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Pilgrimage Accounts

In 1909 Pauline and Joseph had the opportunity to follow in their sisters' footsteps and embark on a voyage to 'Akká for their pilgrimage to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Master. This formal account, prepared by Joseph includes many of the talks that 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave during their visit. The following is Pilgrim's Notes and the sections attributed to 'Abdu'l-Bahá are not authoritative scripture. Following this account are Pauline and Joseph's letters home to their son and Fanny and Joseph's mother, which are of a lighter and even more personal nature.

'Akká Lights

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

After an impressive silence, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke.

"To remove any source of differentiation, the Believers must know that the Blessed Báb was giving the glad tidings of the coming of the Blessed Perfection, and the Blessed Perfection was the Great Manifestation. Regarding myself, I am the Servant of Bahá'u'lláh and nothing more; 'Abdu'l-Bahá is the sum of all perfections, they must not attempt to surpass that word, Ab—dul Bahá.

"All must say to others, that He claims for Himself to be 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Believers must call Him by this name as He wishes. This is the only word He has appointed for Himself."

Mention was made of the privilege we had in coming so openly, while but recently many had been disappointed, and the visits of these friends being very short. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "...So it is not the length of one's sojourn but his receptivity which determines his blessing."

'Abdu'l-Bahá took us to the Holy Tomb of the Báb, and on the way He referred to the fact that we would see Jewish Believers; that the Christian Missionaries had striven years to convert these people, and had done countless things for

them to no avail; but behold! The power of the word of Bahá'u'lláh,—they were now Believers in Christ. This going up to the Mountain of the Lord, Carmel, and the assem—blage there was a fulfillment of prophecies in Isaiah 2:3, also Isaiah 56:6-7.

We asked permission to present the letters and gifts from America. While reaching for them, He said, “You are in yourselves a long and interesting letter from all the Believers. You are a present from the Friends in the Occident. When a merchant wishes to sell any grain he sends a handful as samples. You are the samples of the American Believers.” Then Mr. Hannen replied that he hoped He knew the goods as being better than the samples. He smiled His wonderful smile, and said, “If the goods are equal to the samples it is very good.”

- [This next section of the account is a series of questions which Joseph or other pilgrims asked of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.] *

The next question concerned the marriage of a Believer to one not in the Faith. He said, “There is no harm in it; it is very good. In the Law of God, that is to say in this Dispensation, it is permissible to give in marriage and to take in marriage. That is to say, to give to him who is not a Believer and vice versa. All bigotries of the past have been removed from this Cause.”

Question: What is the necessity for diversity in the development of the soul? ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied that diversity is really harmony. If our food were to be all of one kind it would become monotonous. So in many ways the existence of different degrees is in reality the perfection of harmony and each may attain perfection in its sphere.

Question: Is it the duty of the Believers to attend the weekly meeting? ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, “It is not a duty incumbent upon them; it is not obligatory, but if they have no special demand important and he should be absent it is not com—mendable. If the love of God is truly in a man’s heart, he earnestly desires to be present at all meetings. In fact he would like to be there every night and every day.”

CONCERNING THE COLORED RACE.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, “There should be no differ—entiation between the blacks and the whites. All are the creatures of God. All are created by one God. There is no black and white in the King—dom of God. The purest heart is the best whether white or black. I had a servant, Esphandiar by name; he was better

than a hundred whites. He was so good tempered, so faithful and trust-worthy. One would be amazed at his intelligence.

“The question of the races is one which is extremely regrettable. For the blacks hate the whites, while the whites distrust the blacks. You must overcome this by showing them that you make no distinction. The end will be very unfortunate for both if the differences are not removed.”

Question-Can we communicate with the spirits of the departed?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said that there is a communication between spirits, but that the spiritual séances as given in Europe where spirits are supposed to move objects, etc., are phantasmagoria. That spirit can communicate with spirit is proven by the known fact of teaching. It is a self-evident fact that nothing tangible passes from the teacher to the pupil, yet ideas are conveyed. In point of fact, the human mind is in its original state non-individualistic, and the teacher individualizes knowledge by classifying it and locating it with respect to the pupil’s mind. So soul can communicate with soul and in the realms of existence such intercommunication is possible.

Instructions concerning the children of the Bahá’í Sunday School of Washington, D. C.:

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “In that hour you have to make the children familiar with the prophecies in the Gospels and mentioning the name of God may be established in their hearts while they are young children. They should develop spiritual feelings. You are to explain to them or read to them the Ishrakat, Tarázát, Tajalleyat, the Words of Paradise, and Tablet of the World. You have to make them learn by heart some of these verses. By these means they will become enlightened and well educated, for they are like unto a young tree, you can train them in whatever manner you like.”

After supper ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “Hold fast to that which is the cause of unity and friendship. The result of everything should be the Love of God. This is the essential fact of everything, that we should love one another with Godly Love. The name of love is never applied to anything except the Love of God. Beside Godly love, other love is called passion; it pertains to animals and not to man. But Godly love, which means to love the Friends of God, is of the human characteristics. For they have no other intention save the good-will of God. How many souls have always been together in the utmost love, but at last it was changed into enmity, for the foundation has not been based upon Godly Love. It has been human love.”

At parting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “There is a parting which is in reality meeting. If you will carry out the precepts of the Blessed Perfection it will conduce to our Eternal Meeting. This is better than remaining here. If you stay with me

for a thousand years, or if you do one thing, that is to say, put to practice one precept, that is greater than the meeting of a thousand years. If a tree should yield one fruit, that tree is far better than the tree which has been on the bank of a river a thousand years. There exist among the hearts of the Beloved certain susceptibilities which are of the purest bounties. There exist certain ideal bonds which are the greatest of the innate bonds. Praise be to God, these bonds are firm among us. Therefore you must not be sad on account of this separation. God willing, praiseworthy results will be forthcoming therefrom. Convey my greetings to each of the Beloved of God, and embrace each for me.”¹

This account and Fanny and Alma’s account were published into small pamphlets and circulated among the Bahá’ís of that day. (Imagine my delight when on one of the many days that I spent in the National Archives while researching the voluminous correspondences for this book, I ran across another version of Joseph and Pauline’s pilgrimage. It was in the form of a letter Pauline wrote to her young sons, Carl, who was on his way to Germany at the time, and Paul, Joseph’s mother, and Fanny, who were back in the states waiting for their return. The character and content of this letter is quite different from the other published accounts because of the intended audience and purpose, but in many ways is much more telling of the nature and character of the writer. I was brought to tears many times as I read it, partly because of the memories it brought back to me of my own pilgrimage, but also because of the kinds of things which touched her heart. I can’t begin to express how pleased I was in finding it and I really feel that she wanted it found. So many points she made pulled at my heart strings and released wells of emotion that are somewhat inexplicable, but make me feel that she has been standing over my shoulder as I write this book. I will share these letters in their entirety, noting that I took the liberty to fix some of her typing and spelling errors as I would do with any of my student’s work as needed. I also found it interesting that she struggles with how to use commas as I have often puzzled over in my own writing. I admit that I did add some commas as necessary to make the sentences more readable.

