turn members to the Universal House of Justice. Again I repeat, the House of Justice, whether national or universal, has only legislative power, and not executive power. For example, in Europe and America the Parliament of Congress enact laws, while the Government executes these laws. The House of Justice cannot fulfill two functions at the same time - legislative and executive. In short, the Blessed Perfection has shut all the doors of differences. The clear texts are revealed by Him, with the provision that additional laws be enacted by the House of Justice. --- These days are the days of teaching the Cause of God, days of the promotion of the Word of God. Any other thought is fruitless. We must lay aside all extraneous ideas which are not of immediate benefit. All these plans will appear in the most perfect form in their proper season. This is the day of the diffusion of the Fragrances of God, the day of universal Love, the day of severance, the day of self-sacrifice, the day of attraction, the day of enkindlement, the day of service, and the day of brotherhood..

Ahmad Schrab.



Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa,  
Syria, April 19, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

While the last party of the Bahai students arrived to-day, about twelve pilgrims, including N. R. Vakil, of Sural, and Sayad Mostafa, of Rangoon, departed for India and Egypt. The Beloved of our hearts received the students this morning, soon after their arrival, and only with a few words of love and kindness welcomed them to Mount Carmel and encouraged them in the study of divine sciences and knowledges. "Divine Science", he said, "spells the well-being of humanity. It exalts the spiritual station of man and reveals to him the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God." Then Mr. and Mrs. Holbach were fortunate enough to stay in his Presence for more than one hour. Sweetly and kindly he conversed with them on many topics, especially about their plans for the summer. For the next few days, they are going to live in the German Hospice on the very top of Mount Carmel, and you will have a most charming, uninterrupted view of all the surrounding sea and country. Afterwards, they will take a short ocean trip to one of the near East Islands, and return again to Haifa after a month.

Then the landaw was brought out, and the Master rode away in it. As it was Sunday, he paid a call on Dr. Coles, of the English Hospital. While he was in the drawing-room, he looked out of the window and saw Mr. Shirazi coming out of the Chapel adjoining the Dispensary. Mr. Shirazi had accompanied Mrs. Holbach, because she was desirous to know to the church authorities that the Bahais are free from any religious prejudice. The Beloved called Mr. Shirazi to come up and act for him as interpreter. Those who were present were addressed on the subject of science and religion. He said that religion must ever become the cause of amity and love, otherwise irreligion is better; and science at the same time must be the means of human progress and enlightenment. If science creates deadly weapons for human slaughter and destruction, it is worse than ignorance. Mr. Shirazi told me it was a great and mystical coincident that while the Master was sitting in the parlor, in the adjoining chapel they were singing hymns about the coming of the Son in the Glory of the Father.

About 4 P.M. our best Beloved called into his Presence the pilgrims who were going to depart for India. Tea was served to

them by the faithful Basheer. The Master was in good humor and asked in a playful tone from our brother Vakil: "What wilt thou say to thy Father if he asks thee: 'Why didst thou cross the ocean in defiance our caste laws?' - - - Say to him: 'I desire to sail over the seven oceans of life.' - - -" After a few moments of silence, he delivered the following talk:

"Although the religions of God undergo change and transformation, yet the primal objects are immutable. The original aim of the divine religion is the moral instruction of the world of humanity, the perfection, the illumination and the spirituality of the world of humanity. These are some of the things that are not changed, are not abrogated and re-occur in every religion, no matter how much enveloped they may be by outward dogmas. These are the unuttered aspirations of every religious man. The prevalent notion that the religions of the past have set aside and abolished each other, is a great mistake. Consider how the primal objects of all the great religions are half forgotten and very dimly remembered. The fabric of so-called organized religions is crumbling and tottering into ruin. They are holding fast to a set of dogmatic articles and ceremonial rituals which are as far from religion as the heaven is remote from the earth. Once upon a time this religion (Christianity) was like a comely youth, overflowing with vital force. The youth was in the utmost freshness and charm, adorned with infinite virtues and attuned with music of vigor and health. But now he is stricken with old age. His eyes are dimmed, his ears do not hear, his feet are paralyzed, his hands are weak, his physical forces are exhausted. He is afflicted with senility and dotage. Or this tree was once young and supple. Its branches were green. The fowls of the earth lodged in its twigs and built their nests. It has grown and developed and brought forth much luscious fruits. Now it has grown hoary with age, it is decayed and rottenness has overtaken it. Then suddenly the gardener appears on the scene, cuts a green branch from the same tree, and plants it again in a prepared soil. It starts its upward growth until it fills the place of its parent stock. Now this tree is the same old tree, only renewed. But those people who have grown too old to understand the real situation, hold fast to the rotten root and shut their eyes to the beauty and elegance of the new tree. Now is the time for the planting of the new trees. God willing, you will become assisted in this glorious service so that again this New Tree of the same old religion of God may grow and attain to the stage of fruition.

"Aside from these remarks, there are many distinctly new teachings in the Bahai Revelation that cannot be found in the former Dispensations. (Here he mentioned a number of Bahai Principles, and then continued.) All these universal precepts are not found in the Books of other religions, but the moral and spiritual teachings of past religions are fully embodied in this Cause. When all the great principals of Baha'o'llah are fully put into practice, then their beneficial results will become apparent. His Holiness Baha'o'llah has crowned your heads with such a shining diadem, the scintillating jewels of which will shine upon all future cycles and ages. I hope that each one of you will become the cause of the vivification of innumerable souls, strengthen the original basis of the Divine Religions, quicken the dead bodies with the New Spirit, and bring out of the tombs of negligence these heedless souls. May you deliver mankind from the darkness of prejudices and fanaticism! May you guide them into the realm of lights! Do ye not consider your own ability. Rely upon the power of the Confirmation of the Blessed Perfection. The assistance of Baha'o'llah is creative and dynamic. - - - I expect to hear good news from you. I hope the inhabitants of India may bear testimony when they look into your radiant faces upon your return, that you have carried back a heavenly reality, a divine spirituality, and a holy attraction; that you have returned from the Holy Threshold with wonderful, precious gifts of the Kingdom! May they testify that your conduct, your deeds, your behaviors, are reflecting the rays of the Sun of Reality! May you be like unto those souls who, parched with thirst, have attained to the source of the fountain of life and having drank deeply, fill their jars and return to those who are waiting! May you be like candles ignited with the Fire of the Love of God! "

Then he bade farewell to every one, and embraced all affectionately. Several Tablets were sent with them for the believers in India. Our dear brothers left us, but we shall ever remember them! Farewell, my brother Vakil! Thou hast a strong faith and a heart filled with the Glory of the Lord! And thou, my brother Mostafa! Thou art a shining star of guidance in the heaven of India! May God protect thee and bring thee safely to thy dear homes!

Ahmad Sohrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 20, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

For more than two hours, Mr. Shirazi and two other Bahais from Persia had the inestimable privilege of sitting in the Presence of our Lord this morning. When they came out of his blessed room, they were beaming with joy and their faces were wreathed with heavenly smiles. They had found the time and opportunity to present to the Beloved all their petitions, and received verbal answers. Mr. Shirazi was, however, the happiest man, because the Master had written at his request a Tablet for Prof. Hachand M. Gurbaxani, of the Oriental Institute of Karachi, who happens to be a special friend of his and a man wide in culture and personal influence. The translation of the Tablet is as follows:\*

"O thou wise teacher! The Breeze of Providence wafts from the direction of the rose-garden of Reality, bestowing joy and happiness upon the adepts. The Sun of the Divine World hath dawned from the horizon of the temperate, Spring equinox, resurrecting into new life the countries of the Orient and the Occident. The mountains and prairies of the Ideal world are adorned with green and verdant vegetation. The trees of the Temples of humanity are clothed with the garments of New Bestowals and bejewelled with new blossoms and fruits. A most tremendous stir or motion is witnessed in the world of creation. All the phenomena are in the process of reformation and regeneration, and all the creatures are chanting the verses of oneness with their tongues of consciousness and reality. Therefore we must occupy our time with extolling and lauding the Glorious Lord for He hath illumined this Wonderful, New Century with refulgent rays and splendors of the heavenly Sun. Upon thee be greeting and praise.  
(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas."

The Master foretold many spiritual victories to be won in the Province of Sind, India, and commanded Mr. Shirazi to devote as much time as he could spare to the spreading of the Cause in that section of India, and invited Mrs Getsinger to deliver lectures before the people.

Another Tablet was revealed for another pilgrim, by the name of Mirza Assadollah, a fine photographer who desired to go to Mazanderan and take pictures of the ruined palace of Baha'o'llah and other historical ~~places~~ localities frequented by Him. The Beloved gave a most vivid description of the palace and its architecture, with its numerous halls and rooms and gardens. I was going to write it down, but he stopped me. Laughingly he said: "I am afraid if I breathe Mirza Ahmad will write it down."

In the afternoon, numerous Tablets were dictated to Shougi Effendi for the old and new believers in India. In the evening two Carmelite Monks called on the Master, to receive a permit to hold a picnic party tomorrow in the Garden of Rizwan. The picnic is arranged for their little pupils, boys and girls. The Master gave the permission with the utmost pleasure, and wished them a very good time. Before sun-set he took a long walk, followed by Shougi Effendi, and when he returned, all the pilgrims were standing in a long row to welcome him. As he passed by, he spoke a few words with each and distributed amongst them a bouquet of flowers which he carried in his hand.

The city of Abade has hundreds of believers, and the following Tablet was revealed for them the other day:-

"O ye friends of God and the maid-servants of God !

Praise be to God that during the season of the divine Spring and the time of merciful rejuvenation in which the Breath of Eternal Life is breathed in the radiant entities, ye are enlisted under the Flag of 'Ya Baha El Abha ! ' and like unto the birds of the meadows, perched upon the branches of pines and cypresses, ye are engaged in the glorification and praise of the Clement Lord with the most rapturous melodies. Ye are intoxicated with the Wine of Truth and are joyous in the garden of His Highness the One. Ye are clad with the royal Robe of Guidance and are overshadowed with the outstretching Bounty of His Highness Baha'o'llah. Ye have shut your ears to the croaking of crows and ravens, and are rejoiced and exhilarated with the songs of the warbler of the rose-garden and the meadow. Ye have heard the harmony of the Supreme Concurrence and listened to the glad songs of the nightingale of the orchard of guidance. Ye received a share and a portion from the heavenly Food, and became associated and partners in the outpouring of the Kingdom of Anha ! This is the Most Great Favor and Grace which has surrounded the people of Baha ! Consequently, with infinite joy and happiness, felicity and delight, engage your time in thanking the Lord for these Divine Bestowals; thus may we fulfill the reality of the holy verse: 'If you praise the Lord for His Blessings unto you, He will increase them correspondingly.

Upon ye be Baha El Abha !

(Signed) "Abdul Baha Abbas."

The following prayer is revealed for the believers of a small village :-

"O God ! O God ! These are Thy servants who are attracted to Thy Kingdom of Beauty, yearning after the lights of Thy Meeting, supplicating towards Thee by day and by night. They are advancing towards Thee with hearts, flowing tears, shining faces, brilliant eyes and longing countenances towards the Realm of Thy Glory ! O Lord ! Protect them from the hosts of aberration; immerse them in the sea of humility and submissiveness. Make them the fountains of guidance, the glowing lamps in the dark nights, the ceaming and twinkling stars and the army defeating the battalions of ignorance and prejudice. Verily, Thou art able to do whatsoever Thou Willest !

(Signed) "Abdul Baha Abbas.

Ahmad Sohrab.

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Bahai Nest, Mount-Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 21, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

This is the glorious day of the Feast of Rizwan, the day in which the Manifestation of God, Baha'o'llah, proclaimed His Mission of Universal Peace and the brotherhood of man, to a few of His followers in the Garden, outside of Bagdad, many years ago. This is the day in which the fountain of the Water of Life gushed forth, the clear, crystalline water of Divine Teachings! This is the day in which the Voice of the Lord of mankind was raised betwixt the heaven and the earth. This is the day in which the Creator of the world ignited the Torch of Heavenly Guidance! This is the day in which the rays of the Sun of Reality flooded all the regions with the effulgence of Love and fellowship! This is the day in which the foundation of the golden palace of the good-will toward all men was firmly laid! This is the day in which all the heavy-laden and sore-footed travellers were liberated, because the proclamation of the spiritual freedom was issued from the Supreme Pen! This is the day in which the human race received a mighty downpouring of the Graces of the Holy Spirit! This is the day in which the roses of revelation bloomed forth and the violets of spiritual principles spread their fragrances to all parts of the world. All the pilgrims are rejoicing because they are privileged to be on Mount Carmel on this day of days, and stand in the Holy Presence of Abdul Baha.

From early morning the believers were singing songs of gladness, and descended the Mountain with happy hearts. They were divided into many loving groups in the garden of the Beloved, and conversed together on the great blessings of this Day. For the last few days, it has often rained, and to-day the clouds were gathering in the sky and promised occasional rain showers. All morning we sat and walked in the garden with the hope of seeing the Beloved. Then we heard that our brother Mirza Ali Akbar, of Russia, would give a tea in the afternoon, and the Master would be there. After our lunch, the carriage was prepared, and it was about two o'clock when the Beloved came out of the house and rode away toward the tomb of the Bab. Another carriage appeared right after it, with a number of believers, driving in the same direction. They invited me to join them, as they had an empty seat. Thus our carriage followed that of our Lord until we reached the Avenue leading to the tomb. Here he asked others to alight from the carriage, and ordered Isfandeyar to drive towards the top, to return after one hour. We gathered in the reception room. Many people were there. The women were also invited, and held a separate meeting in the next room. The table was covered with large trays of oranges, cakes, Persian "Baglava". It was decorated with out roses and looked most charming. The wind started its furious

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howling, and suddenly the sky poured down a storm of hail, making the mountain white, but it passed very quickly and left the air fresh. Seldom has the Mountain of God looked so luxuriantly green and fascinating! Verdant esplanades and charming cascades of green tracts are seen from afar, lending beauty to the scene and purity to the atmosphere. After awhile it was reported that the Master was coming. I ran out and climbed a hill which was near the Tomb. Far, far away in the blue horizon, in the road winding in and out through the green woods, the Beloved's carriage appeared, like a white chariot, emerging out of remote, emerald island in the midst of the ocean, or coming out of the clear blue heights! Little by little it came nearer and nearer, and finally it stopped and the Lord alighted. With a radiant face and luminous countenance he approached me. I ~~knelt~~ bowed down as he passed by, and I will cherish in the secret chamber of my heart his gracious smile and loving "Marhaba!"

As he entered the room all the believers arose from their seats. Our poet, "Andeleeb", had composed a poem on this Feast of Rizwan, and Mirza Ali Akbar Rafsanjany sang it with much feeling and artistic temperament and appreciation in the Presence of our Lord. Then the Tablet to the American believers regarding his own station was read by Sheikh Mohammed Ali. Then he spoke about some of the interesting events of the Cause in Adrianople and Acca! The recounting of the stories was brought to his mind by the falling of the hail and rain. Towards the end, he said:- waving his hand toward the mountain:

"I had a wonderful ride over the Mountain. It hailed and rained and the wind blew furiously, and I enjoyed it so much!"

After the talk, he distributed with his own hand oranges and candies to all the Bahais. The meeting being over, we resorted to the Holy Tomb. Miss Sanderson and Mrs. Hoagg represented in the spiritual sense the Western Bahais. They were the only women among all these Oriental brothers to join together in the spirit of worship at the Holy Threshold of the One who heralded the coming of a greater than himself. Abdul Baha asked all the believers to go to the front, and he himself stood at the doorway in the utmost state of humility and prayerfulness.

As soon as the Master rode away, the great downpour of rain started again. The Bay became very rough and the shore as far as the eyes could see, was a picture of laughing, dancing, white waves! I hurried to my own safe Nest, and from the quiet porch watched the wild, entrancing scene of nature spread before me. It was one of the most gorgeous and grand scenes that I have ever witnessed! Right before my eyes, a great perpendicular rainbow of



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of prismatic colors arched the sky. The lower end touching the edge of the sea-shore, its many colors, blending with the pearly waves, and the upper end lost in the blue clouds of the sky. It was a most wonderful sight, a day-dream of fairy-land! As I stood there watching, the lower end little by little vanished and the rest, like a straight line, remained unchanged for a long time. Thus betwixt the heaven and the earth, this gleaming, jewelled sword of many colors stood for a few moments as a renewed sign of Divine Covenant between man and God, filling the heart and the mind with spiritual longings for the unattainable.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Home of Baha'o'llah, Acca, Syria,  
April 22, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

Our celebration of the Feast of Rizwan would not have been complete without at least spending a few days in Acca, and under the roof of the Home of Baha'o'llah. This is just the right season--the season of roses and spiritual motion, the time of rejoicing and happy memories. The Master is feeling well, the Bahais are working all over the world for the promotion of the Word of God. The Bounties of the Lord are spreading before us; the Favors of the Merciful are inexhaustible and the sea of Divine Revelation is in agitation.