This is Pauline’s personal account of meeting with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Letter to Grandmother, Carl and Paul, Cairo, Egypt, March 4, 1909

My Precious Ones,

What shall I say, where to begin. We have lived ages in a few weeks, my last letter was written on board the Prince Ludwig. (Early in the morning we arrived at Port Sa’id) Such a noise, you can’t imagine, thirty or more row boats filled with strange looking men shouting, and calling for passengers for their particular boat to land us. This awful noise and confusion was and is the only unpleasant feature of the trip. After a while we were safely landed and with the help of a man engaged by Joseph, we were taken to the home of Aḥmad Yazdí. He is (just) a real Bahá’í, and we loved him at once. Also the clerks in his store are Bahá’ís and this made it easy for us to speak freely. He sent his clerk with us to a neat little hotel, where we found an American believer, Miss Holtzbecker,

who has taken a great fancy to us and was a great help to us also. She is now preparing to go to 'Akká next week. We walked all around Port Sa'íd and out the narrow streets and along the beautiful beach front where we gathered shells for our baby Paul "Thabet." And for our big son Carl "Nategh." (the first name sounds like sabet) It was such a beautiful place to pray and we did.

We had to wait until the next afternoon for the steamer. During the early afternoon, a sand storm began to gather and by three o'clock the whole city looked pink. The air was filled with sand, and we could not see half a block away. We secured a row boat, which landed us safely on the Russian steamer about five o'clock, which was to leave that evening, Thursday, but on account of the sand storm, and very rough sea, we had to lay in the harbor for 26 hours, leaving on Friday evening instead. The sea was so rough that all the passengers who were booked for Jaffa had to go on to Haifa. Such a lot of sea-sick people you never saw. But it was no wonder the boat rocked every which way, trunks, and satchels were flying back and forth like crazy things.

The steamer seemed like a rubber ball tossing on the waves. The front of the boat would shoot its nose into the air and then plunge into the sea as it seemed, then tip to one side then to the other on a slant like this[illustration] in other words the edge of the upper deck touched the water. Once while Papa and I were sitting in the middle of the boat, on the upper deck on the floor, all of a sudden we had a toboggan slide in a great hurry to the railing of the boat and while straightening ourselves up a little and laughing at our hurry we were hurried back again and poor Papa had a good rap on his head, but it was so very funny that we could do nothing but look at each other and burst out laughing. In the midst of the fun, we were sliding again, as fast as the wind to the side of the boat again. This time we managed to scramble to our feet and by the time the boat tilted again we were holding fast to something. Strange to say we were not ill, not the least bit, and we rather enjoyed this novel experience.

When we reached Haifa, the sea was so very rough that no boats came out to reach us or to take us in from ten in the morning until five that night. We believed, as the Captain said, we must go on to Beirut, because if the men would venture out in their row boats the landing would be very dangerous. At five, we saw some row boats coming towards us. Oh joy! We hastened to our things and Papa looked at me so longingly and said, you must show your pluck now. I was not in the least afraid, but it was indeed a dangerous landing, but thank God after being pulled and thrown and pushed we finally found ourselves walking on firm ground once more. We were so glad to be walking on mother earth that we refused to take a carriage to the hotel, but we had some men carry our baggage.

On arriving at the Hotel, the Manager sent for Mírzá Jallal, the Son in law of our Beloved 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In about an hour he arrived with Mírzá Munír. After a very little talk about the various friends, we were startled speechless by the announcement, "Our Lord will receive you, after you have had supper and one of us will call for you." They saw we were unfit for further speech and left

us. We hastened to our rooms, washed and dressed. I put on my silk dress, ate supper though we did not wish for it. While still at the table Mírzá Munír came. I saw him come in. We put on our hats and coats for it was cold, and started for that wonderful meeting. After ten minute, very quiet, and prayerful walk, we came to the gate of Madame Jackson's house and looking ahead of us on Mt. Carmel, a great eye as it seemed, but really a light on Mt. Carmel, was shinning down on us and this we were told was the Tomb of the Báb.

The Heavens seemed to be a mass of stars shedding their light upon us as though even the stars were happy for us. But how did I feel? Like a timid little bird, expecting I knew not what, but the end was very near. We were ushered into the parlor, where we removed our things. Then Mírzá Munír came back saying, "Come." I followed first, then Joseph. I stood upon the doorsill for one instance as though it might have been the edge of a precipice, looking upon our Lord who said something. Perhaps Welcome, but at the sound of His Voice, I flew at Him, my arms about His Blessed neck my head on his Shoulder. I was breathing very hard, really panting, and the uppermost thought was Father, Father, Father. I seemed like a weather beaten birdie having passed through storms and at last had reached the heaven of rest. Just as I began to feel that I was losing consciousness, this wonderful Father led me to a chair. Then I was quiet and more composed and saw Him embrace and kiss your Papa, your son and brother. He will tell you how he felt.

We sat to one side of the room with Armeen, his dear Father, Mírzá Munír Mírzá Jallal, I don't remember any more, oh yes another son in law and in one corner sat our Lord's little grandson, and our beloved Lord, Very well, face beaming the inexpressible love light in His Eyes. He spoke of your recent visit (Fanny) and how happy He was to have you, and that you were sincere servants, then spoke of Alma's work and among the other things, said she was the Conqueror of Germany. And her conquest would last through-out all eternity, while Napoleon conquered many lands and people during his day, but now these lands belonged to others, etc. He spoke with great joy of the Beloved in America and of the Cause, especially the Wash—ington friends. I can't remember all that was said that night, but after a little while, He arose, took me by the hand, and lead me across the large inner hall or court (you remember Fanny) to see the ladies, at the same time calling Monavvar. He seated Himself upon the divan and I next to Him with my hand encircled by his warm hand. In a few minutes, the Blessed Mother came in. He slipped out, while other ladies and I had to tell them about the Beloved in America, etc. Our Lord returned to Joseph, embraced him, and called him his Son, His own Joseph, and said he (we) should come the next morning and be His guests, and then said good night. Joseph talked to the men for awhile, then sent for me, and we started for the Hotel. Happy beyond expression, but very quiet, we said very little, and slept very little, thinking over the wonderful events of the day. Personally, Our Beloved 'Abdu'l-Bahá was a great and pleasant surprise; His wonderous forehead, clear skin, soft white beard and moustache, the hair is thin and white but not often seen, warm soft and small firmly grasping hands, and last but by no means least,

His wonderful, wonderful eyes. They express as no other eyes can, unspeakable love, sympathy, power and authority, submissiveness and oh the merry twinkle, I never saw anything like it. As to His Spiritual power, our know—ledge increased day by day and we wondered how the people could be so blind, and not know him, only to see him walking with six or more pilgrims, following at a short distance. His bearing, that of humility and power combined. He is. He is, yes He is

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ THE PERFECT.

The reason I say ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, instead of Lord or Master, is because He gave us a talk on this subject. To give it with out the setting and in brief it is this; lord is one title or attribute of God, Master is one attribute, ‘Abbás is another and, etc. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is the combination, total of all perfections.

To go on, the next morning we packed our things, left some clothes to be washed, and by this time Dr Faríd came for us and took us for a walk, and then to the home of Rúḥá, but she was in ‘Akká at this time. We took all the gifts out and had them ready, but not till Monday morning did we pre—sent the gifts. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá walked in saying good morning and asked how we slept, made us feel comfortable and at ease, then I began and placed each gift one at a time, mentioned the names of the givers and the messages where there were any to give. He thanked very sweetly for their expressions of love and asked for the many letters we had brought and then said you are a letter from the Friends in America, a long expressive letter. You are their gift, they have sent you, mean—ing both of us. When a merchant wished to sell grain he sends samples of his goods to be examined, and you are the samples, and it is very good. Then Joseph said we wish to say to our Lord that the goods is really much better than the sample. His eyes twinkled as he replied, if the goods are equal to the samples it is very good. You are dear to me. He mentioned Ruth Fuhrman and He looked so lovingly upon her picture and smiled at the fancy positions of the children’s pictures. It gave him real pleasure, for He examined each one separately. Tell Mrs. Fuhrman He gave me no answer but bowed his Head over the picture in prayer. Please tell Miss Ambrose I have secured an old handkerchief that is rough dried and been used many times by our lord. Should you see Mrs. Eardley, tell her ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said to me, “because you supplicate for her, she may come to ‘Akká.” Tellof Baltimore, that she shall stay with her husband just as long as she possibly can stand it. When it goes beyond her endurance, divorce is permissible. Tell lady Cowles that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá lay her steamer rug across his lap, folded His Blessed hands and prayed. The other Mrs. Coles (Claudia) you say He looked long at her daughter’s picture as though in prayer. O dear, when will I be able to finish this letter. Always someone coming in. At this very minute, a lady is talking as fast as she can, while I want to write. Ah dear, how glad we will be to settle down to work again, though my heart seemed nearly broken to leave our beloved ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. To go on again with my story, or at least try to, it was not until Monday morning we gave the presents, but we

arranged them Sunday morning, had just completed the operation when Mírzá Munír came in to us saying ‘Our Lord awaits you out front.’ Quickly our hats and coats were put on and when we came to the front door, who should be standing at the gate but Our Lord, with a little bunch of violets which He handed to me. He helped us into His carriage and He got in back of us with Mírzá Munír and in front was the driver, an old believer. As we were winding our way up the steep mountain road—way, every one silent of course, Our Lord spoke, saying to me, “About two years ago you had a vision in which you were going up this steep moun—tain and at the top you met many strange people at the feast. Today you will see this vision literally fulfilled, in a moment. He said think and then you will remember all. I did not recall this dream until I reached the top and greeted many pilgrims who had just arrived from different parts of Persia and India and Russia, believers who had traveled for three months on camels, donkeys or walking as best they could. Seeing these shining faces, the dream came back to me. After resting for a while and talking about America and having a friendly chat, one very old and beautiful believer read the greetings sent by the Washington friends to our Lord. Their faces expressed perfect joy and Jos—eph and I were very happy. I chanted the Commune and the Arabic chant, and they were delighted and this servant was most happy to be able to do something to please these wonderful people. In a few minutes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá appeared at the door and said come. We all followed him, Joseph and I were mixed with the others, but in a second Our Lord stopped and motioned for me to come and then to Joseph to come near Him, and quietly we followed Him into the Holy Tomb of the Báb on Mt. Carmel. It was very solemn and I felt utterly unworthy to be there. All stood while Our Lord chanted the Visiting Tablet in a clear ringing voice. Then He knelt on the floor and all of us did likewise. Then we retreated slowly out into the garden. We went into the same room where we had as—sembled in the first place, where the feast was prepared for us. With the exception of Joseph and I, all were seated about the feast spread on the floor in real oriental fashion, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá walking back and forth to serve us and to see that we all were happy, pushing some cheese in front of Joseph or patting him on the back and saying “eat” and now and then letting me take His Hand in mine and look at me with such unspeakable love and tenderness. He spoke to us, but Joseph has it all written out. I will not attempt to give his teachings here, but never the less; it seems to me the greatest lesson was that of love. He embraced Joseph several times and kissed him too, once on the crown of his head as he was kneeling at His feet. Once he called us both to sit beside him on the divan. Being a woman I was denied the privilege of being kissed by Him, but His Hand grasp, I felt many times, and to hear His Voice, as He entered one end of the house, to come to us at the other end, “my daughter”, “my daughter.” “My daughter,” until He reached us and I was at his feet. He has shown us so much love that we can never do anything now but show love to the creatures of God.

When Joseph asked how he might serve more and differently he smiled sweetly, “Go on just as you have been doing. Your services are acceptable.” I begged that

my tongue might be loosened to glorify the Cause. He said, "You have great love, the utmost love for the Cause. That same love is service to the Cause. You serve the Beloved of God and this also is a service. Because you remember God, this also is a service. You shall be confirmed to render great services. Be Confident." When we think of the great love He has showered upon us, our hearts must melt with love for everyone. Oh, I can hear Him, now saying "my son, my daughter" in English too. First He said "My son" two or three times in English and My daughter had to be translated. Then this humble servant wished with all her heart that He might call her something in English. A very few minutes afterwards, He stepped into the room and said "My daughter." I could have cried for joy, but I didn't.

When we were about to leave the Tomb for the carriage, we had been sitting about in groups on the grass, talking when all became silent and all stood reverently watching our Lord coming towards us from the gar-deners house, He stopped, picked a rose, and while doing this Mírzá Munír said "I prophecy. He is going to-pick it for you." (talking to me). Sure enough, walking slowly towards the road leading to the carriage not seeming to see anyone or anything until He came to where I stood, He handed me the rose, smiled and walked on until He came to the edge of the parapet or wall. Here all Haifa lay at his Feet, and at ours. In that moment, it seemed to me all the world was His to do with as He chose, yet like Christ, He chose the humblest, yet most mighty position of non-resistance. He stood like a statue for quite a while, as it seemed, the bearing of One who has conquered the world. Like the gentle Christ, when he was being crowned with thorns and persecuted, with only one to stand by him, John, yet he said, "I have over come the world." As Our Lord stood there, the embodiment of humility and power, that saying of Christ became clear to me. As He turned He motioned to us to precede him to the carriage, which was about a block away, higher up the mount. As we seated ourselves, we looked back to view another wonder-ful sight, Haifa, at the foot of Mt. Carmel, the Tomb bathed in sun-light. Our Lord, walking firmly up the steep mountain path towards the carriage, at a little distance came about 25 pilgrims, heads bowed, hands crossed over their breasts, Jews, Zoroastrians, Moslems, Greeks, etc. When He reached the carriage, He stopped and faced them, motioning them to come nearer and then He spoke. This we did not understand of course, nor was it interpreted for us. But it made a wonderful picture. Then He got in the carriage and we went home, not a word was spoken.