Last night four pilgrims arrived from India, and the Master received them in his drawing-room. After welcoming them, he spoke to them briefly. The contents of his talk may be taken as a Rizwan Message to the Bahai world:-

"Praise be to God, the news received from all parts of the world indicates the fact that the believers of God are striving in the promulgation of the Cause of God. To-day honor and victory are destined for that soul who has freed himself from every thought and is engaged in the exaltation of the Word of God and the diffusion of the Fragrances of God. This is the season of seed-sowing. Whosoever scattereth the seeds will gather many harvests. To-day the matter of conveying the Message is successful or confirmed. For example during the season of seed-sowing the matter of ploughing and planting is successful and not harvesting and crop-gathering. We must, all of us cleanse and purify the mirrors of our hearts from every imagination and idea, and day and night summon mankind to the Kingdom of God and raise the cry of 'Ya Baha El Abha !' Then you will observe what a world-stirring resurrection and revival is set up and how the stupendous power of the Cause of God has become manifest and evident. To-day the matter of teaching is incumbent and obligatory upon all the believers--men and women. For this season, Abdul Baha, notwithstanding the infirmity, weakness and indisposition of the physical body, begged ~~and~~ permission and consent spiritually from the Holy Threshold and supplicated confirmation and assistance, and then hastened towards the empires of the far West. He sought rest neither by day nor by night. He longed for no comfort and yearned after no composure. Although often he was unwell and many a night he suffered insomnia or was passing through a fever, yet he would present himself before great Conventions and raised the voice of Ya Baha El Abha ! in big churches.

"Now my utmost hope is that through the Favor and Bounty of the Blessed Perfection, I may again with infinite detachment turn my face toward another direction; that I may cry out till my very

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last breath and through the Music of the Supreme Concourse I may invite the people of the world to the Kingdom of Abha. Pray that perchance this most great Bestowal be revealed and this weak body and meek spirit be assisted to turn the face toward the Kingdom of Abha while walking in the path of the Blessed Perfection and drinking the chalice of martyrdom in the city of sacrifice-- thus the end of my life may be perfumed with the fragrance of the musk!"

When I awoke this morning, a heavy rain was falling, and it continued for more than one hour. There was a dark mist all over the Mountain, and the Bay was enveloped by it. We knew yesterday that the Master of Wisdom is going to Acca to-day, but when I looked at the rain and the fog, I asked myself: He will surely not go in this weather! After an hour the rain stopped and the clouds vanished. Like any other day, I took my papers and descended the Mountain. From afar I saw the carriage waiting at the gate, and when I arrived near Khosro told me that the Master was going to Acca. Not having any time to go up the Mountain and take a few necessary objects, I stood ready for his command. After a few minutes he descended the stairs and walked straight toward the carriage. Mirza Jalal and Khosro joined him, and as I stood there waiting he called aloud my name: "Come up, Mirza Ahmad! Where art thou?"

The two believers from Neireez had arranged to give a tea in Bahajee this afternoon, so all the pilgrims were invited. When the Master's carriage arrived at the station, they had already taken their seats in the train. We bought our tickets and joined the friends. All the people in the station, both strangers and natives, showed the greatest amount of respect toward the Beloved as he passed by through the crowd. When the train started for Acca, the Master came out and stood in the passage to watch the long range of the Mountain and the plain covered with verdure. I heard him talking with much interest with an Arab about the land valuation and the high cost of living, and consequently I joined him. Suddenly he turned his face to me, and smilingly said: "Who hath said that wherever I go thou must follow me? Hast thou become my shadow? Is it not more than two years that thou hast been accompanying me? What has thou done that thou must travel with me all the time?" I said: "I have done nothing and am not good enough to be with the Best Beloved even for a second. I am not worthy of Thy Bestowals. Thy Bounty and Favor have chosen this broken vessel, this shattered instrument. I only pray to be given the capacity and ability to understand and appreciate the value of these heavenly Graces." When we arrived at the station, there were none of the believers to welcome us, because the Beloved had sent word last night that they must not come. Instead of going to the House, he rode on the donkey to Bahajee. The pilgrims walked after him. Khosro went to town to prepare the lunch. On the way to Bahajee, we were soaked with a big shower which lasted several minutes.

As soon as we reached the home of Aga Sayad Ali Afnan, the Master took off his Aba to have it dried in the sun, and then went in to rest. All the pilgrims gathered in the Guest House and commenced to chant the special Tablet for the Rizwan, known as "The Sun of the Words." The plain of Bahajee was a mass of verdure and flowers. White and yellow daisies and red anemones had transformed the country into silvery, golden and ruby colors. A more beautiful sight of nature one could hardly see anywhere! The sun was now shining in its ancient glory, and the believers came out of the rest house and were divided into different groups. One group was singing Bahai poems, another chanting Tablets; one conversing on the high themes of the spirit, and one recalling the days when the Blessed Perfection pitched the tent of brotherhood nearby, and the people were ushered under its shade to learn from Him the path of truth and righteousness.

While we were eating our lunch around a large table, the Master entered the room, and wanted to know whether we have had enough to eat. Then he ascended the old rickety stairs to his own little room on the roof. Having finished our lunch, we came out into the garden and the Beloved, hearing our footsteps, left his room and stood at the top of the stairs. With his white, cream overcoat, and his long, white locks falling on his shoulders, and his white beard, he looked exactly like the archangel descended from heaven and suddenly revealing himself to the astonished world. Standing thus, he commenced to speak:

"In the neighborhood of Bagdad, there lived a man and a Bahai by the name of Mohammed 'the thorn-picker'. He lived about twenty-one miles away from the city. Once he invited me and a number of other believers to his home. In order to cover this long distance on foot, we started at mid-night and arrived there before noon, tired and exhausted. His establishment consisted of a small bamboo hut. Outside the sun shone brightly and the desert sun was hot. We all crowded into this little hut, and the warm hospitality of our host made us forget the heat. He ordered his wife to prepare the lunch. 'On my eyes, my lord', she said cheerfully. From the center of the hut she brought forth a few handfuls of flour. She kneaded it into dough. Then she added two dates to it and made it into a round thing like a hard cannon-shell. In the midst of the hut there was a primitive earthen oven. She made a fire with thorns and drew the cannon-ball into the center of the oven to be cooked. From a human standpoint, we could not stand the heat of the Arabian desert nor the heat inside the bamboo hut, but making light of it, we chanted Tablets, sang Bahai songs, and did not mind the natural discomforts. After an hour, the woman took out of the blazing fire this bomb-shell, placed it on a round tray, cut it into two pieces and set it before us with natural grace. Our lunch consisted of this

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half-cooked, black dough. There were no spoons, so we ate it with our fingers. A similar dinner was prepared for us for the evening, and after eating, we bade our kind and genial host farewell and started homeward. Because Mohammed, 'the thorn-picker' was the flame of the Love of God, the relish of his food is yet in my taste. I have attended many large banquets and partaken of various dishes, but this was better than all of them. I have not forgotten and will never forget it."

At half past two, we started toward the Holy Tomb. The Master was there. He anointed every one with rose water, and afterwards chanted in a low sweet voice, the Visiting Tablet. After this, he walked to the guest Home, and with his own blessed hand distributed oranges and bon-bons. Then, followed by all the believers, he visited the Tomb of the Great Afnan, not very far away, and ordered the construction of the grave of Mirza Aga Jan. "Whatever he did towards me during his life-time, I have forgiven him. I hope, through the Favors of the Blessed Perfection, he may be submerged in the sea of His Forgiveness". He asked all the pilgrims to return, and that he would return in a day or two. He rode then on the donkey, and ordered us to ride in the carriage. In half an hour, we were all again in the Blessed Home. In the evening, he called all the believers to his room. He was fatigued, and therefore was reclining on the divan. The old believers tell me that this was exactly similar to those days when Baha'o'llah was living. The Beloved was sitting in the same place that His Great Father used to sit when He received the friends. He gave an informal, intimate talk, relating a number of historical events that transpired in this very room, taking us back in imagination to those marvelous days of the Manifestation. Afterwards, a number of the officials called to pay their respects to Abbas Effendi, the friend of the poor ~~and~~ and oppressed.

Ahmad Sohrab.

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Home of Baha'ollah, Acca, Syria,  
April 23., 1914.

Dear Friends:

The first visitors of the morning were Abul Gasem and Aga Mehdi each bringing large and small bouquets of flowers to decorate the reception room of their King and Beloved. Knowing my great love for roses, they had not forgotten me, and so I received from each a token of Bahai friendship and brotherly love. While looking at the wonderful flowers from the Rizwan on these Rizwan days, I am writing to you with a heart overflowing with the love of each. These are days of rejoicing and merry-making and the Bahais, no matter in what part of the world they happen to be, should be happy and try to make other hearts happy.

Last night I stayed in the house of Aga Hossein Ashjee, and he and his son did everything possible to make me comfortable and welcome. Whenever a new pilgrim comes to Acca, there is always a happy rivalry and dismission amongst the resident believers as to who is going to entertain him. The spirit of kindness towards each other and hospitality towards the guest is highly developed amongst them. With any one of them you feel perfectly at home. There is no carping criticism, no braggadocio, no ornamental, self-protruding pretensions. All that one can see in them is a deep feeling of reverence for the celestial spark of goodness and wisdom which shines brightly amongst them. This "Reverence and Wisdom" in the inspired words of an English author, is: "A cheering proof, in a time which else utterly wanted and still wants such, that living wisdom is quite infinitely precious to man, is the symbol of the Godlike to him, which even weak eyes may discern; that Loyalty, Discipleship, all that was ever meant by Hero-Worship, lives perennially in the human bosom, and awaits, even in these dead days, only for occasions to unfold it, and inspire all men with it, and make again the world alive."

This morning the Master received the people in his own room, not coming down on account of his fatigue. Before noon, Ahmad Yazdi, and his brother Mirza Ali Akbar, of Russia, arrived from Haifa, and as the Master had just gone out to return a few calls, they had to wait for his coming. They had brought three Abas to be given away by him as presents to whomsoever he deems necessary. After his arrival, he called them immediately into his presence and had a long talk with them, after which they rode in the Beloved's carriage to Bahajee to visit the Tomb.

Many newspaper articles and letters are being received from India, giving the news of the spread of the Cause and the excellent work accomplished by our Western friends. Such good letters were received this morning and their contents made the Beloved very happy. When Ahmad Yazdi and others returned, the Master called all of us into his room. He asked about the believers of Bakou, and

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Mirza Ali Akbar reported progress and union. "The believers of God", he said, "must unite their scattered forces and then teach the Cause. The uppermost thought in the mind of every Bahai must be union and then progress. 'Union of the friends, progress of the Cause', must be the motto of every man and woman in this Movement." Then he dictated Tablets in the Turkish language to the Pashas who met in Paris. Our friends left for Haifa with the afternoon train, and the Greatest Holy Leaf and Mirza Hadi arrived in the evening.

About 8 P.M. the King of Wisdom called us all into his own -- his Father's room. There were nearly 40 of us present, and we sat on the floor. One of the Zoroastrian believers tried to kiss his feet. This was the prelude to his talk:

"I have often repeated that kissing the hands, the feet and kneeling and bowing are strictly forbidden in the Bahai Dispensation. These are old, archaic customs of the religious East, and the nucleus of the New Humanity must throw away these swaddling-clothes. The leaders of religions were so bigoted and presumptuous that they awed and forced the simple, innocent people into these spurious customs. These outward manners are injurious to the nobility and majestic grandeur of the soul. They pollute the minds, degrade the loftiness of characters and debase the beauty of human nature. The hearts must be united together, the souls must affiliate with each other. All mankind must turn their faces to the spiritual susceptibilities and concentrate their attentions upon the emanations of consciousness. The Mohammedan Sheikhs and Ulemas who were the essence of pride and haughtiness, while walking in the streets always had their hands out of the sleeves of their Abas, ready to be kissed by the motley crowds. How harmful this is! How harmful it is! The deed which is conducive to humility, meekness, submissiveness, evanescence, is acceptable to God. The action which in the least connotes existence, pride, self-projection, is human and not acceptable by the Lord of mankind. For this reason it is said: If a sin becomes the cause of contrition, remorse, shame and self-reproach and penitence, it is better than that act of worship or devotion which would create arrogance, vainglory, vanity and self-esteem. For then man will shun that which is evil and hold fast to that which is good. - - - Sacred history records that Satan was favored at the Threshold of God and was the teacher of the angels, and in every one of the seven heavens he was known by a holy name. As soon as he began to see himself, to think of himself, he fell. On the other hand, although man was created in the image and likeness of God and was destined to become the perfect, clear mirror, reflecting the rays of divinity, he prayed from the depth of his heart: 'O Lord! We are sinners. Envelope us with the graces of Thy Forgiveness and illumine us with the light of Thy Pardon.' - - -

He continued to speak, now about the incidents of the rich, dramatic life of Baha'o'llah, again further discoursing on the spiritual significances of humility and appealing to all mankind for greater tolerance and loving-kindness. In the evening the Motosarrafi, the Manager of the telegraph office, and a few military men called on the Beloved, and stayed with him till midnight.

Ahmad Sohrabi.

Bahá Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,  
April 24, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Ten minutes before we started for Haifa, I did not know anything about our departure. I thought we would stay at least for one week and visit the Holy Threshold of Bahá'ó'llah several times. If I had my own way, I would have stayed for a longer period, but as I am the unworthy servant of Abdul Baha, I prefer to be with him, even if it is in the dungeon. Don't you approve of my taste? I am sure you do. I love and adore him. His love is all-sufficient for me. One tiny drop of his love is better than seven oceans of human love. His love is the Fire which burns away aught else save divine consciousness. If I possess his love, I possess everything. If his love has not taken hold of my life--though I may be the richest man I am accounted as the poorest. If the still water of my sea of existence is not kissed by the gentle falling of the rosebud of his love, ~~causing~~ causing some perceptible ripples, then non-existence is better than existence, death is better than life, and degradation is better than honor. Light as is the rose-leaf's kiss of his love upon the water's lips-- that heavenly kiss trembles, halo-wise, into a circle, the emblem and symbol of eynernity--immortality. Day and night I dream of his sweet, matchless love-- as great as the universe of God, as broad as creation, including all, excluding none; loving all, hating none. What dearer treasurer do I need in this world? What garden of love is better adorned than his? The love of father and mother may change, the affection of relatives and friends may die, but the love of Abdul Baha is unchangeable and his affection the light of every heart. Love him and you will have a safe anchor for the dark nights of storm and hurricane. Love him and you will gain perfect control over the rebellious propensities of this life. Love him and you will soar towards the heaven of sanctity and chastity. Love him and you will become the gleaming star of the horizon of Abha!

Early in the morning, I got up out of my bed and after performing my prayers and chanting supplications, we drank our tea and then started for the Home of the Beloved. He was already up and calling on a poor family. After his return, he called me to his room and I read to him a few letters received from different parts of the world. As he was sitting on the divan, lost in a sea of contemplation, he dictated two Tablets, one for Mrs. Stannard and another to Mrs. Getsinger. While he was talking with me about the work in India, the news was brought that Mr. and Mrs. Holbach, Mirza Jalal and Mirza Mohsen, had arrived from Haifa. and consequently he asked them to enter the room.

After lunch Mr. and Mrs. Holbach were driven back to Haifa in the Beloved's carriage. They were going to leave to-night for the Island of Cyprus, to be away for about six weeks, and in all probability they will join the Master, no matter where he may be, at that time.