On several occasions we saw Him walking on the rough mountain roads with ten or twelve men following him, and now and then he would stop and speak to them. On one of these trips He said to them, "When I arrived at this place forty years ago, there were only a very few little huts about and now see the many houses, to this side, the German Colony over there awaiting the coming of the lord. After He passed through this land they came to settle." This was news to us because we had been taught that they came in 1868 — guess that was the Monastery.

Another time Dr. Faríd, Joseph and I went for a walk and on our return we saw Our Lord crossing the road a block away. We were coming this way [arrow pointing right] and we had crossed like this[arrow pointing up]. I saw that He had a bunch of flowers in His hands as He waved His other hand. Joseph began to go at a lively trot to overtake Him, but foolish me, I said to Ameen, “No I won’t run for then He will give me the flowers and I would rather the other Pilgrims should have this pleasure.” What do you think, when we reached the gate, He stood near the house smiling, and Joseph was coming toward us with the most beautiful flower in the bunch, a perfect iris. Every one marveled at its beauty and wondered where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had gotten it and Joseph had a beautiful rose (for himself.) The point is this; ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had a flower for each pilgrim and one for Joseph and one for me.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited Tiberius during which time we were sent to ‘Akká, the Holy Tomb of Bahá’u’lláh, and the Garden of Riḍván [sic], the never to be forgotten trip.

Fanny, the ladies one and all send their love and wish me to tell you they often speak of your visit and what a joy it was to them. They are indeed wonderful people, especially the Greatest holy Leaf, who was especially affectionate to me, which gave me great joy. She was quite distressed that we had to leave so soon, and sent word by several of the Persians to Our Lord, asking him to send us back again before we left for home. But He told us it was not wise, because we would cause the people to wonder at our being there so soon again and be means of trouble. Don’t ask me how I felt when I had to leave the peace of the Holy Tomb. It seemed as though I could not leave, though I knew I kept the others waiting, I believe a long time. I did not hear them go out nor would it have made any difference, it was heavenly and I longed to stay. At first it seemed my whole being seemed like a surging sea, my head buzzing and I found myself wondering at this con-dition. All of a sudden I seemed to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on my right hand, and the eyes of the Greatest Holy Leaf on my left, and all was at peace, such peace that passeth all understanding. At last realizing it was time to go to the others outside, I backed to the door, but my heart failed me, I must step back for one more prayer, and I did so. Oh such joy cannot be imagined, it must be felt. After putting my shoes on and we were about to leave, a relative of Bahá’u’lláh or the gentleman who lives next to the holy Tomb and cares for the Tomb, came to us with two little bunches of violets that had been in the holy of Holies for two days, and presented them to us. These we have pressed and will bring with us. At the Riḍván we received two pomegranates that had been on the chair where Bahá’u’lláh had sat, in the room where He lived while at the Riḍván. How strange it seemed to be walking about the Garden where He, the Most Glorious, walked and taught His beloved. The mulberry trees with its twisted branches and the natural seat.

On arriving at this Garden, all were surprised to find that other pil—grims were there ahead of us, ten or twelve of those whom we had met at the holy Tomb of the Báb. They were just being served tea when we arrived on the scene. We

also were served and then explored the gar—dens. After receiving a number of beautiful flowers, we went to the carriage. All the pilgrims gathered about us to bid us God speed, and we started for Haifa. Forgot to say that while in the Garden, we were permitted to go in the Blessed Room, in which His Blessed Perfection sat and rested or wrote. We were told to enter, but neither of us had the physical power to go further than the door sill. We prostrated ourselves in awe and prayer. I was dimly aware of a large, possibly an armchair, the seat of which was covered with fresh fragrant beautiful flowers. It was indeed a very strange experience to know of a Power—ful Presence and not able to see but an unmistakable feeling of His Presence. Similar to the experience in the holy Tomb only this time there was not that struggle for peace and understanding. We received that at the Holy Tomb, and when we gazed upon the Photographs in ‘Akká, of Bahá’u’lláh and the Báb, That experience defies expression, at least on my part.

Another experience, silly perhaps, but not for me. I was very serious when a piece of lemon was handed to me, from the lemon tree, growing in the Riḍván Garden. It was eaten with the solemn prayer on my part, that, like as in the Story, I might eat with equal joy the sour as well as the sweets offered by God.

Just remembered the story of the peacock at ‘Akká. One day while in the presence of Our Beloved, and feeling extremely unworthy: He said when you visit ‘Akká notice the feet of the peacock, they are ugly. The peacock proudly struts about with his beautiful tail feathers spread out. He is proud, but the moment he glances at his feet the tail feathers drop. So you must keep your faces and hearts turned to God always, never look upon your unworthiness.

The drive along the beach was delightful although somewhat sad because the shore was lined with wreckage from an Italian steamer that had been dashed against the rocks at the foot of Mt. Carmel. Many hundreds of oranges, wash-stands, beds, tables, railings, doors, floors, great bails of cotton, and hay there — - — - I must stop just this minute to mail this or I fear you will never get it. Continued in our next. So much has happened during the writing of this letter, I fear it is very bad, but perhaps in Algeria or Naples I may find time.

Pauline

Your homesick little Mother

Thabet be a good brave boy and pray for us 2.....

March 12, 1909.

Dearly Beloved ones,

My last letter had to be mailed in such a hurry that I am unable to remember just where I left off. But believe I was telling about the wonderful drive along the sandy beach where we witnessed the sad sights of a wrecked steamer. We did not see the steamer itself at this point, but various parts of it. We saw the steamer before it went all to pieces at the foot of Mt. Carmel, and wonderful to

relate, many of the pilgrims we met at the Tomb on Sunday had just left this same steamer. It was after leaving Haifa, it was dashed against these rocks. It was hoped that by relieving the ship of the freight, they might float it. With this end in view, many boats came to their assistance and worked day and night, but on Wednesday the sea was so very rough and the boat went all to pieces. The poor passengers after having been robbed of everything by the sailors and Arab boat men, so they say, were taken to the Hospice on Mt. Carmel, where we saw them, and here was the chance to invest little Mrs. Coles money. Perhaps she would be glad to know where it went. Our party of four helped them a little by leaving four dollars for them, only a drop in the bucket, but the best we could do. The beach was lined with natives who were gathering together the lumber and oranges, bales of hay and cotton and many strange looking pieces. Great wagon loads were being carted away and still the beach was littered. Our hearts were heavy when we saw such evident signs of grief and sorrow, and aside from this my heart was in a strange condition. We had just left 'Akká, and the wonderful Believers who were loath to part with us, then the wonderful Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh and the dear little Ridván Garden where we had tea, now this drive to our home in Haifa, where perhaps the dearly Beloved 'Abdu'l-Bahá would not be seen until the next morning. We went to our room to rest, Joseph did take a nap, but I (poor me) was nearly heart broken with unutterable longing to return to the Holy Tomb or to see the master's Face. In the depth of despair, I cried out, oh Lord, come to me now or I shall perish. Scarcely had the prayer been spoken in my innermost heart, when a voice from the back of the house rang out loud and clear, "My daughter, my daughter, my daughter," until our Lord stood in our room and I was at His Feet weeping telling him how I missed Him, etc. But in my heart I was ashamed to have disturbed him, He had just returned from His trip to Tiberius, and was, and looked very tired. He was very gentle and kind to me, said He had been with us to the Tomb in Spirit and had prayed for us, and because of us He had returned that evening. Be sure, though my body was absent, my spirit was with you. After this little speech I arose from my knees. He shook hands with Joseph, patted him on the back and said, "My son," and left us without further speech, save to say, "I am very tired, so will leave you, good night." This night Joseph and I both had a dream in which we were told we must prepare ourselves to leave on Sunday. On waking in the morning we both spoke of it, but Friday passed, and Saturday yet no word had been said, but we knew as though the word had been said. On Sunday morning, our Lord called on us and after the regular talk He arose and said you will be leaving this afternoon. Remember, I shall be with you always, I love you very much, in dream He had spoken to us.

One afternoon, while 'Abdu'l-Bahá was out for a walk with a group of Believers about Him, which is in itself a Christ picture, He turned to His followers and said when I came here forty years ago there were only a very few houses. Now see the size of it, the many beautiful homes and well kept grounds since Bahá'u'lláh and his followers passed this way. In surprise, I said to the one who repeated the incident to us (for of course we were not of the party) We have been taught

that the German colony came here expecting the Lord in 1866. It is quite evident from what our Lord has said, that they did not establish themselves in Haifa until after the Lord had passed through in 1868. After this Bahá'u'lláh came again to Haifa and visited the Nuns asking them if they would know the Lord when He came and was told, "Oh yes, we will surely know Him." and Bahá'u'lláh passed on. The master has also visited the same convent and we saw the window where the nun watches for the coming of the Lord.

On another walk of this kind, our Beloved 'Abdu'l-Bahá pointed out some sisters, nuns, who were walking in a body just ahead of them and said these are pure souls who have sacrificed themselves, given up the world in order to know God, now consider how great is your blessing. If I write all that happened there will be nothing to tell though I feel like going on. One thing more of personal interest, I had been told in America and here also that some ladies had asked permission to dress like Lua, but were told not to, I may dress just like her if I wish, but I will not do so, because I asked, had He told me to do so, it would have been different. The Holy Mother and Dr. Farid's mother both gave me a white scarf to put on when I teach as they put it, and it was a beginning. I said I would wear them when I pray. They were all so good and kind to me and they remember you with so much love. One afternoon we had a drive, Miss Codwise, Marquise, Joseph and I to the Monastery on Mt. Carmel and to Elijah's cave. He later was of real interest because the prophets of old had really been in this cave and taught by Elijah. The master said this was the truth. The cave was very large, twice as large if not larger than the Hall. All around are natural stone benches, Arabic and Hebrew inscriptions cut into the stone walls. Opposite the entrance is a Muhammadan altar. On the left side of the cave as you come in, is a smaller cave and stone bench around it. Here it was easy for me to imagine the great Elijah in this smaller cave with about seven or more of his people around him, the other fifty or four hundred prophets seated in the big cave. How very strange to be in on the mountain where the holy men of ancient days, did walk and talk. While the trip was proposed and our Lord gave his permission for us to go, I had not the least desire to go but already I am thankful to have been to this Holy Spot. Joseph has a little sea-weed from this place, I picked up a few shells for Thabet.

That morning Miss Codwise and the Marquise had arrived and were in my room when our beloved 'Abdu'l-Bahá came in to greet them and bid them welcome. Joseph had been called out of the room in order that a dear little Persian lady might visit us. And very shortly the Master entered. He addressed Himself to the new Believers of course, and began to speak and she would interrupt several times and differed some times. I of course was using the Greatest Name for her, but was at a loss to account for the merry twinkle in the Masters eyes, and sometimes He turned His side to her and looking out of the window his Face wreathed in a smile. When He left in a little while, and we went on talking in a general way, finally wandering out into the great central room or hall when they were in the midst of a laugh, the ladies and Joseph I mean. Mírzá Munír said, "Will you be quiet the Master is here." We had not seen Him come in but

when Marquise saw Him she was taken completely by surprise and talked away in a lively whisper about the great surprise. I whispered, "That explains the twinkle I saw in His eyes." She said, "I caught that twinkle too, several times." We were called to dinner where the Master explained the meaning of Cain and Able. Afterwards we had a hearty laugh at the expense of the Marquise. Some of us should have introduced her, but we thought she knew by our manner that it was the Lord. I am devoutly thankful our Lord did not teach me as He found it wise to teach her.

One afternoon I was visiting the ladies when 'Abdu'l-Bahá came in and sat down beside me. This was in answer to an unspoken wish, but I did not say what I wished to say, but after His saying, "Speak to me," I thanked him for the magnificent flower He gave me and said in English, this flower is called a flag, but it was more beautiful than any I had ever seen, and that I hoped he would make me a flag bearer in this Most wonderful Cause. He smiled and said, "the opportunity may present itself, this was a very pretty thought of yours." I answered and said, "You can make the opportunity if you see wise." Again He smiled and said, "En shah'llah. Because of your great love for the Cause, I love you very much."

This same afternoon, I was leaving the ladies to go to my own room, when glancing through the front door which is of glass I saw, oh the most wonderful sight you could imagine to have happened in the days of the Spirit Christ. There was our Lord walking up and down the gravel walk from the house to the gate His turban pushed back, His head, erect, the great Eyes full of deep thought. On either side of the walk were pure and holy men, both old and young, with hands crossed upon their breasts, heads bowed in reverence, ears and hearts open to receive the words which fell from His lips. My eyes were looking for them, for I was fairly glued to the glass, but after a while I felt it was not lady like for me to peep as it were, though the ladies knew I was there, I quietly turned, went swiftly, but quietly out the back way to my room in the other house, not looking at this scene, until I reached the door. Just making sure they were still there, I walked into Joseph and told him to hurry to the side window, I was too deeply affected to go again, but He had gone before Joseph could see. This was made up to Joseph the same night or the next one, when 'Abdu'l-Bahá went out the back door to His house. We were told to come, that supper was ready. When we came to the door, we saw our Lord walking. Joseph and I stepped quickly by to get near Him, Joseph first went halfway between the two homes. Without turning His face, our Lord took Joseph by the hand and held it until we reached the table. Was Joseph happy, well I guess.