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While I was occupied with my writing, I heard the footsteps of the Beloved coming, and then he asked me whether I was ready to leave for Haifa. I gathered my papers and started after him for the train. Isfandeyar was thoughtful enough to bring the carriage to the station, and when the Master alighted from the train in Haifa he was driven directly to the House. Mr. Shirazi was the only person who had come to the station to welcome back the Master. The others did not know anything about his sudden coming. All the believers and pilgrims were delighted when they heard that the Master was back, and the night was spent in soulful communion and spiritual joy. I may bring this letter to an end by translating a portion of the talk of the beloved given on the night of the 22nd instant, in Acca, in the room of Baha'o'llah:

"In reality all my movements are fraught with danger. The Favours and Graces of the Blessed Perfection have been always with me. Were it not for his continual protection, I would not have been living to-day. Those souls who are enveloped with the Clouds of Divine Providence are ever assisted with the Army of the Kingdom. - - During the years that Baha'o'llah lived in Bagdad and Constantinople (Adrianople) whosoever stood in His Presence and listened to His Wisdom, he was impressed with His Marvellous Power and Knowledge. The Jews, the Christians, the Zoroastrians, and the Mohammedans found their highest aspirations embodied in Him. During those years that He lived in this Home, the enemies found an opportunity to forward false reports to Constantinople to the effect that Baha'o'llah had fled out of Syria. This report was garbed with a semblance of credence, and reliability, because He did not receive any stranger, neither did He leave the house. From the Sublime Porte, Ahmed Bey Tufik and Korshid Bey, a Hungarian, the Commander of the garrison, were commissioned to investigate this matter. One day they came to me and asked me to arrange an interview with Baha'o'llah for them. I told them I could not promise them, because it was beyond my jurisdiction. The Motosarrafi continued his begging and importuning, but Korsheed Bey explained the truth, viz: That because they were commanded by the authorities in Constantinople to investigate this matter, they could not well disobey the orders. "We desire", they said, "to look only in the face of Baha'o'llah, and speak with Him a few words. That will be quite sufficient." I presented their petition to the Blessed Perfection, and he appointed an hour for their visit. When they entered the room--this room--Baha'o'llah was sitting here. (With his hand he showed the right side of the divan.) Abboud was sitting near the threshold and the two, one sat where Mirza Tarazollah is sitting now and the other in the opposite corner. He commenced then speaking to them words of welcome and gentleness, and ordered Narguillah to be brought in. In the beginning, they refused to smoke in His Presence, but after much insistence on the part of Baha'o'llah, in order to obey Him, they just touched their lips to it. After half an hour, they retired from the room, deeply impressed with the awe-inspiring Presence of the Blessed Perfection. A few days after the interview, the Motosarrafi told me: 'When I was in the Holy Presence, I lost ~~myself~~ myself entirely and could not utter one word!' Korsheed Bey was also delighted with his visit.

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In this manner did Baha'o'llah associate with people, and upraise the Standard of the Cause of God."

It is now past mid-night. I leave my Nest and go out on the perch. The many millions of light-giving, spirit-speaking stars are shining brilliantly. To me they represent the future perfection of the world of humanity and the glorious consummation of mankind. May each individual evolve into that lofty station destined for him by the Creator. Let us all work unceasingly for the realization of this hope. With this thought in mind, I enter my Nest again, and fall into the loving arms of sweet sleep.

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Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa,  
Syria, April 25, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

This was a day of glorious sunshine and heavenly blessings; a day of divine companionship and calm spirituality; a day of roseate dreams and aspiring vision; a day of apparent tranquility and flowing ideals! During the day the Beloved walked now and then in the rose-garden, admiring the infinite varieties of flowers, and their riotous colors. The walls are a mass of red, white and yellow roses. The garden itself looks like a cashmere shawl or a rich Persian rug! How he loves to walk along the paths of this garden, admiring the marvelous handiworks of nature; inhaling their fragrances and translating the same fragrance into his beatific discourses, which are no other than the ideal nosegays from the Paradise of Abha! In one of his walks before noon, more than 30 pilgrims and Truth-seekers stood most reverently in his presence. He was giving to them one of his philosophic talks on the perennial virtues and transient defects of the world of humanity, when a copy of the Calcutta magazine, "The Empress" of the current month, was put into my hand. Opening it, I saw an illustrated article on "The Bahai Movement of Persia, its Universal Aspect", written by Mrs. J. Stannard. My face was brightened with interest and I showed it to the Master. Portions of it were translated to him, and he listened very attentively. "Praise be to God!" he said, "that Mrs. Stannard is confirmed. She has created a whirl of interest in the Indian press. At present a spiritual revolution is started by her. A resurrection is set up. Bravo, Mrs. Stannard! She has ignited the Press of India with the luminous torch of guidance. I announce to her the glad-tidings that greater and ~~xxx~~ more universal confirmations will descend upon her. The quick motion of the spirit, the Urge of the Ineffable, has encircled her. She is the embodiment of goodness. Day and night she is striving. She is not thinking of her rest and comfort, but she is engaged in the service of the oncoming Kingdom of Celestial brotherhood. Truly I say she has no other wish save devoting her entire time to the service of the world of humanity."

The friends and readers will be interested if I quote herein a few extracts from her recent letters, as well as articles. She says: "Calcutta or rather Bengal is the brain of India without doubt and the educational and religious societies are numerous. At first I had great difficulties, owing to finding no one free enough to help me. - - - Since ten days, however, things are much better, and I see my road quite clear. I have made some most important acquaintances amongst the religious notable people and Illustrated Papers and Hindu Magazines will take all articles I want. I have reproduced Abdul Baha's picture in two of the most splendid Magazines. - - - Another great man, perhaps the greatest in India, is the Bengalic poet Rabindranath Tagore. I sent him a letter of introduction from Sir

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Richard Stapaley of London, and he asked me to meet his school colony in the country, some three hours from Calcutta. I had a most beautiful time. His institution is poetic in the extreme, situated in the heart of a most beautiful country. He is a genuine and beautiful picture himself. You will know that he won the Nobel Prize for literature. All his money goes into this fine educational scheme of his. He is an intensely learned and spiritual soul, and a good friend to the Bahai Movement. He much wished to meet Abdul Baha in America, but was not able. On the next morning of my arrival he sent for me to attend the Divine Service held for the boys. This he conducted himself and gave them one of his beautiful, philosophical discourses. All the buildings of the schools are like thatched cottage bungalows under various trees and distributed over large areas of ground. I had a one room cottage to myself. Oh! the peace and the beauty of that place! I felt as if I had come into a spiritual oasis after the noise and heat of Calcutta. Well, that wonderful morning he conducted me to a place under the shade of a great spreading tree where all his students and staff were seated on the ground. The poet himself took a front seat on the ground in front of the table at which I was to sit and speak. It was a charming picture in front of me. Then as simply and spiritually as possible I told them of the Bahai Movement, its sufferings and its teachings. I told them about Abdul Baha's visit to London straight from the prison of Acca, and as he stood on the pulpit of the City Temple and realized the great Unity between the East and the West by his presence in that religious gathering. Also that the great privilege of meeting them (the spiritual friends and truth-seekers) here in the Poet's beautiful home, was a blessing accorded me from the Almighty God to once bring greetings between East and West. It was a wonderful morning indeed! When I finished, all flocked around me to see the portrait of Abdul Baha, and the Poet himself asked if he might have one. He is a genius, truly under the shadow I feel of Baha'o'llah. And oh! I can just see the dear Master walking about this place; if ever he comes to India he will love it. - - - Upon my return from the Poet's corner, I was engaged to lecture at an important place. I have now struck upon the best center for Bahai support and work. When I lectured, some of the old philosophers --perhaps 20-- were seated on a carpet around the pulpit. The body of the hall was filled by some 300 student-men; in the galleries were ladies behind Purdah. I gave a rousing speech, quoted Hindu words and some of Abdul Baha's talks, but I took them through the whole thing from a little history to the final condition. - - - Bramo Hindus are all really Bahais in ideals, their various associations are founded by real saintly pioneer reformers and I look upon them all as inspired Bahai Lights. They are working out their principles. - - - That night a great power seemed helping me, and I went on in a flow of proof and demonstration for an hour and a half. They were almost wildly excited afterwards. The old men clamored for leaflets I have had printed, and the interest was intense. I had a greatly loved religious philosopher in the

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chair, and he asked me to come and give another talk next day and answer questions. - - - Here as in Bombay people threw themselves on the literature, and dozens of hands clamored to hold the portrait of Abdul Baha. There was an especially keen, old chap who took and ran away with it. The temptation to have possession seems to seize some of them. I sent a student to him, however, the next day, to have it back, with the result that the young man has begged me to put Abdul Baha's picture in a paper. It is extraordinary--but this happened in Bombay-- a man tore it from my grasp in a crowd and fled away with it as a sort of precious jewel, and I never got it back. - - English-speaking, Hindu religious reformers here seem quite astounded when they realize the great Revelation of Baha'o'llah to the world and how they, for the last fifty years, have been trying to work out, under difficulties, this very same idea. They are realizing that indeed it is true how great is this new Cycle in that the world seems to be working out the same progress. - - - Well, there are many people here who will be most eager to see Abdul Baha. I believe if only all can be arranged the Master would have hosts of friends followers. A very intelligent Hindu Brahman came to see me and said: India is ready for some great man, a leader. Once the Master comes, there will be a great spiritual revival. - - - The women are advancing and they would gladly take up these teachings."

In another letter to the Beloved, she writes, also from Calcutta: "I have been very well occupied here and am now meeting some of the leading Societies and thinkers: All are in the advanced groups getting very interested. - - - The various Societies of Bramo-Somaj are the true channels for the Bahai teachings. - - - Calcutta is very learned and a busy center, and therefore more difficult to impress than Bombay. Since all are learned and religious, we have to preach love and unity as you did in the West; but above all, I show them the wonderful, practical working side of Baha'o'llah's eternal Revelation; how these laws must uplift countries and they are then very much pleased. You will be greatly followed and respected here, dear Lord. All are saying to me: Will he not come? We want a Leader, a Supreme Teacher, and if he comes we shall all know and feel His Spirit. A good Brahman came to see me, and he said: We are under foolish rituals and dogmas which hamper our growth and progress. If someone came whose spirit we felt, we would all turn to him. Now that they are beginning to hear my lectures, my work is greatly advancing. - - - They are so afraid of getting caught again by religious priests and hidebound dogmas that I have to show them first the great liberty of conscience which the Bahai Faith establishes, and how Baha'o'llah summons direct to God. There is a great, new spirit waiting to be caught into unity. I am talking to them on this, and by traveling from one place to another I connect Societies. - - - When the end of the week comes, I shall have lectured four or five times to Societies and two to ladies. One Maharani I have visited and the Maharani Cough Bahar wishes me to attend a Convention in Lucknow

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next month.-- I am meeting this week for lecture some leading, religious people at a Society that opens their doors to all religions and makes a study of all sacred scriptures. It is an admirable work, and they are summoning a special meeting to hear of the Bahai Message.-- I am sending to Bombay for some Bahai books, and I will send two to their library. Here again is another useful work to be done. We should present books to various libraries and institutions. But I cannot afford to do it all the time. If some good Bahai friends would donate a gift book fund to be available at any time, then when I see a real use I would present books here and there. (Those who desire to contribute towards this fund may ask for particulars from Mr. Jos. H. Hannen--M.A.S.) This is the time to spread the literature. Everyone asks for leaflets and pamphlets, and I can get them published here very cheaply."

Another letter from Calcutta says: "Much work is to be done here, but I have all the channels cleared to be worked and the Bahai Movement will be fully established by the end of Congress times next year. I have lectured on and off all the time. At the City College, at a great meeting, the great patriot Bepin Ch. Pal took the chair when I lectured to more than 300 people. He was deeply interested, and wants me to write an article to be published in the Press. There is no end of press work to be done here. Bengal and Madras are the two clever centers. I will lecture on Sunday night to the Theosophical Society. Group meetings for teaching at the Devalaya Association, about which I wrote you last week, are needed, and I shall hold one or two in the next few days."

I have quoted enough of the letters to show you a glimpse of the fine work of this active sister of ours. Now let us turn for a few moments our attention to a number of magazines containing articles and photographs. The February number of the New Reformer, edited by D. Gopaul Chetty, 15 Venketryan Lane, Sowcarpet, Madras, carries an article of several pages from the pen of Mr. George G. Andre, on "Some practical Aspects of the Bahai Teachings". On page 366 of the same copy there is a detailed report of Mrs. Stannard's address at the Karachi Conference, styled "What the Bahai says to the Theist". I am told that this new REFORMER has been publishing something every month on the Bahai Revelation, and thus putting the public in touch with these principles.

Another magazine, called "THE MODERN REVIEW", edited by Ramananda Chatterjee, with offices at 201-3-1 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta, publishes the report of the All India Theistic Conference, Karachi, and illustrates it with the photograph of some of the Delegates, in which are present Mrs. Stannard, Mr. Shirazi and Sayad Mostafa. Here again one finds an epitome of Mrs. Stannard's lecture.

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Another weekly Brahma - Samaj Magazine, "THE MODERN MESSENGER" EDITED by S.E. Somaj, 211 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta, publishes interesting articles on the Cause in its two successive editions of March 22nd and 29th, 1914.

The Hindu "PATRIOT", the oldest Indian paper, in its weekly edition of January 16, 1914, publishes the Karachi Photograph and a review of the conference. In its issue of March 23rd, 1914, however, on the inside front page, the Editor publishes the full photograph of Abdul Baha on the occasion of his first visit to the West. On the second page a large photograph taken in Chicago with five other Persians, and on the third page Mrs. Stannard's picture herself. It contains also a detailed article on "The Bahai Movement of Persia, its rise and influence". THE EMPRESS, an illustrated Journal, April 1914 contains three photographs and another graphic article on "The Bahai Movement of Persia, Its Universal Aspect." The daily JAIN JAMSHEED, a Zoroastrian paper published in Bombay, dated March 28th, publishes a long article of four full columns from the pen of Doctor E.C. Betsinger, entitled "A Message to the Sons of Mazda."

Another Zoroastrian paper of Bombay, called THE LAMP, prints the Beloved's Message to the Parsees, as well as his full-faced photograph.

The INDIAN DAILY NEWS, of Calcutta, also publishes a most stirring, vivid article in one column and a half, on "The Bahai Movement of Persia-- Its Rise and Progress."

THE BRAHM APRACHARAK, is also a Brahma-Somaj Magazine, but in Urdu language. This publication has printed for the last two years in each edition translation of Abdul Baha's Address in Europe and America. There are numerous papers and magazines in vernacular languages which publish articles on the Bahai Cause; but we cannot read them. Nevertheless they show in a clear and unmistakable manner how the banner of the Cause of Baha'o'llah is waving over all the regions of the world.

The President of Jain Lodge of Bombay, Mohonlal K. Shah, has written a petition to the Beloved. I will quote herein an extract:- "Most Reverend World-Teacher - - - I have read the heart-stirring history of the Movement, studied the noble and sublime precepts of Bahais, and I am impressed very immensely to read and hear everything of the Bahai Cause. O Master of the World! I do request you most entreatingly to come and preach the mission of Love, Brotherhood and Universal Peace to this divine land, which has ever been and is now ready to receive the message of Love from the mouth of the Masters that have appeared from time to time in different parts of the world and at different periods of time".

The Beloved has revealed for him the following Tablet:

"O thou wooer of Reality! Whenever any object is endowed with capacity, it will attract unto itself Divine Confirmations. Then consider thou that when the earth obtains capacity, the outpouring of

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the cloud of springtime transforms it into the most delectable paradise. The same law is applicable to all the earthly phenomena.

"For the last four years, I have raised my voice and cried aloud in all the assemblages and churches of Europe and America and summoned mankind to the Divine Kingdom. The power of the capacity of the Western nations attracted my heart to them; otherwise it would have been impossible to take this trip. I have returned exhausted and fatigued and hardly any power is left in me to take this long voyage to India. But if the continent of India attains to any extraordinary capacity, if the Fragrances of the Merciful be spread and pure souls and radiant hearts be confirmed, then peradventure the capacity and the magnetic power may attract Abdul Baha to that illumined region with the light of Reality. - - -"

To Mr. Rashmatullah, an Indian Bahai student in Oxford, he writes:

"Thy letter of April 10th, 1914, was perused. Whenever thou desirest, thou hast permission to come to the Presence; so that from here thou mayest proceed to India. As regards my journey to India, it is not possible now. It shall possibly be realized sometime in the future. But happy events are occurring in India. I hope that this trip of thine to India will bear fruit. - - -"

Mr. Gopaul Chetty, the Editor of the NEW REFORMER, received the following Tablet:-

"Oh thou who art thirsty after the water of Reality! The Editors of the Newspapers and Magazines are in reality the guides of the nations and the founders of the success and prosperity of the people. However, before the publication of any fact, they must investigate it most thoroughly; otherwise they will bring discredit and disgrace upon themselves forever and ever; for such traces are not effaced, neither are they forgotten. Through the flight of ages and cycles they will be circulated more widely.

"Many newspaper editors do not follow a path of independent research and investigation. Although they know not one word about the Principles of His Holiness Baha'o'llah, they stain their pens with calumnies and write contrary to truth. But ere long the reality will appear and for such Editors there will remain eternal dishonor and everlasting ignominy.

"Praise be to God that thou has attained to the reality of the Cause of His Holiness Baha'o'llah and become informed with the mysteries of His Teachings. I hope that thy perfumed pen may become the promulgator of the Principles of the Manifest Light, so that the people of that country may know how the Refulgent Moon hath cast His Resplendent Glory and Light upon the world of creation, instituting such precepts which are the spirit of this age and the Light of this Cycle."