I am telling only the little events, because Joseph had taken the messages and talks in short-hand. These you will have when we return. I will tell one more thing then leave the scenes of that inexpressible life for some other day when we meet. After our Lord left us, I packed the things while Joseph went to buy the tickets. We had dinner, but our Lord was not present. After a long, long wait as it seemed, He came to our room to say goodbye. It seemed to pain him

to send us, away. Seeing this, I used every effort not to cry and thanked God I did not. My eyes were dim with tears, but they did not flow. My goodbye was like the meeting. He permitted my head to rest on his shoulder for a minute, called me daughter, kissed Joseph and called him son, said I will be with you always, remember these days, then He left us. In a minute or two I was told to come and say goodbye to the ladies. I ran quickly thinking to have it over with before I broke down, but on reaching the door, saw our Lord walking very slowly with bowed head on the very path I must walk to reach the ladies, I stepped back a little, that I might not disturb the thoughts of this heavenly one battling with the inclination to run after him and falling at His Feet and just once more seeing those eyes, oh those Eyes of love. But I conquered this selfish thought, but when he went into the house and I finally went to see the ladies, my strength was gone. I wept and wept and have done so a number of times since. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has given us much work to do and now we go forth to live a new life.

Yes, one more thing, tell Aḥmad, that first I, then Joseph with me, went on our knees before our Lord and supplicated for permission for Him to come. Our Lord said He shall come but it is not yet time. There is much work for him in America, and be ye especially kind to Aḥmad. “He is very dear to me,” or “I love him very much.” It was one of these two, can’t remember which. Also tell Aḥmad that his spiritual father in ‘Akká, Sezid Asadu’lláh, the venerable old gentleman who taught him of this Truth said, “tell my son he does not behave well to leave his spiritual father so long without news from him, that I love him, and would like to hear from him now and then.

End of ‘Akká Accounts

We arrived at Fort Said too late to go right on to Cairo, so we called on Aḥmad Yazdí again. He is so kind, and again saw the dearly beloved Taqí Manshádí for the last time, since on arriving at Cairo we heard he had passed out suddenly, the day after the day after we left. It was a great shock to us all. Here in Port Sa‘íd I had the great pleasure of meeting Mrs. Maxwell. She in an angel on her way to heaven, known as ‘Akká.

We left for Cairo after making these visits and taking a walk along the beautiful beach, where we picked up some more shells for Thabet. If they do not get broken we will have quite a few for our little lamb. Oh how we miss our boys. Even Joseph’s eyes were moist with tears sometimes when he is thinking of them. If only we might hear something about them. It is now the 12 of March and we have heard nothing. Where is my big son “Nategħ”, if I only knew? Perhaps lonesome out on the deep sea, perhaps still at home? Soon we will know something. Next week we will be with Alma, and she will have some news for us I know.[Carl was actually on his way, crossing the ocean to stay with his aunt Alma in Bermany.] I am running away from my subject. We arrived in Cairo safe and sound, but oh so dirty. As Joseph said, he had to cut the dust around me before he could see my face. It was not quite so bad as this,

but truly it was the worst I ever saw. We took a carriage to the Hotel where Miss Holtzbecker was stopping. After securing our rooms, we looked her up, and while with her, Mírzá Rhouy came in. Bless his heart. He kept us busily engaged during our six days stay in Cairo. This long stay was due, of course, to the fact that we had to wait for a steamer for Naples. We had a ride on a camel to the Pyramids and around the Sphinx and the temple of Isis. This was all very interesting, yes even the Sphinx was of interest to us. But when we reached home we were dead tired and there was Rhouy waiting to take us to our Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl. I simply had to rest a little, which of course shortened our visit with our beloved Mírzá. He was surely happy to see us and we, well you know. He mentioned many of the friends by name and wants us to give them all his love. Spoke of your visit and Alma, he asked many questions, and we were able to answer all but one, that was if Mrs. Boyles husband was now a believer.

This is not the most comfortable desk I have written on. It is a magazine on my lap and I am seated on a pipe that pushes and throbs with the movement of the machinery in the very bow of the steamer. Joseph is next to me reading. It is the only spot on the deck of the steamer where we can sit and not be blown away. This queer motion makes writing difficult, still this in my only chance for a week at least. Being well, we are going it pretty lively. Now to go on with Cairo.

We met about ten or twelve Believers at Mírzá's. Needless to say, we were very happy. On leaving, Mírzá Rhouy walked us to his house, through a beautiful part of the city. After a long walk, we reached the very, very large open space before it, where the soldiers practice and parade before the Ruler. The great barracks are to one side of this great court and to the other side a very large and elegant apartment house, which we admired extravagantly and with bows and graces were told that is where Rhouy and his family live, now on the lower floor, and gradually we will move higher and here it is I hope someday to bring the master, our Lord, if HE will so honor us. Our Lord has sent word that He will visit Cairo and Egypt. Isn't it too wonderful. The Believers are beside themselves with joy. Well we went into Rhouy's Apartment and met the ladies. Yes, Joseph did too, saw all the family. Also saw the typewriter Mr. Phelps sent him.

After some tea had been served and some cakes, and a Tablet had been read, we left for home, our Hotel I mean. Though it was quite late, about nine o'clock, we went into our lunch room and had supper. Then we retired by candle light, dead tired but happy. The evening before, Rhouy had taken us through the bazaars and on the Moski[?]. These were strange and wonderful sights, but no doubt you saw these narrow streets arched over by upper stories to the houses and indeed hard to explain this scene. It must be seen to be understood. Streets where we would never venture into without a native.

There were many beautiful things, but no money to buy. Donkeys walking through these narrow streets with the greatest care, so gentle in spite of the

heavy burdens they carry. We then called on a Dr. and Mmd, De Bounes, spent a very pleasant hour with them, and returned home. The third day Rhoy sent a Believer, one of his English scholars to take us out sightseeing. He took us to the mosque of Sulţán Ḥasan, a very old mosque. A very strange sight it was indeed, but some exquisite work in the dome of the Temple, from here we went for quite a long walk up hill until we reached the most beautiful Mosque in Cairo, built like the ones in Constantinople. It is a very handsome place, no chairs but elegant rugs, marble pillars and walls, exquisite paint-ings, a gallery for the Ruler and princes and the dignitaries to worship, hundreds it seemed like thousands of prisms suspended from the bulbs of electric lights, radiating the lights of the co-lors of the rain-bow because the sunbeams were playing among them. Really a place of prayer. In one corner was the — tomb of Muḥammad-‘Alí all in real gold. Before entering this you pass through a very large court capped by this real green roof, you sent on the postal to Aunt Mary. In the center of this court is an elegant marble affair around its base as it were, a ditch or gutter and all around this big pillar are taps. Here the worshippers come first to wash and then enter the Temple. It was a grand sight and though we were tired, we enjoyed this visit very much. After leaving the inner Mosque, we walked around the outside of it, and were ashamed of our own race, the tourists breaking bits of marble off and thus marring the looks of the building. On going farther around, we were unspeakably surpri-sed to see a part of Cairo at its base, and such a part, you could put Washington in the one corner of it. It is a very, very large city. Just to one side of this point of observation we see the English Fort with its guns and just below this the Turkish Fort with its guns. A strange sight this was, the Mosque on the top-of this very big hill, at its base one round lower down the English fort, one round more and the Turkish fort, at the foot of this a beautiful street very very wide with wonderful palms and trees and flowers in the parking on each side of the street and this is also used for pa-rades also practicing ground for the artillery. Such pictures thrill the soul with delight as well as sorrow. Again we were very tired, ate our dinner and tried to rest but I was trying to write....then went to tea with Miss Holtzbecher at the home of the DR. and his wife, where Rhoy joined us. We had a jolly time until quite late.

The next morning I begged to stay home and write. I was tired out. This was done until it was time to go to the wonderful and never-to-be-for-gotten meeting at the home of Lhorassani. I do not know how many believers were present but they circled the large room. It was a wonderful sight and we thank God for the privilege of attending such a meeting. No one can listen to the talk of such holy men and the power of the Word of Bahá’u’lláh, only the Word of God could have united such souls, men with great minds of their own, like little children when a word of greeting is sent to them from the Center of the Covenant, ready to sacrifice every will and desire of their own, even life itself, for the sake of the Word of One, according to the minds of most of the people, only a man, a false prophet. To imagine a false prophet purifying the lives of people to such an extent that they would die before committing a questionable deed.

Oh, what can the people be thinking of, what do they expect? Can any greater than this happen that singly and alone one man arises and causes thousands of men, women and children change, so that pure deeds and actions take the place of selfishness, render services for others, thereby learn to know God, Yes, these people are a living Testament of His Power and Might. No man could accomplish this; not ten, no not even a thousand men, putting their wise heads together, to perform such a miracle. Thank God the veil has been removed from our eyes and God grant that we may remain firm and steadfast youth to the end. To be brief, Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl instructed us, a youth chanted the words of the Manifestation, then Joseph read some of his notes and we felt spiritually uplifted.

The next day we visited the new English part of Cairo, built on an oasis that was. The homes are magnificent, never saw anything like it. We then spent the evening with Rhouy and took dinner with them and he read us his Tablets. It was twelve o'clock, I believe, or near it when we returned to the Hotel. I forgot to mention that in the afternoon Miss Holtzbecher had arranged to have us meet four Believers who came to visit us and served tea and crackers.

We had a very pleasant time, principally, Joseph reading his notes. The next day was Sunday, and Rhouy came to take us to the Barrage. He took us to the station where we got on a train, speeding along through the interesting villages. Some of the houses were simply mounds of mud with a hole for a door, other mud houses closely built together with thatched roofs. Strange contrivances for spreading water over the beautiful and fertile grounds, by this means supplying the water which the heavens seem to deny them, for it rains very seldom in these parts.

After an hour's ride or more, we reached our destination. Men were shouting to take the cars for the barrage. Paul, what kind of cars do you think they were? A platform on four wheels with two seats across the middle, two people on the front seat, two on the back with their backs against each other, then two Egyptian men with the most wonderful pair of legs you ever saw, would take a hold of the two rods that came out at each side and they pushed this car running like the wind all the way from for about the distance of a mile until they reached the beautiful gardens and the strange and wonderful Barrage. We did not ride because we wanted to see as we went. The barrage is a massive bridge over the Nile. At the base of this bridge you see between each arch, a door or solid iron gate[illustration] suppose this heavy line is the upper part of the bridge, the light line is where the water reached, the lower arch is the top of the gate and these gates are so arranged that they can be drawn up or let down when the Nile is very high and overflows. Instead of letting it flow into the sea, these gates are pulled up and the water must flow somewhere, so it floods these lands and makes it rich and fertile. There are two of these bridges, one over each branch of the Nile, and the fertile land between is called the Delta. This Delta, where we saw it, was the most wonderful flower garden I ever saw or ever hope to see, again, and the grand old trees and beautiful palms and

scattered rustic seats even in the lotus trees where we sat down to rest. Yes, we really went up in the tree and sat on the bench put there for the purpose. Sitting among the boughs of this lotus tree, we drank in the beauty of the scene about us. The wonderful coloring made by the flowers, the beautiful birds, the velvety grass, the towering palms and the low graceful leafy plants, the strange vines, etc. The only thing missing, to complete the picture, was our Lord. But it made us supremely happy to think that in the near future He too will walk in this wonderful flower garden. This particular tree where we were sitting, and the grounds beneath it, are used by the Bahá'ís for special feasts. This attracts no special attention, since it is for the public. A little way off the grounds are arranged for picnickers whose hearts are rejoiced because of tables and chairs and, etc. But our people spread their feasts on an immense rug spread beneath the tree. Tablets are read (no chanted) and then they lie about on the grass and there is plenty of room.

Since writing the letter we have left the steamer, rushed through Naples for Rome and are now about to leave for Venice, both times travelling by night to save Hotel bills. Home is indeed a wonderful, also strange place, but I am thankful to be an American citizen. But really I must close this letter. We are very well and would be very homesick were it not for the fact that we may never come this way again; we would fly away to our beloved ones. In two or three days now we will be with Alma and we wonder if Carl will be there. Oh the agony of not knowing where our dear son is. I dream of him so often, in fact, all of you and Alma. God grant you may all be well and stay well until our return at least. When I have time in Stuttgart will go on with where I left off. Just to quiet your mind on one point which you would like to know, yes, Fanny I met the wonderful women in Alexandria and they all remember you, their faces beaming at the recollection. We met the Woodcocks, and S. Russel and others.

Fanny dear, I have done the best I could with letter writing and hope my letters to mother have been given to you, because they are for all.

Affectionately,

Pauline Hannen³

About Cairo

Stuttgart, Germany March 29, 1909

Dearly Beloved ones:

If possible I will go on now where I left off. The visit to the beautiful park in Cairo caused the utmost joy, because I could easily imagine the Beloved and the friends sitting about in groups under these magnificent Lotus Trees and most of all, the picture in my mind seeing 'Abdu'l-Bahá walking about these grounds and completing the living picture of the Garden of Eden. He will walk in these because He has promised them. On returning to Cairo, we had the pleasure of seeing a flower parade, rather some of it, carriages and horses bedecked with

flowers and tulle and ladies dressed in dainty colors, a float made in the shape of an air ship. All of flowers, other floats loaded with masked people to represent different animals, others with clowns and, etc. A very lively picture for Sunday afternoon. We had callers and it was while these guests were here I had to close my letter so quickly that they might mail it for me, because we were to leave early in the morning for Alexandria. There are people of every nationality and creed and classes, congregated in this city and do just as they please. The noises are quite terrifying to us. This fact I mentioned in my note to dear Mother [Joseph's mother]. We started on our way and at the station, were met by some of the Friends, but most especially precious by our beloved Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl who sends his love to all the Believers and mentioned many of them by name.

This is the old letter I started and then lost. Will send it along.

The Master has given us so much to do that I am anxious to start and see the work progressing. For one thing, I can't imagine how we will instruct the children concerning the Ishrakat, but He told us to do so, and no doubt in the world, He will give us the Light. Also the work among the colored people, and to establish a Spiritual Meeting for Believers only, where the colored are to take part as well as the whites.