In the afternoon, the Beloved was again walking in the rose-garden when Mr. Shirazi passed by. He called him to come in, and immediately started to speak about India. "How many cults and sects exist in India! The rays of the Sun of Reality will unify them.



God willing, when thou wilt return to India thou wilt address large meetings and attract many souls to the Kingdom of Abha ‡ Each one of these meetings shall constitute the effulgences of the Qr̄ of Truth. May those meetings become centers of spirituality and reformation!" Then coming near to him, he smote him twice on the face and said: "Thou shalt be confirmed!" Then he entered the house with happy smiles on his face. Before sunset he took a walk in the avenue leading to the green country, and followed by Haji Mirza Haydar Ali, When he returned and observed all the believers waiting for him, he said: "Mirza Haydar Ali is a very young man. He took me this afternoon for a walk. He never gets tired!" - - In the evening, all the pilgrims entered the drawing-room, and after a few minutes the Master appeared and the sun of contentment dawned from the horizon of every heart. The subject of his discourse was again India and the Confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha. I will translate the same in a future letter. All the believers from India send you their heartfelt Bahai greeting. They wish to be remembered to you and ask me to beg you to pray that soon the Beloved may bless their country with his Presence.

Almad Sohrab.

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Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa,  
Syria, April 27, 1914.

Dear Friends:

This was the day of the anniversary of the Coronation of the Sultan of Turkey, and consequently all public and government buildings are decorated with flags and buntings. Many stores are closed and officials calls are paid to the Governor to congratulate him on the auspicious occasion. The Master also, with Mirza Mohsen, was driven in his carriage to the City Hall, at the invitation of the Gaemmagam.

He came out of the house about 9 o'clock, and as soon as the believers heard that the Beloved of our hearts was walking in the garden, they approached him. Sweetly he smiled and welcomed every one with a gentle wave of his hand, and the word "Marhaba!" Then he continued his delightful walk, all of us standing at a respectful distance from him. "Most beautiful is the rose-garden of Ismael Aga! This is the height of its glory! Like the crown of an imperial Monarch, it is studded with the flowery gems of many and varied hues. Look at that long wall! How the climbing rose-bushes have decorated it with white, red, yellow and pink! Neither in Europe nor in America can one find a rose-garden exactly like this! How these tall, white lilacs diffuse their fragrances all around! They are so pure and delicate; the emblems of sanctity and spiritual refinement. This garden is made possible through the work of love. Each flower speaks to me with its inarticulate tongue, a message of the love of the gardener -- the love that passeth all understanding." Then he entered into the carriage and drove away.

In the afternoon, the Beloved called me into his presence and dictated Tablets for the American believers. Then he sat and was silent for a few minutes, thinking divine thoughts. When he sits in this position of divine contemplation, his face is worth a wonderful study, and the beholder himself falls into the same dreamy mood, his mind and heart stirred by strange, unutterable thoughts and feelings. At this juncture, Haji Mirza Heydar Ali entered the room. The Beloved looked up at him with such sweet tenderness and fatherly expression. "Come, Come!" he said heartily, and with the glow of a consolidated friendship on his face and laughing, "Thou art my real friend. Whenever I look into thy face, no matter how heavy is the weight of the load of my sorrow and care, it is immediately taken away. Thou art my boon companion and old friend. Come and sit down beside me." Then he began to speak with him about the various matters pertaining to the Cause of God. It is most touching to see the Master with this old man, grown old in years and experience in the path of Truth!

Mullah Abou Taleb, another old Bahai, resident of the Pilgrim's Home, gave a tea to all the departing pilgrims in the rose-garden of the King of Kings. Although many of them had gone to Acca to visit the Holy Tomb of Baha'o'llah for the last time, yet they returned in time for the tea.

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The Master graced the reception with His Divine Presence, and gave a short talk, most invigorating to the spirit of those who had the privilege of listening. Turning his face to Aga Sayad Hossein, who was going to leave for Alexandrette in an hour, he said: "Are you going to leave to-day? Praise be to God that there are a number of Believers in Alexandrette and they are associating with each other with the utmost joy and fragrance. Years ago there was a Gaemmagam in Haifa who was my special friend. He often praised the character of Abbas Goli, who lived at the time in Alexandrette. With wonder in his eyes, he would often say: 'What has happened to Abbas Goli? How he is transformed! It is as though he has soared to heaven and descended to earth as an Angel!' People answered him: 'He has gone to Acoa and has become a Bahai!' 'What a change!' he would say. 'He has become so spiritual, so heavenly, so divine, so polite!'

"Beneath the shade of the Blessed Perfection there must occur in a Bahai life a complete regeneration! If he continues to live in accordance with the old standards and habits, then what has he gained by the change of name! His Holiness Baha'o'llah hath said that there are two kinds of revivals. The first kind is only in the realm of words. It is not transmitted into action. For example, the black stone of Mecca was, is and will ever remain, a black stone; but because it is connected with the name of Mohammed, every year thousands of men and women undergo the severe hardships of long journeys to see, touch and kiss it. The water of Jordan is the same as the water of any other river, but simply because it is attributed to Christ, the Christians ship it to foreign countries for benefic purposes. The real revival, therefore, is the revival of conscience and heart, and not the change of name. For example, a person thrown headlong into the lowest degree of immorality rises to the glorious height of sanctity and purity; the bloodthirsty tyrant becomes a great and upright man; the coward is changed into a brave soul; the traitor becomes most trustworthy and the heedless mindful. Whereas formerly he was afflicted with all the debasing and social sins, he becomes cleansed through the purifying water of the Holy Spirit. His former life becomes non-existent, his very innermost being is changed. Angelic, divinely pure, radiantly spiritual, white as the snow on the summit of the mountain, white as the lily of the field-- he stands amongst men as a flawless pearl of sanctification, as a spotless diamond of holiness and as a paragon of perfection to all mankind. Every Bahai, nay, rather, every individual soul MUST attain to this lofty pinnacle of virtue. I hope when thou returnest to Alexandrette, thou wilt become the means of the happiness, joy and pleasure of the friends of God and confer upon them the glad-tidings of the Kingdom. Say unto them: 'Praise be to God, you have witnessed that the glory of all the emperors and kings is ephemeral, but the majesty of the believers of God is undying and everlasting, even in this world their traces are eternal.. - -"

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Then rising from his seat he walked around the room, stood before the table of refreshments and ate a piece of candy and a few pieces of oranges.

Mr. Shirazi, our active, energetic Bahai, left to-day for Beirut and Damascus, and will go from there to India to start on a wider field of work.

One or two German and Austrian brothers-- Hossein and Hassan, arrived tonight from Port Said. I did not see them, as our dear brother, Mirza Jalal, welcomed them at the steamer and conducted them to the Hotel Carmel. I will tell you more about them in another letter. The following is a prayer written with the Beloved's own Hand for the believers of Neireen:

"O thou my Lord, the Merciful, and my Beloved, the Clement !  
Verily these intelligent souls are assured in thy mention, are stirred with the Fragrances of Holiness, are set aglow with the Fire of Thy Love and are engaged in Thy Praise amongst Thy people. O Lord ! assist them with the angels of Thy Sanctity and the Cohorts of Thy Kingdom ! Verily Thou art the Merciful, the Compassionate !"

(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas."

Ahmad Schrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa,  
Syria, April 28, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Twelve living torches of the Fire of the Love of GOD--twelve holy pilgrims dedicated to the Cause of human brotherhood and international Peace, left the presence of Abdul Baha d for the vast domains of Russia, India and Persia --to dispel the darkness of ignorance and prejudice and create the vivifying influence of love and amity. As they sat this morning in the Presence of the Blessed One, they were immersed in the ocean of heavenly attraction and enkindlement, giving their ears to every word uttered by him and wishing in their heart of hearts they could stay many days longer. About Universal Peace the Master spoke to them, dwelling especially on the horrors of war and bloodshed and heartening them to do their utmost to extinguish this world-consuming fire which is ravaging the nations, and like unto the wheels of Juggernaut passing over the bodies of the innocent people. "In this Century", he said, the voices of Peace must drown the clamors for battle, and the principle of arbitration must gain sway over the arbitrement of the sword. Man must learn war no more, neither must he let the brutal and barbaric forces of passion or lust control the humane, intellectual and moral powers. He must help the world forward in its march of progress and enlightenment and abandon the path of the wicked and the unrighteous. You must sow the seeds of Peace in the plastic minds of the children; teach them the victories of Peace, surround them with the lessons of Peace, envelop them with the atmosphere of Peace, and inspire their hearts with the glorious achievements of Peace. Let their food be Peace, their vestures be Peace, their contemplation be Peace, their highest aspiration be Peace, and the impelling purpose of their lives be Peace. The followers of the Blessed Perfection are the Invincible Army of Peace, and are showing by their deeds and words that they are peace-markers. Raise ye the tumultuous voices of Peace to the Zenith of Heaven. Work ye for the Cause of Peace. Stand ye by the Lord of Peace. Draw up in line your armored regiments of Peace! Unfurl at the head of your indomitable phlanxes, the flag of Peace! Fill the world with the cry of Peace! Let your watchword be the sweet anthem of Peace. Be ye the laborers in the construction of the Palace of Peace! Think of Peace, work for Peace, and consecrate your lives to the Cause of Peace."

With this ringing message in their ears and with weeping eyes, they came out of the room of the Blessed One. "Trust in the Favor and Bounty of the Blessed Perfection!" we heard his voice calling out to the pilgrims. "Rest ye assured in His confirmations, which have encircled you at this holy hour. You are always with me and are inseparable from me. You are the soldiers of my army. Rush ye in the battlefield and defeat the powers of the prince of darkness."

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After this soul-stirring meeting, our two German brothers, Herr Oscar Nidermayer and Dr. Ernest Q. Dietz, whose Persian names are Hassan and Hossein, came from their hotel to meet the Beloved. They have been travelling through Persia for nearly two years and everywhere they have been welcomed and entertained by the Bahais. The first speaks Persian quite fluently and the other fairly well. They are now on their way to Vienna and Munich. They expect to write two books on the Moorish and Arabesque Architecture of Islam, previous to 500 years, and another describing the fascinating experience of their long journey through Persia. They will embody a good deal about the Cause of God in this second volume. Herr Nidermayer-- Hossein-- is a very pleasant young man, clean-shaven, alert and most delightful, while Dr. Dietz is older, has short whiskers on his chin, and has many anecdotes to relate for the enjoyment of their listeners.

The Beloved received them with a cordial and heartfelt welcome, and for more than half an hour he spoke with them about their trip over Persia without the help of a translator. They were most pleased with the result of their journey, and were eloquent and warm in praising the wonderful hospitality of the Bahais. "The Bahais", they said, "in Persia are very liberal and broad-minded; even their peasants speak about those principles which agitate the minds of European scholars and thinkers; especially are they interested in the matter of Universal Peace". "The spheres of thought are suffused with the effulgence of divine enlightenment. The advocates of Peace are increasing in number ever year. In America, in France, in Germany, in England, the lovers of Peace are found, and they are adding day by day to their efficiency and activity." The Beloved then invited them to dine with him tomorrow night.

In the afternoon he called me in. He was lying on a settee near the window. The rays of the sun streaming through the window embraced him in their warm, loving arms. A number of letters had just arrived from America, and he placed them in my hands to be translated to him. He was in a most humorous mood, and the contents of ~~the~~ some of the letters made him laugh very much. As I went on translating one after another, he would make now and then some funny remarks, laughable, witty and sparkling.

After this, he came out of the house and asked me to walk with him to the Hotel Carmel, where our two German brothers were living. On the way he came across Dr. Dietz and walked back with him to the store of Mirza Anayetollah. Here the Master sat with our friend for more than an hour, and ordered tea to be brought from the Hotel opposite. The Manager came in and a most lively discussion on religion was started and brought to a happy conclusion. On our way back home, the Master asked Mirza Ali Akbar of Russia to accompany our German brothers tomorrow to Acca, so that they may visit the Holy Tomb of Baha'o'llah, etc. From that time on till past sunset our Western friends were sitting in the garden, surrounded with flowers and speaking about the Cause. Just at that time the Blessed One called us into the drawing-room. Although there were several believers present, he espec-

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ially addressed himself to Hassan and Hossein.

"Persia" he said, "has unlimited possibilities for the development of its natural resources, but there must needs be civilizing influences and untiring efforts. These means will be made available in the not far distant future. Persia will become the paradise of the world, because it is the birthplace of the Manifestation of God. First the inhabitants of a country must be imbued with the spirit of progress, then the country will advance as a matter of course. As long as a people are kept in the rayless prison of coarse habits and are not moved by generous impulses, the country itself is held in a state of semi-barbarism and stagnation. We hope to see the denizens of Persia become liberal and progressive. First we must find the candle, then the lantern. We hope through the Divine Bestowals the moral life of the people of Persia may become cleansed from loathsome vices and degrading habits; that they may become the patterns of the spiritual life; that they may embody the ideals of the Merciful one; that their hearts may become the clean caskets for the pure thoughts of celestial paradise; that they may lay the foundation of divine ~~civilization~~ civilization; become conducive to the promotion of love and good fellowship; that they may co-operate with all the nations in the establishment of Universal Peace; that they may master the findings of modern sciences and arts; that they may study and gain material knowledges, and teach the supernal Knowledges of the Kingdom of God. This is our earnest hope. Toward this goal we are pushing forward. For the attainment of these ideals we have accepted fifty years exile, wandering and imprisonment."

He continued to speak along these high themes of divine wisdom, and when he came out in the garden the fragrances of the roses reminded me of his spirit-searching words.

Ahmad Sphrab.

Bahai Nest, Mount Carmel, Haifa,  
Syria, April 29, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

The first, the ninth and the twelfth days of the Rizwan Holiday are to be celebrated with more importance and solemnity, and when in the future the Bahai communities grow large and strong, all business must be suspended, great festivities be arranged and joyous fetes be planned. For this reason, as this was the ninth day of the Feast of Rizwan, early in the morning all the believers gathered in the rose-garden of the Blessed One. Filled with the anticipation of meeting the Beloved, they were fully enjoying the ideal pleasures afforded at the moment. After half an hour, Mirza Jalal announced, while standing on the steps of the house, that the Master would receive the believers. Of the pilgrims, only three have been left behind; everyone else has already departed. These three pilgrims will also leave in a day or two, and thus for the first time since our arrival, the Home will be quiet. I felt to-night very strange as I entered the Home and found not the cheering, singing and chanting of the pilgrims. The air was very still, and the pale crescent moon shone in the heaven, shedding its weak beams upon the calm scene of nature.

Thus you can guess that when we entered the Presence of our Lord this morning we were not as numerous as on the former occasions. Hence this was a meeting only for the resident believers. As tea was being served, the Master started to speak:

This is a blessed day, a happy and joyful day. The beauty, the holiness and the significance of these days are not known now. This is the time of gladness, bliss and ecstasy for the believers of God. Because we have lived during the days of the Blessed Perfection and have experienced the great joy of these days, their celebration by us is always shaded with a recurring and recollection, but for those who have not seen Baha'o'llah with their physical eyes, these days will be celebrated with a genuine hilarity and most thorough preparations. The beauty, the sheer joy, the exhilaration of the golden Rizwan days are now brought back to my memory, and in reviewing them I find each day a perfect gem of spiritual rapture. During the nights of those days, we could not sleep, because we fancied in our minds the unparalleled joy of meeting Baha'o'llah in the morning, standing in His Presence, receiving His Graces and listening to His Words. This was the ninth day that the Blessed Perfection leaving Bagdad stayed in the garden of Najib Pasha before starting for Constantinople. It is impossible to describe with words the beatific vibrations with which we were surrounded in those days. Although to all outward appearances the Blessed Perfection was an exile, yet He moved with such power and manifested such majesty! The list of visitors calling on Him during those ten days looks rather like the roll-call of an army. Those who had never seen Him while He lived in Bagdad called. All the leaders of the community, the officers of the army and of the government paid visits; even the Governor, Nabeg Pasha, called, and Baha'o'llah did



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not pay back these rather important calls. Were one to reflect for one moment, he will realize that such great events have never occurred in the history of the past Dispensation."

After this meeting he came out in the garden, and for more than one hour walked in and out of the flower beds. "Throughout all the countries that I have travelled, I have not seen a rose-garden like unto this. This is the garden of Ismael Aga. His sincere devotion has made it possible - this flowery kingdom, this fairy scene of matchless beauty, this deamland of the Orient! Every blade of grass, every blooming flower, every budding bears testimony of his tireless zeal and industry."

One of those present spoke about the progress of the Cause in Russia. He said:- "As the Cause advances in all parts of the world, the government will realize that the believers of God are law-abiding citizens and loyal, relying always upon the justice and fair-play with which they are treated by the central administration. Praise be to God that the Fragrances of the Merciful are being wafted throughout all the world." Then he continued to speak to us about other themes, instructing us in other lessons.

One of the radical changes with which we are threatened is the probable departure of our dear brother, Mirza Mahmoud Zargani for India. The Beloved has advised him about this matter, and like unto a disciplined soldier, he is ready to comply whenever the final order is issued. Our dear brother has rendered most valuable service to the Cause from the moment he joined the party of the Blessed One, travelling with him throughout America, Europe and the East. His letters from America and Europe, eloquent with warm expressions and graphic descriptions, kept the Oriental Bahais informed of the mighty events of those wonderful months. They are now re-written, re-constructed and put into book form, ready for publication. The Master has given him his consent to publish them in India. Thus, one by one, the members of the Master's Western tour are entering the active field of labor. Mirza Mahmoud is now preparing himself to leave at a moment's notice; but I believe it will be yet weeks before he actually departs for his chosen work. Mirza Ali Akbar also will leave soon for Bakou with his bride.

The Consul-General of England in Beirut, with his wife and two daughters, accompanied by the English Consul-General in Haifa, called on the Beloved before noon. The Consul-General is a tall, stout and sturdy man, speaking Turkish very fluently. He spoke with the Beloved on sundry subjects, and we were very happy listeners. Abdul Baha gave them a number of newspapers containing long articles on the Cause. He gave a high tribute to the political sagacity, farsightedness, constructive ability and humane nature of Lord Kitchener. When they came out of the house, they walked around the garden and admired the beautiful roses and daffodils and sweet peas and carnations and lilacs. In the afternoon, the Beloved called on them and others, and it was rather late when he returned.

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In the evening. Our German and Austrian brothers arrived. They had enjoyed the visit to Acca, and had seen all the interesting, historical places. As they were going to leave the next day for Damascus and Beirut, they had returned to Haifa at noon, and ascending Mount Carmel, visited the pilgrim's Home and the Holy Tomb of the Báb, taking photographs both here and at Acca.

Beside our guests sitting around the table, Mrs. Hoagg, Mirza Ali Akbar, Mirza Hadi, Mirza Mohsen and this humble servant were present. The Master spoke to them about the greatness of the Bahai Cause, contrasting its world-wide propaganda with the religion of Christ during the Apostolic period. The menu was composed of rich and delicious dishes, and everything was thoroughly enjoyed. After dinner we resorted to the reception room, and the Master talked a long while, relating two very funny stories of how Mohammedans, while considering the Christians unclean, are eager to receive money from their hands. Then he retired, leaving us to entertain them to the best of our ability.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Abdul Baha's Home, Mount Carmel,  
Haifa, Syria, April 30, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Lo ! There is a change ! The Garden of Allah is calling unto us; the desert, the strange, mystic, sweet desert, is bidding us to leave the crooked by-ways of the city and civilization and roam over its straight path. This morning the Beloved sent me word to be ready to start tomorrow morning for AlhammeH, near Lake Tiberias, four hours away from Haifa. I was beside myself with sheer ecstacy. All day I was whistling whenever I found the people not around. Away even from the half-civilized Haifa into the heart of the desert: That will be indeed ideal, soul-inspiring, divine ! The very thought of it intoxicates with undreamed pleasure ! I am going with my Beloved into the Garden of Allah ! My cup of bliss is surely filled with His Holy hand, and my soul longs to quaff the nectar of his love ! This will probably be the climax of my terrestrial experiences with the Blessed One: for to my mind nothing is more fascinating and significant than to see "Him around whom all names revolve" surrounded by Sheikhs and Arabs, right in the Desert itself. The wife of Mirza Jalal, Ruhu Khanom, Miss Sanderson and the wife of the Beloved left a few days ago for AlhammeH to prepare the ground for the arrival of the Master. to supervise the pitching of the tents and to make everything ready for his reception.

The Master was busy all day, receiving a few Arabs who came for pecuniary help, and then he called on the officials of the town to bid them a temporary farewell. Several times I saw him during the day but only for a few minutes, each time to listen to his orders and then leave him to carry them out. On the other hand, Khosro was very busy packing up the necessary luggage for our expedition into Sahara, and attending to procuring the needful items of the ship.

At 7 P.M. the believers, knowing of the departure of the Beloved, came to see him. He received them in his drawing-room and spoke to them as follows:- "I am leaving tomorrow for Tiberias. I am leaving because you have persisted so much; otherwise, I would have stayed here, because I have so much to do. While I was travelling in Germany, I passed by Badeh Baden, and although the friends persisted that I should go and take the baths, I could not comply with their wish. In Stuttgart, Consul Schwarz invited me to Morgentheim, which is an excellent resort for taking baths for various kinds of ills. I stayed here for only one night, visited the large, commodious bath-houses, the electric baths for reducing the weight of corpulent and fleshy people, and other ingenious devices, but I did not take a bath myself. The baths in Morgentheim cannot be compared with AlhammeH hot springs. In the former, Consul Schwarz has built a very palatial hotel; its grounds are shaded with tall, magnificent trees, and its baths are made of porcelain, clean and sanitary; but in AlhammeH no improvements whatsoever are made.- - -In this Cause we must give up all pleasures and re-creation for the sake of service.

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There are people always in the world who deliver excellent addresses and exhortations, but they do not carry them out in their lives. I have taught the believers with deeds and not with words. - - - Day and night we must think and plan how to become more self-sacrificing in the Path of God, how to become more faithful and loyal in the religion of God, how to concentrate all our attentions around the promotion of the Word of God and how to renounce our will and choose the Will of God. Having attained to this spiritual condition, the Divine Confirmations will encircle us. - - - The only source of the consolation of my heart is this: Praise be to God that since the departure of the Blessed Perfection I have not rested five minutes. I did not sleep one night comfortably, neither did I seek tranquility for one day. I exercised my utmost power at all times to spread the laws of the Religion of God and to promote the principles of universal righteousness and salvation. I never complained and accepted with the utmost resignation all the ordeals and trials. - - - Then bestowing his blessing upon all those who were present, he retired to his room. Descending the stairs, the friends gathered in the garden, read Tablets and sang Bahai songs and then they scattered with the full expectation that they would soon see the Master--probably at the end of two or three weeks.

Immediately I ascended the Mountain, with Mirza Habbib, went into my nest, put my papers, etc. into a satchel, and hurried down again to spend the night in the Beloved's home, so that I might be ready to leave with him at 5:30 A.M. for the station. So it is long after midnight that I am writing this last letter to you, from the Home of Abdul Baha. Everyone is sleeping, and the house is very quiet, and I am sleepy also. I wish there were not such a thing as sleep, so we could devote our 24 hours to the service of the Cause without any interruption.

I will conclude this letter with an extract from the communication sent in by one of the firm and spiritual Believers in America: - "My youngest brother and wife, who have been six years in Australia, New Zealand and India, arrived in America a month ago, and spent three days with us last week. They heard a great deal of the Bahai Teachings. - - - I asked my sister-in-law why the Masters, as she called them, in India, sat in caves and hidden from the world; why did they not come out and uplift humanity? She said: 'You do not know how much they have done toward bringing the Kingdom, and beside that, they had such power that the people couldn't stand it; that it would knock them over.' I said 'Why, you have been telling me of the most terrible conditions in India, and they haven't helped those right around them; besides there is no one in the world who has such great power as Abdul Baha, and he goes everywhere, showing his great love for all, and he assists and teaches them. All the world has testified to his great power, beneficence and love, and how millions of people have been uplifted by him.' "

Apr. 30, 1914.

The following is a Tablet to a believer in Pearl City, Hawaii:-

O thou daughter of the Kingdom!

Thank thou God that the lights of the Kingdom have shone upon thy heart and thou art led to the Most Great Guidance. Thou art delivered from darkness and has stepped into the world of lights. Thou art released from the well of nature and hast soared to the apogee of the moon. The inhabitants of that Island are asleep, and thou art awake; the majority of the people of the town are blind, and thou art seeing. Many are dead, but thou art alive. Likewise those souls who have been ushered into the Kingdom with thee, Praise be to God that all of them are illumined. Endeavor as much as thou canst, so that thou mayst enter new people in the Kingdom--and that they may become rejoiced and gladdened through the heavenly music. Thus the lights of the Merciful One and the Bahai principles may illumine all those Islands.-----"

Ahmad Sohrab.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhammeh,  
Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 1, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The night is very balmy, and the spirit of quiet contemplation is stealing over me. I wish you were here to enjoy the beauty and charm of this Arabian desert. The silver beams of the moon have cast a soft and sweet spell over this enchanting scene, and after having a talk with our sister, Miss Edith Sanderson, I have come to my Sylvan Bower to speak with you for a little while and then sleep my first night in the Garden of Allah.

I was up this morning at 3 o'clock, because I had so much writing to do. After half an hour, someone was sent down by the Master to awaken Khosro and Isfandeyar, the latter to prepare the carriage. Little by little the darkness of the night was changed into light, and I came out of my garden to have a last look at the beautiful rose-garden. As I was walking around the beds of lilacs, the door of the house was opened, and the Master came out, followed by his three sons-in-law. The women were in the corridor, waiting to have a last glimpse of him as the carriage drove away. Amongst them was Mrs. Hoagg; a few others, including Admad Yazdi and his brother, had come to bid him farewell. Mirza Jalal drove with the Master up to the station, but did not go farther. Mirza Hadi, Khosro and myself were the only ones who formed the members of the Beloved's party. When our carriages reached the Austrian Post Office, the sun arose out of the Eastern horizon, glorious and resplendent. The Lord was driving in and out of the narrow streets of Haifa; many people were lounging around; others having just gotten out of their beds, were hurrying along to open their dingy shops; the porters were drinking their bowls of hot milk in front of crude, improvised cafes; a few squatting on the ground smoking their hubble-bubbles; a motley procession of unthinking humanity, dull, uninteresting and dead to all the higher impulses of aesthetic life. The Commander of the Army was also the guest of the Master, and so they had a separate compartment all to themselves, and we three had secured places in the second class. The train pulled out of the station at 6 o'clock and 5 minutes A.M., and then, although I was very happy in the great privilege accorded me, I could not help but feel sad, for I realized that the companions of my travellings with the Beloved have entered one by one on the active field, while I am left behind. Probably the Master, realizing my utter uselessness, out of his own grace, is keeping me beside Himself. Hard as I have thought on this subject, I cannot think of any other reason, for I know I am not worthy of all His infinite graces.

From Haifa to Alhammeh, there are six stations, taking about four hours for the train to cover the distance. They are as follows: Balad-Sheikh, Talle Shamam, Afoula, Shatte, Baysan, Jesrol-Majame, Samaeh and then Alhammeh. When we arrived at the station, we found

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familiar faces to greet us. A tent was prepared for the Master, and a lovely green bower for myself. The fur walls and the roofs are made of Oleander branches, which is named by Baha'o'llah the Pleiades trees. The pink flowers are yet on the branches, and it made altogether a pleasing appearance. The tents are pitched quite near the station, which is a fine, white stone building, beside a lovely, gurgling river. We are at the gate of the great Sahara, called El Houran. This valley of Alhammeh, boasting of four sulphur baths of various degrees of heat (one as hot as boiling water) is about three miles long and one mile broad.

The Master conducted his honored guest to the Tent, and conversed with him on a wide range of subjects, philosophic, spiritual and historical. Now and then he would come out of the tent, calling for Khosro, Mirza Hadi or someone else, and then his majestic, patriarchal figure, with his snowy white beard and turban, his white locks falling on his shoulders, his commanding forehead and cream-white robes, would bring forcibly to the mind of the beholder the picture of Abraham and the story of his hospitality. Only the Master has not to wait for the arrival of guests. They are coming all by themselves. Just think of this first day: At noon the Beloved entertained at lunch the Commander of ten thousand men, and at dinner more than ten Arabs gathered around his table. They all sat on the ground and helped themselves bounteously. Here in the desert every one is welcomed to what you have. People enter your tent, and food must be prepared. You must go without food so that your guests may be fed.

In the afternoon, the Judge, the Collector, the Chief and the other minor officials of a neighborhood town called on the Beloved, and a veritable flood-gate of conversation was set loose, now on public education, again on the history of the Inquisition, the dogmatism of the middle ages of Europe, the rise of Islam and the founding of three powerful Caliphates in Bagdad, Cordova and Egypt, and how through their beneficent influences science and philosophy were spread in the Orient and Europe, and how in the course of time they were fallen into decay and deterioration. Now in Arabic and again in Turkish, he continued to speak for hours, his guests were listening in rapt attention, as though an angel of the Lord had descended from heaven and was speaking to them in the golden tongue of the Cherubim. Whence comes all this knowledge, all this understanding, all this divine insight into the nature of things? they whispered to each other.

Right after sunset, the Master after having taken a walk through the country to see the two hot springs in which he will take his daily baths--entered his tent and his guests sat around. As though impelled by a higher power, he began to speak, recounting with telling eloquence and penetrative power, the contents of his talk in the San Francisco Jewish Synagogue and in the Commercial Club of Minneapolis.

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Seldom had I seen him so animated and quick in expression. To talk so much would tire him a great deal, but I know whenever the occasion calls, the Beloved does not spare himself at all.

While he was thus speaking, I was sitting outside the tent with Miss Edith Sanderson, wishing many more of the Western friends were here to participate in these matchless scenes of spiritual life. She is enjoying greatly the novel experiences of the Garden of Allah.

After dinner, with a few other friends, we went to the hot spring, and while the moon was shining over us, we disported in the warm water. Returning to my Syrian Bower, I fixed my mosquito net and slept soundly on the floor. Now and then I opened my eyes and was delighted to see the silver moon streaming down through the interstices of the Oleander branches, and hear the musical lays of the breezes wafting through the green boughs. Where am I? Who has brought me here? This is indeed a strange, mystical world, full of unexpected happenings! In the silence of this wonderful night, I could not sleep, for I was surrounded by a peaceful army of thoughts and the names of many Bahai friends came to my mind. I wished for all the Confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha and the support of the Holy Spirit.

Ahmad Schrab.



Extracts from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab's letters, dated Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhammeh, Lake Tiberias, Syria: He wished these various letters to friends to be incorporated into the Diary Letters.

To Miss Louise Krug, New York City--May 1, 1914. He writes

"While the Beloved is spending his days quietly here, the Convention of the Mashrak El Azkar is being held in Chicago. What a contract! I wonder how far the work of the Temple will be carried through the unanimous action of the Delegates, and what further resolutions will be made to promote the Cause of God in America. I mentioned this fact to the Master, and he said: "We have done everything possible, and now we are waiting for the results of their efforts." Then I told him that as soon as the train reaches Alhammeh I will write you a letter, and he smiled. I will bring this letter to a close by quoting an extract from the words of the Master, as an appropriate message from the desert to the Bahai world:

"Praise be to God that you are quickened with the Breaths of the Holy Spirit, and are rejoiced and gladdened by the Melodies of the Supreme Concurrence. You have radiant hearts and spirits and are exhilarated with the Good news of the Merciful.

"Consequently with the utmost potency and assurance, arise ye in the effusion of the Fragrances of God. Likewise all the believers and the maid-servants of the Merciful who are living in those parts must with perfect accord and affiliation singly and collectively dedicate all the days of their lives to the Cause of His Holiness Baha'o'llah and engage in the promotion of the Blessed Teachings, in order that the human world may become illumined, the satanic hearts become angelic, the veils of superstitions be rent asunder, the light of Reality may shine forth, the basis of dogmas be destroyed and the truth of the divine religion may appear like unto the Sun. Rest ye assured in the Bounty and favor of His Holiness Baha'o'llah for He is the supporter of the teachers of the Cause and the Defender of the sincere ones."

With this glowing message the believers must put forth new effort and soul-stirring enthusiasm.

Your sincere friend Ahmad.

To Miss Juanita M. Storch, Oakland, Calif, May 2, 1914.

In company with the Blessed One, I arrived yesterday in this most enchanting place, in the heart of the mysterious Desert. The Blessed One lives in a tent, and as he goes in and comes out and entertains the Arab chiefs and guests with that spirit of true hospitality peculiar to these tribes, the

patriarchal figure of Abraham bidding his guests welcome, is brought before my eyes. I wish you were here and could see my lovely, flowering Bower, set up beside a laughing, dancing stream. It is made of tall, strong branches of Pleiades trees (Cleander) with their green leaves and pink flowers on. The ceiling is a Mass of glorious, verdant boughs, the four walls the emblem of the garden--a beautiful and most charming tree, and Ahmad is perched on its branches trying to sing this first song for you and the friends in the far West. My Sylvan Bower is about fifty feet away from the Tent of the Blessed One, and while I am writing you this note, I distinctly hear his clear, strong voice, quoting Arabic poems to his picturesque guests. The Blessed One is very happy here, and may stay.

All day long, the delightful cool breeze wafts through the interstices of my green habitation, making the air within refreshing and very pleasant. The floor is covered with Persian rugs, and the guests are always welcomed.

I wonder if you will recognize me if you see me in this Arabian desert, with its Eastern setting. I have doffed American clothes, and am wearing Persian, long robes with small, green turban, which is most comfortable and more to my imaginative liking.

The life of the desert is very primitive, leading one into the contemplation of the higher and nobler ideals of existence. Here there are no chairs and tables, no knives and forks, no downy beds of ease and soft couches. Away with all such superficial means and their kith and kin, with which we are loaded by the tyrannical hand of civilization! Let us eat with the natural forks that God has given, sleep on the hard, dry soil that the Master has made, and roam over the mystic, interminable desert with its longing call. I am writing this letter on my knees a few Arabs are gathered around staring at the writing as though they had never seen the same, and are asking me so many questions in their peculiar idiom that I do not understand. They are a fine race, enduring the ups and downs of life, but intellectually they are like children. They love the Master very much, and listen to his discourses with rapt attention.

Just as this moment the Beloved entered my Sylvan Bower. I arose from the ground and welcomed the Spiritual Bird into this paradisiacal nest. "How cool is this Areeshah!" he said, as he sat on the ground, and after a few minutes of silence he closed his eyes and is now quietly sleeping. I have covered his body with his Aba, and am sitting in the corner of the Bower, finishing this letter.

"What art thou doing?" he asked, as he opened his eyes by the rustle of the wind. "I am writing a letter to Miss Juanita Storch." "Send to her my wonderful Bahai Greeting."

Thus in this varvellous way from the heart of the Arabian Desert I am sending you the greeting of the Blessed One.

Your sincere Bahai friend Ahmad

To Miss Juliet Thompson, New York City--May 3, 1914.

Although we are at the gate of the Desert called El Houran, yet we are living in the hollow of a valley which is encircled by green mountains on the slopes of which are little native villages. The Beloved has come here to take the hot spring baths, which springs abound in this district. He took his first bath to-day. As some of the members of the Holy Family are here, Miss Edith Sanderson, our spiritual sister, is also living with them, and is enjoying more than my words can portray this typical eastern life, this life in the desert, full of whispering charms and sweet beauty.

Last night, she of all the ladies, joined our camp fire and drank the Arabian coffee prepared by a newly-arrived guest. In the moonlight night, with all the sparkling stars in yon blue dome, in this Oriental night with its spiritualizing, ethereal atmosphere, we spoke about you and how you would have loved to be here. "I wish we could realize more the grandeur and significance of these days which we live under the all-protecting shelter of the Blessed One, and be ever alive with his wonderful spirit! How many people would have given up everything if they could just live here, as near the Beloved as we are living." said Miss Sanderson.

Before sunset, I took a walk on the ascending slope of a rocky mountain, at the foot of which we have pitched our tents. There are several small and large caves, and I took a fancy to explore them. There was no regular path, and the ground was overgrown with sharp thorns and thistles. Finally I reached the caverns. The Ceiling and the walls were black and smoky, showing the signs of the ones banditti's occupation. At present there was nothing particularly interesting, about them, except numerous poisonous, black serpents coiling in different corners, and as I did not molest them in any way, they did not deign to notice my harmless presence. A hundred feet further, I found an Arab hut, whose wife was cooking bread on a concave pan. Saluting him as I passed, he was most profuse to invite me to sit down, and when I gently excused myself, he adjured me by "The life of my beard" to comply with his wish. Realizing the solemnity of his oath, I yielded to him, but he would not let me sit on a boulder, which I liked better, but he ran to his hut and brought out a rug, insisting that I must sit on it. "You have set your feet on the apples of my eyes" were his poetic words of welcome. "Hast thou ever been to Haifa?" I asked. "No!" he said. "I have never been outside of this valley. I am perfectly happy here with my wife. I am the son of the desert. Let the world take care of itself!" Then I spoke with him about things, and found him quite an interesting study of simplicity of nature and careless contentment. Leaving the man and his wife to their delightful freedom, I walked through verdant meadows and flowery fields. Red poppies and white daisies have painted the slopes of the towering hills. The green slopes of the southern hills are very

beautiful. They are intersected by delightful glades and interspersed with happy, smiling villages. In the glow of the twilight I sit, in front of my rustic cottage, and weave the wreath of myrtle thoughts and tender blooms of ideals. Then suddenly the Master comes out of his tent, and I mention to him your name. The Message of Peace and Love is issued forth from the heart of the Desert to inspire the hearts of mankind with mighty resolutions! Happy are those who listen!

Your sincere Bahai friend  
Ahmad.

To Miss Gertrude Buikema, Chicago, Ill--May 4th, 1914.

The Star of the East is shining from the horizon of the Arabian desert, and as long as the Star of the West shall reflect its glorious lights. The spiritual correspondence between these two reflective centers of luminosity must be continuous and uninterrupted, so that the hearts of mankind may become illumined and the Tent of the Cause of God be hoisted.

The black tents of the Bedouin in this part of the desert are the most primitive. They are called "Hair's houses." Adjoining our white tents and Areeshah there is one of these "hair's houses" set aside for the entertainment of the Arab guests. In its center a huge fire is made, and coffee is brewing all day for their delectation. The other day, about one dozen of them were gathered under its comparatively cool shade, because situated as we are in the hollow of a valley, the length of which is 3 miles and the breadth of which one mile, it makes it very hot during the hours of noon. I joined their gathering, which was in the form of a circle, and listened to their talks. From one of them I asked to tell me the ceremonies connected with their marriage. After much discussion pro and con, I got hold of the following points: Women are looked upon by these Arabs as inferior beings, as load-carriers, having no consequence whatsoever. In many instances, the cows, camels, donkeys, are preferred to women. When a man wants to get married, he must give for example four cows, or eight donkeys, or a number of camels or goats, to the father-in-law before he every hopes to make his daughter his wife. A very high priced wife costs \$500., and the lowest price is \$5. A good, big cow costs \$50., and a smaller one half that amount. A goat will be put down as \$2 or \$3. In short, the young man, according to his station in life, must give these animals to the father-in-law. While the girl is a silent spectator in the corner of the tent, the bargaining is going on for hours between the father and the suitor. And all this haggling is either for one cow or one goat, the father desiring to have one more, the suitor to give one less. When this important transaction is settled, the night of wedlock is decided upon. Then the bridegroom

invites all the members of the village, and spreads before them a large feast for two nights; the third night a large escort of young men go to the house of the bride, put an Aba over her head, and with singing and dancing they carry her to his house. If in the course of their martial relation they come to a disagreement, which may be considered by us as most trivial, but by the husband very grievous, he just tells her: "I divorce you", and the poor woman is divorced and must leave the house without a complaint. Another thing is: the woman by far carry the heavier burden of the society. I have seen here men walking with such supreme confidences ahead of their wives carrying on their backs household utensils, tents, etc. They work in the fields, harrow the ground, gather the crop and do beside these all household duties. Probably they are satisfied with their lot, but their condition is pitiful, heart-harrowing in the extreme. The more well-to-do a Sheikh of a Bedouin is, the greater the number of his wives. These wives are treated in many cases worse than the slaves or penal laborers, and they are forced to work even during the period of their gestation. Another peculiar custom amongst these Arab women is the way they paint their chins, lips and cheeks with blue color. The color is indelible, and the pictures most fantastic. It is difficult to change the thought of the Arabs as regards the inferiority of the women's station in life; but let us hope that better days are coming, the light of perfect equality is being diffused and sooner or later it will also penetrate in these dark corners.

Your sincere brother Ahmad.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhamneh,  
Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 2, 1914.

Dear Friends:

My shady Bower has no doors--a symbol of welcome to all those who enter therein. My heart is full of love to everyone. Why should I not love all? I wish for no other blessing in the world save the nearness of Abdul Baha, and that the Gracious Lord has vouchsafed me on land and sea, in Europe and America, in Egypt and Syria, in civilization and now in the heart of Sahara. What higher station does any soul aspire to? Under all circumstances and conditions, I have seen him the Lord of the hearts of men, everyone paying homage and reverence to him and none turning away from him disappointed. Lord of the hearts indeed, and more than that! As I awoke this morning my heart was full of thanksgiving. I heard the sweet warbling of the birds hopping on the verdant branches of the roof of my Areesheh. I listened to the soft murmur of the little limpid rivulet laughingly passing by. Looking up at the heaven, I saw it declaring the majesty of the Lord. Viewing my surroundings, I declared they were beautiful, but in strange contrast with the Western countries. Ah me! I exultingly cried out: What a glorious life this is! What a fascinating existence is this! Am I dreaming, or am I seeing these things with my physical eyes? I had never heard before even the name of this place; I had never expected to see it, and yet Abdul Baha has made it possible. While these thoughts were roving in my mind, they brought to me the word that the Master was coming to my Areesheh to take his tea. After a minute, the Incarnation of Divine Love graced the humble quarters of his unworthy servant. He was all smiles and happiness. I was on my feet to welcome him. He smote gently my face, and sat down on the Persian rug spread on the ground. "How cool is thy Areesheh?" "Is this not better than the palace of the Kings? Because here inward happiness and contentment rule, divine beatitude and the ideals of the Kingdom exist! This is a green, flowery oasis in the heart of the desert. Baha'o'llah has given it the name of the 'Home of the Saints'. ---All the companions of our trips in different parts of the world have departed and only you and I are left! What dost thou say to this? And now where are we? In the Arabian Sahara, away from civilization and the haunts of men. For the present we are here, awaiting the Command of God as regards our future plans. Indeed God has brought us to this poetic spot, and in its appointed time, He will surely guide us into other promised lands.----Praise be to God that the power of the Divine Cause became manifest as the sun at its meridian course. It has established an ideal communication between the world of the Kingdom and the material world. To-day the Cause of God has assumed a most eminent importance in the estimation of the outsiders. These ten officials, with whom I spoke for hours were the members of the local government of a nearby town, and very

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and very influential in certain quarters. They had come here to take baths. I went to particular pains to explain to them the ideals of our Movement in an indirect manner. They had heard many things which were not true, and I wanted to dispel these wrong notions-- thus they may realize that even in the world of philosophy and scientific attainments the followers of this Cause are not deficient. The European and American tour has brought forth most extraordinary and unforeseen results, and has advanced and promoted the position of the Cause in the eyes of the public in the most astonishing manner. Consider how great has become the Cause, that the Governor-General of Salonika, the Governor-General of Syria, the Governor-General of Damascus, the English Consul-General in Beirut and a host of other great men were so excited with interest as to come to Haifa and call on me to find out the truth without any intermediary. Reflect what a great tumult the Cause of God has thrown in the pillars of the earth--that hardly had we arrived here yesterday than all these men were attracted and listened to all that I have said with utmost attention".

I mentioned to him that I had brought with me the Gospel of Buddha by Dr. Paul Carus, and have been reading the first few chapters. He told me to bring the book and read it to him. I translated for him the first chapter, entitled "Rejoice !" He listened but did not make any comment.

Leaving my green bower, he invited to his tent three of the Arabs and the Turks, and quoted for them many Arabic poems to the evident enjoyment of all. At ten o'clock, the train arrived from Haifa, and brought a few more friends to be added to our already increasing host. There is one daily train from Haifa, which stops only three minutes at Alhammah, and then proceeds to Damascus. Another train leaving Damascus early in the morning reaches our camping ground about 2:30 P.M. , and then after three minutes continues its journey toward Haifa.

In the afternoon the Beloved, coming out of his tent, sat in the shadow of the station building. The Arabs got around him, and he entertained them with stories and talks that he alone can give. They were charmed with his conversation, and sat with him as long as they could.

A tent is pitched near the hot fountain, and the Master took his baths for the first time. When he came out of the tent, he looked most wonderful in his white robes and white turban.

The believers arriving this morning have rented small bungalows near the hot spring, and are glad to be with the Master.

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When the Beloved was ready to return, after his bath, a spirited horse was brought for him, and he rode the animal as a royal King.

The evening was spent quietly in the bosom of the desert. The Beloved took his dinner with the members of the Holy Family, and retired rather early.

It is arranged that as long as the Master remains here, no letters or newspapers are to be forwarded to him--- thus if this plan is executed to the end, we will be deprived of the world's news and cast off from knowing all that is transpiring in the Cause.

Ahmad Schrab.



Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 3, 1914.

Dear Friends:

The breezes favor us in the mornings and evenings, but in the middle of the day the wind is hushed and the weather grows very warm. Hence those who desire to take short walks must do it either very early in the mornings or after sunset in mystic moonlight. Generally I take my walks all alone, but they tell me I must not go too far away from the camp, as I might be attacked by the Arab Bedouins. I tell them I have nothing to be attacked for, that I can manage to get along with them very well, and that those I have seen in the camp and with whom I have conversed, are quite gentlemanly and polite. Many people are unnecessarily afraid of the Arab Bedouins; but notwithstanding all their failings, they are a simple good-hearted community. They will never render evil for good. Whosoever treats them with kindness, will not be harmed, but will be protected to the very last drop of their blood. Their love or hate goes to the extreme point of manifestation. When a person has incurred their hatred, they will not rest until they have avenged themselves. Time is of no account to them. If the father of the family or the tribe has been unable to mete out the desired punishment on the culprit, the object of their enmity will be bequeathed intact to the rising generation, their hearts will be inoculated with its deadly poison, and they are abjured to deal the blow whenever possible. The result of this feudal tradition has always been ruinous to the steady progress of these Arabs, for no sooner than one of the numerous tribes becomes strong and powerful, than the love of vengeance rankles in his mind and war is declared against the object of its hatred. They have not yet learned the mighty lessons of union and co-operation--so much needed for the steady advancement of any country, and the enlightenment of any nation.

Thus it so happened that when I was ready early this morning, to start for my work, the Master called me. I joined him immediately in his walk to the hot spring. Let me tell you right here that although there are many hot springs in this valley, there are only three which are used by the public. One is called Jarab, for skin diseases, etc. The other is Magleh, for many forms of ills which I do not need to enumerate here. The third is Reeh, also for many kinds of sicknesses. The water of the first is hot, the second is VERY hot, the third tepid or lukewarm. There are no buildings in the neighborhood of these springs, and no sanitary regulations whatsoever. People bathe themselves in any one of these springs by numbers. There are no different quarters for men and women. The Arab Bedouins, whether men or women, bathe with no stitch of clothes on--in an Adamic state, but the time for the bathing of each sex is different. Often one sees fifty to one hundred men enjoying the hot water, naked, unashamed, not knowing what modesty means. The whole place is rented from the government by two Kurds for the insignificant sum of \$250. They in turn charge the bathers from one to ten cents per day, and one may take as many baths as the constitution can stand. Several wealthy persons,

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realizing the dazzling possibilities of a place like this, have approached the government to get a concession for its material development, but they have been uniformly refused. On the other hand, were this place developed, it would enter into concurrence with Lake Tiberias baths, which are about half an hour from here, and greatly decrease the income of that company by attracting a large number of Western tourists because of its natural advantages. Around the spring of Magleh there are vast ruins of ancient buildings, with tall colonades, high arches, etc. I could not get any one to tell me how far back they date. They may have been baths built by the Roman conquerors of Syria in ancient time, where the Roman generals, nobility and their wives took baths. Popularly, it is said these buildings were constructed by Solomon, and he came to Jerusalem to bathe in these hot springs. Be that as it may, it is quite clear that over these springs wonderful domes and arches were built but the Arabs have quite destroyed them. This afternoon I stood over one of these stone walls of wonderful masonry. On the half demolished wall, one sees hanging hundreds of tattered shreds of clothes in many colors. What does this mean? Because popular belief has attributed the construction of these buildings to Solomon, the superstitious Bedouin women have come to believe that if upon their arrival they tear a piece of their clothes and hang it on the wall, all of their secret hopes and wishes will be realized. How many sweet, womanly hopes are tied up and centered around one of these shreds, no mere man can even remotely guess. But let me acquaint my men friends, in strict confidence, that the heart of the Bedouin woman is stirred with no other emotion than the dread of sterility and divorce. Many a woman comes from a long distance to bathe herself in Solomon's spring that thus her life may be crowned with a son; and many a woman ties the shred to the rock with a prayer that her lord may not divorce her, and the guile of the other wives might not work to her ruination. While I sat on the wall, I watched the strange procession of the Arabs passing by. A more non-descript, odd, novel Kaleidoscopic procession I had seen nowhere. I fail to find proper adjectives to describe these multi-colored crowds, constantly changing and shifting into a mass of rainbow hues. In front of me is the hot spring, the Arabs have gathered around it. A little further is a broad green plain with large, wild trees. Here they live by day and sleep by night, with their horses and donkeys. The drollest scenes, comic, melodramatic, Bedouin dances, singing and sports are enacted by night in the light of the moon. To me they looked more like abnormal beings coming out of the nether world, to disturb the calmness of the night.

As we walked this morning toward the spring, the Master said to me: "How art thou? Art thou feeling well in this desert? This is the Sahara, and the comforts of the city are lacking. Dost thou mind it?" I answered: "Not at all. I love it very much. There are thousands of people who would love to be here, but the Beloved

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Abdul Baha has made it possible for this unworthy servant. This is through his Bounty and Favor". Several Arabs passed, with their wives carrying the heavy burdens on their heads. Looking at them he said: "Look how the men walk ahead, straight and confident, while the backs of their wives are bent with heavy loads. What a contrast between the social customs of the West and this country!" When we returned from the spring to the camp, the train had arrived from Haifa, bringing with it Touba Khanom, Mrs. Hoagg, and about four or five believers. They had brought with them a great deal of luggage. Because my Sylvan nook is much cooler than the tent, one of the daughters of the Master desired to spend a few hours with the other women. With much pleasure I transferred it into their hands, and joined the Arabs gathered about the "Hare's house". I asked them many questions about their habits and customs and received satisfactory answers. The Master also joined the members of the Holy Family in the Areesheh, and had his lunch with them. In the afternoon, we followed the Beloved to the Magleh spring, where he took his bath, but the water being too hot, he could not stay there as long as he would have liked. When he came out of the tent and walked toward the little Arab store where he rests a few minutes every day, all the Bedouins were gazing at him with wonder and amazement. At the first glance they saw that he was a superior being, apart from all the rest of mankind. Never had they seen a more-majestic and spiritual figure than the Master. "He is a saint, he is a godlike man!" "He is a prophet!" "He is the Master of men!" are a few comments they whispered into each others ears.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhammeh,  
Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 4, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

The life of the desert is the life of Peace and spiritual musings. It grants calmness to the troubled spirit and bestows tranquility to the confused mind. It brings forth the essential nobility of the human nature, and creates an unutterable yearning to fly towards the unattainable. The long, interminable stretch of Sahara inspires the heart with the idea of infinitude and the immensity of God's Mercy. It teaches one open-handedness and hospitality. The green oasis teaches him the lesson of boundless hope and optimistic industry, and the gentle invitation of the Sheikh to share his tent and frugal meal, the idea of natural kindness. There is a picturesque charm and romantic beauty in the atmosphere of the Sahara, the Arab, his tent, his "Jape Yargal", his camel and his nomadic life. Its soothing effect is infectious and gives one a firm equilibrium to grapple with difficult problems. It is like a tonic. The drought is cool and bracing. It steadies the nerves and strengthens the bodies. It fills the heart with the ambrosia of Truth-seeking.

This morning I had another visit, but considerably shorter, from the Beloved. He sat only a few minutes, inquired about my health and whether I had slept well, and then he went in front of the station to talk with and teach the Arabs. Aga Nozrollah, a Bahai, from Haifa, who has come here to take the baths and is an engraver of seals, has brought with him beads, etc., to sell to the Bedouins, and the Master, looking at his wares, bought several rosaries and distributed them amongst the women, who love such cheap decorations. Then the number of these women went to the porter of the station and asked him a question. He did not answer them. The Master seeing him turn his head haughtily, went near and in a laughing way gave him two blows with his hand, on the cheeks, and said to him: "Dost thou think thou art better than them, because thou art a mere servant in this station? Thou must be polite and kind to women--no matter if they are ignorant Bedouins. They are the maid servants of God, and we are the servants of God." Then in order to soothe him, he bought a very good string of beads and presented it to him, which made him very happy.

The train brought six guests, two Arabs and four Zoroastrians. The two Arabs from Beirut and Acca were taken to the guests' tent, and immediately the Master joined them, and after his welcome he started to speak with them on the philosophy of religion and the four standards of knowledge. One of the two is Mr. Baroudi, the associate in a company having received the concession for the improvement of the Tiberias baths. There are four capitalists

Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 5, 1914.  
Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhammeh.

Dear Friends:-

To sit in the shade of the cool arbor in the early morning and watch the green slope of the opposite mountain with its waving curvatures and deep-cut fissures, while its summit is gilded with the first rays of the rising sun, the warblings of the sweet birds mingled with the plaintive notes of the shepherd--the mantle of spiritual ecstasy spreading over all these delightful scenes--and above all the Beloved of the world, sitting in his tent close-by, praying--is a rare pleasure, a unique experience that in all probability will never be repeated in one's life. I wonder whether I would have found so much happiness and contentment, were I camping in this oasis all by myself, or even with a number of friends! Sometimes--to be frank--I think I could not endure even the sight of Paradise without the presence of the Beloved! In other words, my Paradise is his presence; my joy is his good-pleasure; my rose-garden is his world of ideals; my heaven is his contentment. Without his constant help and assistance, I could not write one word, nor would you have been interested to receive a letter from one so unworthy.

These were my day-dreams, when suddenly the Beloved appeared at the door of my Areeshah. "Didst thou sleep well last night?" he asked. "I did. When I returned from my bath, I fell into a sound sleep. Then I awoke and had my supper and slept again." Seeing that I was busy with writing, he smiled and commanded me to continue my work, and walked away to join the station-master and a few others whom he desired to introduce to him. For half an hour he spoke to them about certain traditions of Islam and the explanations. Then he joined the ladies in the tent, and for the benefit of Mrs. Hoagg and Miss Sanderson, detailed the customs and manners of the Arabs, and how the women are treated and subjected to all manner of menial labors. At 10 o'clock the train arrived. There were many soldiers, and the whole train was decorated with flags and buntings. These days the Turkish authorities are very active in the enlistment of new recruits, and they are being drilled with vigor and feverish haste.

From the station the Beloved retired to his own tent, and laid himself down on the ground. He was lying in such a manner that half of his body was under the sun, the other half under the shadow of the tent. He was up after half an hour. Something in my heart told me to put the work for the present, aside, and go out of my Areeshah, and pass by the tent of the Master. Probably he might call me in. When I neared the tent, I saw him reclining against the chair and looking toward the slope of the opposite mountain. "Come in!" he said. "Sit down. Look toward that half-brown, half-green mountain! What a fine picture it makes! Look at that large flock of goats passing through the ravine,

winding in and out! Is this not a charming pastoral scene! Although it is now verdant, owing to the recent unexpected fall of rain, yet in one month one cannot find one blade of grass. Everything will be dried to the very root, owing to the intense heat. The heat will be so great that no one will be able to stay here, and in the middle of the day it is as though columns of smoke rise to the sky. The only tree that stands the heat of the summer in this desert is 'Gaz. The life of the Arab in the interior is most simple. Their principal food consists of the milk of the camel and a few dates. They do not like the atmosphere of the city. They revel in the expansiveness of the desert. The other day a few of the Bedouin women taunted our women because they are living in the town, while they were happy to breathe the fresh air of the desert. When, years ago, I travelled from Acca to Tiberias, in our Caravan there was a beautiful Bedouin woman, riding on a camel. She was listless and thoughtful. In the same caravan there was a young Christian, who was struck with the beauty of this Arab girl and her dark eyes. After some futile attempts, he succeeded in establishing himself in her favor. As I was near, I could hear their conversation. He was telling her: 'Thou art so beautiful! Why dost thou not come to the city?' 'Why?' 'Oh! Thou wilt be married to a rich man!' 'What will he do for me?' 'He will build for thee a lovely house, thou wilt be served as a queen; servants and maids will wait on thee; thou wilt walk through green gardens, thou wilt sleep on soft beds instead of sand; he will buy for thee many precious jewels with which thou wilt decorate thy body, he will surround thee with such wonderful objects that thou hast never seen, even in thy dreams!' The girl straightened herself on the camel and looked at the youth with pity and contempt in her whole demeanor. 'I have my beloved desert, vast, broad and immeasurable. What do I want to do with your cave-like, cage-like and box-like houses. There the air is stuffy; here the whole expanse of the Sahara is your avenue and boulevards. Here is my home--the palace of immensity, the residence of God's own children. Fie on your town and your civilization, snobbish manners! I hate them! I cannot bear to look at them! They are all cheap tricks sanctioned by your so-called society. You come abroad to display your crafty etiquettes of mock modesty and respectability, while in reality you are physically and morally and intellectually corrupt, afflicted with loathsome diseases. Away from me! Let me stay where I am! My home is the Sahara, my couch is the soft sand, my decorations are God's virtues, my lamps by night the moon and the stars!'

He continued to tell me other such wonderful stories and I wish I had time and space to write them. After his lunch and rest, he called me to his tent and dictated a few Tablets in Turkish. The weather has already become warm,

and beads of perspiration were streaming down my forehead. After this he went to the station. No matter what time he goes there, the Arabs are sympathetic listeners. "Let me acquire knowledge!" an Arab said, as he pushed his way through the crowd to come near the Beloved. The Master does not mince at words, and this afternoon he enumerated their failures, their predatory instinct, their tribal strifes, their lack of feelings as regards the study of sciences and arts, and their present ignorant status. They were struck with the force of his authority, the lucidity of his talk and the truthfulness of his advices. "Why are you so slothful?" he pleaded with them. "Why do you not make an effort to raise the educational standard of your women? Are they not your mothers, your sisters, your wives? Why do you hug ignorance so long to your breasts? Hail, friends, hail the light of Knowledge! Welcome the bride of understanding and carry in your hearts the torches of wisdom."

After this talk, he went to the bath. There also he spoke and counselled before going in.

We ate our supper under the moonlight. We had an Arab guest who related two lovely stories with a moral lesson to them. Then we walked towards the spring, and saw the wonderful sword-dance by more than 400 Arab men. It was very wierd and sensational.

The members of the Master's camp, including men, women and servants, have reached to 30. As the days roll on, we may have more guests.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhammeh,  
Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 6, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Out of the desert the following message is sent to the Bahai world; from the "Garden of Allah" this beautiful nosegay is forwarded to the Bahai meetings:-

"The more union and agreement appear among the believers of God, the greater will be the Divine Confirmation, the more uninterrupted will be the descent of the holy blessings from heaven! The friends must love each other with such deep sincerity as to move the hearts of those who come in touch with them. They must establish the Kingdom of Unity in the hearts of mankind, so that they may with their own eyes see the embodiments of kindness, righteousness and purity. The world of humanity is submerged in the ocean of darkness, ignorance, lust and passion. The people are in the bondage of worldliness and tied with the baser attachments. They are not thinking for one moment to attain to the good-pleasure of the Lord. They have smeared their wings with every form of play. The creatures are under the subjugation of these lower appetites of nature. They are engulfed in the world of nature and live in accord with the requirements of nature. They are like these cows grazing in the green field. They have no other thought, idea or concern save grass, water and the appeasing of their animal passion. The individuals of mankind must release themselves from these ties. Only through the Cause of God, only through the religion of God, only through the power of the Merciful can they adorn their inner being with spiritual virtues. While on the one hand the people are immersed in the sea of worldly notions, the believers of God must inspire their hearts with heavenly ideals; they must cause a great reverbration in the pillars of the earth; they must rear like the lions and wave like unto the sea. They must show them the beauty and charm of the world of God. Even while I live in the desert, I expect to receive good news from the believers of God in all parts of the world.

"The Cause of God is like unto a college. The believers are like unto the students. The college is founded for the sake of the acquirement of sciences, arts and literature. If the sciences are not therein and the scholars are not educated, the object of the college is not achieved. The students must show the results of their study in their deportments and deeds, otherwise they have wasted their lives. Now the friends must so live and conduct themselves as to bring greater glory and results to the Religion of God. To them the Cause of God must be a dynamic force, transforming the lives of men, add not a question of meetings, committee, futile discussions, unnecessary debates and political wire-pulling.

"What is the sum-total and upshot of farming, plough-



ing, sowing the seeds and irrigating? Is there any other thought behind all these labors save the gathering of crops? If the sheaves are only green and verdant, but having no grains of wheat or barley, the result is not achieved. The aim has been the luxuriant verdancy of the field, but the richness of the harvest. I hope the believers will do their utmost to crown their lives with abundant harvest. The friends are the members and organs of the body of the Cause. Each member must be active and perform its duties. The eyes are the organs of this temple; their function is to see. The ear is another organ; it must hear the voice. The hand is another organ; it must take hold of things. If they do not perform their functions, they are useless and unnecessary. Hence each one of the believers must be an active member of the Cause. There is a vast difference between the soul who has consecrated his life to the joys, pleasures and delights of this mundane world, and the soul who seeks naught else save the good-pleasure of the Lord, who devotes his rest and comfort to the progress of the Cause. Let the Bahai world become the expression of one single individual seeking to live the life of holiness and sanctification."

This spiritual and divine message was uttered this afternoon as he sat in front of his tent. Although he was speaking to a number of Zoroastrian Bahais who came over this morning from Adassehah, yet unconsciously he was addressing the Bahai world. I could go on and translate some more of his wonderful words, but enough is translated to show you the burden of his message. He went on and spoke more, now about the stirring life of Baha'o'llah, again reciting the tragic events of the years of the Bab, but always impressing the listeners with the importance of the promulgation of the Cause, and the great responsibilities of the Bahais concerning this matter. After this, followed by a number of believers, he walked toward the bath. There at the spring, on the mud veranda of the crude hut of the inspector, he gathered around him several important Sheikhs of the tribes of the desert of El Houran, and spoke to them on the spiritual principles of El Islam. With wonder in their eyes, they listened to every word that issued from his lips and paid him honor and reverence when he finished his talk. After the bath, he returned to the camp, riding on his horse. In the evening, for more than one hour he walked alone in the moonlight. I stood near the door of my Areeshah, watching him walking, his majestic body silhouetted against the hills and mountains that were bathed in the pale moonlight. What strange and mystic thoughts were revolving in his spiritual mind!

In the morning passing by the door of my "Areeshah", the Master went to his own tent and was there for a long time all alone. Then coming out he called my name a-

loud, and immediately I was behind him. "Come along! I want to take a walk." He reached the Areeshehs of a few Jews from Haifa who have come here to take the hot baths. He sat there and started to speak with ~~an~~ an old Jew about Mount Carmel, Elijah, his cave and the miracle of sacrifice, and asked him whether, like others, the Jews believe these buildings were founded by Solomon. He said "No." At this time a tall negro passed by, and looking at the Master, approached him. In a few minutes his sad story was related. He was from the interior. He had walked on foot up to Alhammeh. He had no money. He wants to take the baths, and he wants to go to Haifa. The Master's hand went immediately into his pocket, and our tall negro brother was happy beyond words. He laughed, showing a set of pearly teeth, and passed away from before us, probably never to be seen by us again.

Speaking about an influential Syrian, who has been grabbing the land of the poor peasants, the Master said: "It is very strange how the possession of a few spans of earth blinds men to justice and fairness. He becomes neglectful and heedless, forgetting God in his mad haste after wealth and trampling upon the rights of others. In other countries, such cases of gross injustice are rare. Those who are God-fearing never commit such acts, and those people who are not afraid of God must be considerate lest they might jeopardize their reputation and good name and thus be degraded in the estimation of the public and bring disgrace upon themselves and upon those who are connected with them in the business world."

The train brought new guests, Aga Sayad Ali Afnan and his family, Aga Hessein Ashjee and his son, and two others. The Master received and welcomed them in my Areesheh. Aga Mehdi and Abul Gasen had sent wonderful bouquets of flowers as tokens of their devotion and imperishable attachment to the Cause.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhammeh,  
Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 7, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

Biblical students believe that in at least two instances the name of this valley is recorded in the Old Testament. First it is in Second Chronicles Chapter 6, v. 3 and 4.

"And Solomon went to Hamath-Zobah, and prevailed against it.

"And he built Tadmor (Palmyra, in and around Damascus) in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath."

Likewise in the book of Joshua, Chap. 19, v. 33, it is mentioned as one of the many fenced cities:-

"And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath and Chinnerath."

All through this vast country there are old remains of an ancient civilization. For example the situation of Beisan (two stations above this) is very remarkable, commanding a view of the Jordan Valley. The ruins are very extensive, occupying an area of over two miles. Amongst them are the remains of a castle, a temple, with standing columns, a theatre, a Roman arch, and all around are traces of a massive wall. The history of Beth-shan or Beth-shean (house of quiet) the ancient name of Beisan, is full of interest. The town belonged to Manasseh (I Chron. 7 Chap. v. 29) though within the original limits of Issachar (Joshua 18 Chap. v. 11). The Israelites were unable to drive out the Canaanites, but placed them under tribute (Joshua 17 Chap. verses 12, 13, 16.) When the Philistines came to strip the slain on Mount Gilboa, after the fatal battle, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent it into the land of Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols and amongst the people. And they put his armour in the house of Ashtorath; and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan (1 Samuel 31:8,10,12). When the Scythians overran the country, it is stated by later historians that a colony established itself here and the name was changed to Scythopolis and it was a city of Decapolis, or the League of Ten Cities. It was a prosperous place in the twelfth century. Finally, it was demolished by Saladin. The railway, running east, leaves to the South the beautiful plain in the center of which is the station of Beisan. The line now approaches the Jordan, not far from the ford named "Makkadel-El-Aboreh ("The Ford of the Crossing") which Colonel Conder, supporting the theory held by Origen, supposes to be the Bethabara where John the Baptist exercised his ministry (John 1, 28.) To our left as we proceed, we notice crowning a hill-top, the ruins of the Crusading Fortress of Belvoir, built by King Fulke in 1140, and taken by Saladin

in 1182. The line now crosses the Wady Bireh, and then running north by north-west, along part of an old Roman Road passes the station of Jiar-el-Majinia, on the right bank of the river. The Jiar-el-Majinia, or Bridge of Assembly, probably, derived its name from an ancient market which was held in a now ruined Khan (Inn) not far off. The bridge is a Saracenic structure, consisting of a large pointed arch flanked on either side by a smaller and lower one. A causeway supported on three other arches runs above the small side-arches to the level of the great middle one. About 3 miles N.E. of this bridge, the line crossed the Yarmuk, and about five miles beyond reaches the station of Es-Semakh (alight here for Tiberias, which is reached by boat crossing the lake) on the southern shore of the Lake of Galilee, having, after crossing the Yarmuk, passed on the left, first the red-tiled roofs of the Jewish agricultural colony of Sejarah. The view of the Lake and its surroundings, as seen from Es-Somakh, is magnificent. Part of Tiberias is visible, whilst Tell-Hum, or Capernaum, is clearly seen at the north end of the lake, not far from the northern in-flow of the Jordan. On the hills beyond we see Safed and some villages, while towering above all and in the distant background, is snow-covered Hermon, whilst to the S.E. perched on a mountain top, are ruins of Umm Keis, the Gadara of the Gospels.

Leaving Es-Semakh (699 feet below sea-level) the train proceeds for about four miles S.E. towards the mouth of Yarmuk raine. The Yarmuk is the Hieromax of the Ancients, and not mentioned in scriptures, though its name does occur in the Talmud. The interesting little plain, where we are camping, lies just inside and beyond the narrow entrance to the great ravine. It is asserted that this enclosed plain is to the Bedouin an inviolable sanctuary or place about one of refuge. It is about two miles long from east to west, and one mile in width. The area is occupied by patches of cultivated lands on the northern slope and bits of jungle, amongst which are numerous clumps of wild date-palms, and other sub-tropical trees and underwood. Here lie ruins of the ancient baths, temples, theatres, churches and tombs of Gadara, the sad relics of a civilization which once thrived here, but was put to an end by the great battle of the Yarmuk, which in A.D. 636-7 first made Mohammedanism triumphant in the Holy Land. Here are the remains of a small Roman amphitheatre, as well as of a Roman bath. The chief hot spring is found on the right bank of the river, and the water in which the Master bathes every day is about 1200 Fahr., and is impregnated with sulphur. This region is visited every year in the spring by large numbers of sick persons and those who desire to take these hot baths.

Today while the Beloved was walking toward the bath, referring to some of his historical remarks concerning this

most interesting spot, he said, "Although some of the simple folks believe that these ancient monuments of civilization were built by Solomon, yet there is no foundation for such belief. It is true that David conquered these lands and Solomon extended the boundry of his father's conquests, but there were no public buildings at that time. When Alexander the Great (in 332 B.C.) conquered the Persian Empire, the territory of the Jews became a Macedonian Province. Immediately after his death (In 324, B.C.) and the dividing of his vast empire between his four able generals, his ambition of world-conquest came to naught. Syria and Palestine became the share of Seleucus. Seleucus and his successors, by conquests and wars, added year by year large territories to their dominion. In the year 205, B.C., the Seleucidae, or descendants of Seleucus, had established a kingdom of Syria, extending from the Mediterranean to the Indies. The Capital towns were Selucia on the Tigris and Antioch on the Euphrates. Antiochus III, the Great, laid the foundation of ten prosperous colonies in as many parts of Syria, and Anatolia, and induced many Jews, by granting them special privileges, to migrate and settle permanently in these colonies. One of the cities built by Antiochus the Great is the city of "Mokeiss" on the top of the mountain, the dilapidated buildings of which are yet witnessed by the tourists. The two springs situated in the north and the south of the valley are connected with each other by a system of arches, over which people walked and viewed the smiling prosperous plains dotted with buildings of many stories and men and women busily engaged in the pursuit of pleasure or work. Where are now those Greek Kings and Roman Imperators and Queenly ladies who lived in their palaces, danced in the moonlight and bathed in the hot springs of the valley?" They laid the foundations of these stately buildings, and they reared their walls so high that they vainly thought the hand of time would not touch them. How would they feel if their ghosts could return and look upon this dismal picture of complete desolation! The wild, roving Arabs pitching their tents in the ruins of those gorgeous palaces. They have become the dung-heaps of animals and men, stables for their asses and horses! Such sights give one much thought for reflection and contemplation! Now the flood of destruction hath reached its crest. From now on there will be a period of construction. This plain will be built and will become inhabited by a happy people. It will not take a long time before this will become fulfilled."

This morning, Abdul Baha entered my shady bower unproclaimed and sat for some time. Tea was brought in, and in his holy Presence we drank the ruby contents of the glasses. He spoke with Aga Sayad Ali Afnan, and wished him to hasten some work which has started on the Holy Tomb of Baha'o'llah. "Whether I am there or not, the Blessed Spot must always be

in the best condition!" he said. Then he retired to his tent, and after awhile asked me to join him and translate for him a few more chapters of the Book of Buddha. While I was thus engaged, five Arabs from Adaseyeh were announced. They were sent as a delegation by the farmers to present some of their needs and complaints to the Master. They were received with true Arab courtesy, and hospitality. He listened to their complaints with wonderful patience, and then read their long petition. He sent then and there for the men who are the heads of the village, and instructed them in the most practical, business-like way, thus securing for the peasants the required redress. Amongst other things, he said to them:-

"Consider that Abdor-Rahman Pasha received one-fourth of the entire crop and produce from the farmers in his villages, Mokaibe, just next door to you. On the other hand, you are charged only one-tenth, and nothing more. For many years, personally, I have not received one cent from this village, nay, rather, as you all know very well, on various occasions I have expended many thousands of piastres over the improvement of the place. You must be most thankful and praise God for His Bounties. I wish that each of you may be really comfortable and happy, and that the essential means of your livelihood be always amply provided. You are my children, Mix and associate with the Parsees. They will instruct you in many lessons of agriculture. They will teach you farming along modern lines. They are most industrious and you can ameliorate your conditions, and increase your crops, by watching their ways. Live a virtuous, upright, honest, thruthful life. Waslk in the path of the righteous and do not give your ears to the froward and the transgressor. Do not sow the seed of discord and jealousy amongst yourselves. Co-operate with each other and be always quick to learn. Shun slothfulness. Be diligent in your work. Have you not read in the Koran wherein it is revealed by the Lord: "Those farmers who believe in God, practice virtue and are striving in their avocation. He will open before their faces the doors of heavenly Blessings!" In Haifa there is a colony of Germans. They are all Christians. They have not even one-tenth of your land, but as they are faithful and perservingng, they all have become wealthy, because they practice intensive farming. They are all better off than your Amira and Sheikha. Why should you not be at least like them?"

In order that this large company of men and women may have as much milk as they like, every morning and evening four large cows and their little calves are brought to our camp. A man herds them every day and a Bedouin woman milks them morn and eve. The Master was telling Mirza Abdorra-Auf that the woman must wash her hands with soap before she milks the cows.

Every night one or two Persians, with our Arab guard, Mahmoud, sit up all through the night and walk now and then around the camp, so that no thief may enter. In order to test them, whether they are really wide-awake or not, the Beloved has been getting up for the last two nights between 2 and 5 A.M. and calling their names aloud: "Who is there? Art thou awake?"

Mirza Hadi, my room-mate, left to-day for Haifa. He did not know whether he would come back or not.

The night was very attractive, calm and beautiful. The weather was cool and the moonlight was simply divine. My solitary walk was greatly enjoyed. The Beloved took his supper with about a dozen of the Persians, in my Areesheh. I abstained from my food, because I was attacked by one of those periodical headaches.

A most charming Areesheh is prepared for the Master, just next to mine, and he occupied it this afternoon for about two hours. When I joined him, and was permitted to sit down on the rug as he was doing, he said: "Here I am." My verdant and shady arbor is next to thine; but I am afraid I will give it up in a day or two. I never keep anything for myself."

While I was thus happily enjoying his heavenly presence all alone, an Arab called, and somehow the question of socialistic movement in Europe and America was brought in, and the Beloved gave a clear exposition of the demands of the labor socialists, the woeful results of the strikes and the constant clash between the capitalists and the workers.

Then he dictated a very eloquent Tablet in Arabic, and the interview was brought to a close.

"Let love and amity be the musical notes of your lives; joy and fragrance the harmonizing of your hearts; sincerity and devotion the clarions of your souls!" was his advice to a Turk.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower, Alhamme, Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 8, 1914.

Dear Friends:-

"During the life-time of Baha'o'llah", the Beloved said, while sitting at the entrance of his tent and looking up towards the height of the mountain, "the inhabitants of the village, Mokeiss, were most anxious that I would buy half of their real estate for 1,700 Pounds Sterling, but I did not do it. They knew that if they were my farmers, they would be infinitely better treated than by one of these Turkish Pashas, who by every hook and crook try to exact from them all that they produce with the sweat of their brows. Nowland value is so raised that an offer of 12,000 Pounds Sterling has been refused by them, for the same land they offered me for 1,700 Pounds Sterling. I bought half of the village of Adassayah for only \$1000, and half of the village of Nogaib for \$300. In those days land was very cheap in those parts, but since the construction of the railroad, all the prices have raised considerably, especially those lands which are situated in the vicinities of the stations along the way. Years ago there was a village, half of which I was going to buy, but there was another party who was anxious to get hold of the same. He intrigued much, but to no avail. At last the papers and documents were properly drawn up and signed, and I went to the Government house to pay the money. When I arrived, the Judge and a few other officials were present. I sat down, and after preliminary remarks I took the money out of my pocket and started to count it. At that very moment, the door was opened, and one of the believers entered the room with the following message from the Blessed Perfection: "Leave the earth to the people of the earth." I took the papers into my hands and tore them into pieces and said: 'Now whosoever desires to buy this land may do so without any interference on my part.' I got up and left the meeting. They were all astonished to see me giving up the land so suddenly. From that day I never cared to buy land; otherwise I could have bought many villages. 'Let the earth to the people of the earth' is a heavenly advice to all the believers of God. Let them lighten their leads as much as they are able; thus they may become inspired with divine ideals and world-illuminating thoughts. The clouds of care and worry must be dispelled; otherwise the sun of repose and serenity will be always hidden. The garden must be cleared from its thorns and thistles; so that flowers of all kinds and hues may grow from its soil."

The other day he gave an interesting talk, a short passage may herein be inserted: "If a friend dies and



leaves behind some debt, the believers must do their utmost to pay it off to the very last cent. For example, I pass away from this world, while being under obligation of debt, the friends must see to it that all such debts are cleared. During our sojourn in Bagdad and Haifa and Acca, many believers died, leaving behind debts of large and small sums, and I paid them all most scrupulously. It makes no difference whatsoever, whether it is a question of paying my own debt or the debt of my friend or friends. People may look upon this subject from a different standpoint; but it must make no difference to the Bahais. We must consider the debt of the believers of God as our own debt. This is the station of unity."

Speaking about forgetfulness, he said: "Man is liable to forget things very quickly, but the animals remember longer. If you have been kind to a dog once in your lifetime, it will never forget and will follow you whenever it sees you. Once in Acca two persons claimed undisputable possession of a donkey. They brought witnesses before the Judge to substantiate their respective claims. The Judge was bewildered and did not know which party he should heed, because to all appearances both seemed to be right. At last he found a solution. He said: 'Let the donkey alone. Man may forget, but the donkey will not forget. Let it go out, and if it stops at the door of either of your two houses, that one is its undisputed owner.' This suggestion was carried out, and the right owner was discovered.

This morning, he came out and walked around the camp and the station for an hour or two, refreshing and gladdening the hearts with his spiritual discourses and talks. At ten o'clock the train arrived. Haji Ali Nagi, who is a believer from Egypt but on his way to India, Haji Ali and Scheil Effendi, from Haifa, descended from the train. I saw the Master walking from one to the other end of the train, apparently expecting someone to alight. Suddenly our Commander (who was the guest of the Beloved the first day of our arrival) emerged out of the first-class compartment. He was dressed in his military uniform. The Master advanced, got hold of his hand, and embraced and kissed him before the eyes of all the wondering spectators. Hand in hand, talking and laughing, they walked toward the tent. The Commander is a dashing, tall, handsome officer, powerful enough to command and direct the movements of several Turkish regiments in Acca, Jerusalem and Medina. The Master is now old, with white beard, but with youthful energy and power. Therefore it was not only interesting but very significant to see both of them walking beside each other, with their hands locked in each other's. They are two generals, but each one is marshalling different forces. One is the

general of the army of peace, the other the Commander of the regiment of war. But they are friends. I hear the Commander is going to pass a few days at least with us. He is the guest of the Master. The tent and Are esheh of the Beloved will bid him a hearty welcome. They were together practically all day; they dined and supped and bathed together. The Conversation between them is carried on in Turkish, and I do not quite understand this language. As they pass the hours in the Areesheh, I hear clearly the voice of the Master. Now he speaks about the military heroes of Persia, again the victories won by some Oriental General and the romantic details surrounding his adventurous life. They took their supper together right under the soft rays of the moon, interspersed with talks and stories, till very late at night.

Arabic newspapers were brought with this morning's train, but no letters. Thus, although we are temporarily shut off from all the Bahai news, yet we are assured that God is directing the steps of His sincere believers.

Ahmad Sohrab.

Pleiades Sylvan Bower, AlhammeH,  
Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 9, 1914.

Dear Friends:

"What do you expect the Bahai to accomplish in this world?" asked a stranger.

The Beloved one answered:- "The Bahais must be the servants of universal Peace, the workers for the Cause of the Oneness of the world of humanity, the spreaders of heavenly Love amongst the children of man, the promulgators of the principles of the progress of mankind, the dispellers of the clouds of religious, national, patriotic and political prejudices; and the upholders of the inviolable rights of equality between man and women. They must correspond religious ideals with the deductions of science and reason, and discard all such theories which cannot stand the test of intellect and empirical knowledge. This is the work of the Bahais. Dost thou not desire to accomplish this work? Art thou not in favor of it? Dost thou like to enlist in this army? You? Then, come and usher under this tent, Make thou also an effort so that the world of humanity may attain to the highest summit of perfection. Strive that religion may be cleansed from ignorant prejudices. Strive that bias may be removed. Strive that warfare and strife may become non-existent. Strive that love and good-fellowship may replace intolerance and the narrowness of dogmatism. Strive to scatter the seeds of kindness in the hearts. These are the teachings of Baha'o'llah. We are striving in this path. His Holiness Baha'o'llah has opened a great Door of interdependences of all nations before the faces. For example, the strict adherents of the present-day religions consider each other as infidels and contaminating, as apostates in the sight of God and man, as deserving to be thrown to the bottom of Hell and in the Jaws of Satan; but Baha'o'llah, addressing the world of humanity, says:- 'Ye are the leaves of one branch and the fruits of one tree!'"

"What is your belief as regards the origin of evil?"

The Blessed One answered: "There is no origin of evil. The origin of evil is non-existent. For example, darkness is evil. It is the absence of light. Whenever there is no light, there is darkness. Consequently it has no existence. Poverty is the absence of wealth. Ignorance is the absence of knowledge. Evil is the absence of good. All evils are non-existent and have no outward forms and shapes. Creation is good. 'And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good!'"

"How can one understand the object of his life?"

The Blessed One answered: "There are two kinds of understandings; objective and subjective. To illustrate; Thou seest this glass of this water, and thou dost comprehend in a subjective manner their constituent parts. On the other-hand, thou canst not see Love, Intellect, hate, anger, sorrow,