Well, good bye I am homesick just now, so I had better change drinks as the saying goes.

Pauline

Notice the letter was started the 20th today is the 29th.⁴

The following is a letter that Joseph wrote to his mother, while making their way home from their stay in 'Akká with 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

Cairo, Egypt

March 5, 1909

My beloved Mother,

If you will forgive an assortment of rather mussy paper I shall be able to commence a somewhat delayed letter. As you will see, we are in Cairo, where we arrived Tuesday afternoon, March 2nd.

March 6

At this point I was interrupted, so you have an object lesson showing the difficulty of writing while "in tour". To resume: We arrived here Tuesday afternoon having completed a sojourn of 9 days in Haifa. As we wanted to see Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl and the believers here, and also Alexandria — and since there is no ship for Naples from Thursday until the following Wednesday, we decided to spend a week between the two places, and have purchased our tickets to leave Alexandria on Wednesday next. March 10th arriving Naples about Saturday, 13th inst. Thence we shall probably proceed to Stuttgart, stopping in Rome and Venice en route, reaching our destination somewhere around the 17th. As

to our plans after that, there seems to be some doubt. I think we may remain about two weeks with Alma, then stop at Paris and London and sail for “home sweet home” about the second week of April.

We are both very well indeed. This morning we were discussing how fortunate we were as to health, for not one day’s illness or even discomfort has attended all our many changes.

Cairo is an intensely interesting place and the “Streets of Cairo” scenes in the various “World Fairs” are by no means exaggerated. One sees here people from every nation, literally in their native costumes. It is a city of 500,000 population. The streets are lined with cafes and day and night men and women sit and eat and drink and smoke as though the pursuit of pleasure were the chief thing in life, as in deed it is to them. Now and then processions pass, with weird musicthe merchants of every market is noisily sold. Guides and people with something to sell infest the land, and tourists galore are their prey. Handsome hotels and shabby “pensions” are many. We have a comfortable room, at a reasonable price, and eat at a very nice restaurant. Miss Holzbecher, whom we met at Port Sa’id, is here in the same Hotel and is lots of company for us. Then Mírzá Rúhí, whom Fanny will recall has been very attentive, so that we have been on the go continually. Yesterday we attended a meeting of the Cairo Assembly at the magnificent home of Mírzá Khurasání, where Fanny also went. It was most beautiful. About 30 men were there, and all greeted us so lovingly. Some of them are going to call on us this afternoon and others will see us off when we leave here Monday morning, while we will be met at Alexandria. So truly the Spirit of Unity has found us brothers and sisters here in Africa, so that we are made so welcome and homelike as though ‘twere Baltimore!

The weather here is like it will be in Washington in May or June. Flowers are a bloom, palms, eucalyptus & other tropical trees are everywhere, green and graceful. The sun is hot by day: but at nights one is comfortable with plenty of covers and sleep well. On Wednesday we saw Pyramids and the Sphinx. The visit to these historic landmarks is never forgotten. They were most interesting and beautiful. We rode camels and weren’t scared a bit. The trip was tiresome. Returning we went to Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl’s the same day. He is the same dear old Mírzá and next to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá we feel that he is our objective on our spiritual journey so we are not sorry that chance has given us longer here than we expected.....I hope that letter reached you safely. There is much uncertainty as to mail in this part of the world. I have written letters, one from Gibraltar, one from Naples and one from Haifa, besides some cards.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in Haifa during our entire stay. He left for ‘Akká Monday of this week. We went there Wednesday of last week and spent one day and night visiting the Tomb of Bahá’u’lláh and the Riḍván (Garden) on our way home. While we were away, The Master went to Tiberius on the shores of Galilee. His first railroad journey in many years — perhaps the very first. The days were spent in Haifa peacefully and happily, receiving instructions and enjoying the heavenly home life at the Holy Household. We were sorry to go, yet much (Of

course) calls us home and we shall be overjoyed as the miles decrease toward the dear familiar scenes. I sent a cablegram to Fanny while in Haifa to send Carl to Stuttgart, 'Abdu'l-Bahá having approved Pauline's plan. Hope she got it in time to get him off so we can meet him there. (Stuttgart)

So much is happening these wonderful days that one scarcely stops to express surprise at anything, and I can only hope (and believe) that the new order of things as far as Carl is concerned will be for his greatest good and ultimate happiness, as well as that of us all. I wish you could be with me this morning, though the noise would distract you. Yet to see the camels, donkeys, tram-cars, and omnibuses, the Arabs in picturesque robes, the Egyptian women with their veils and peculiar headdresses, the Europeans of every kind one would suppose a big Noah's Ark had suddenly been emptied, or a thousand circuses turned loose. This is the height of the season here and unknown ... have timed our journey so as to give us the best weather of the year.

Pauline is opposite me at our table, scratching busily to Fanny and Paul. They will probably share the letter with you and I hope you will do likewise with this.

By the time you receive this we shall be much farther on our journey, and only a few weeks will divide us. Already about half the time has elapsed. It has all been wonderful! From every standpoint we are absorbing knowledge and shall return to our loved ones, our lives and our duties, prepared for greater service. We should try to share some of the joys with our dear ones at home as the days go by, so that you may rejoice with us.

Guess I've told you about all news, so far as a letter will convey it. Accept dear love and many kisses and believe me

Ever your devoted boy

Joseph⁵

Pauline adds;

Dearest Mother, I have by no means forgotten you as might well be imagined by not writing to you, but we agreed, Joseph and I that he would write to you and I to Fanny and since our letters are so different it would be best so for the first time during our trip we are both tired and nearly distracted by the noise, monkeys on dog's barks, men & boy acrobats, men, women and children playing violin, banjo, and singing for money, all kinds of band music, mules braying and men shouting, soldiers who had evidently been fighting, hard bloody faces and necks, men and boys chasing after us to sell us something. While it is highly interesting it is beginning to make our heads' ache, at least Joey's does, my eyes hurt and I want to get home now. Lovingly, Pauline⁶

The visits with the Head of the Bahá'í Faith, the Center of the Covenant, the Master, were a galvanizing experience in the lives of the participants. Meeting The Master in person gave them the confirmation and assurance they needed to dedicate the remainder of their lives to his service. Their complete obedience was

never in doubt through the rest of their endeavors. The questions they asked show their still deep attachment to Jesus and their Christian roots, but the answers helped them to turn steadily toward their new Beloved, Bahá'u'lláh, who claimed to be the return of that same spirit that was in Christ. Other questions which were answered, gave them the tools and knowledge to fulfill their personal interests as to how they would serve when they returned to their homes. Alma went back after her pilgrimage, and continued to spread the Faith to many parts of Germany and beyond. Fanny and the Hannens went back to Washington and taught the Faith to friends of African descent, and particularly to Louis Gregory who carried the torch even farther than they could have imagined. Joseph took up the cause of helping the Persian friends and sewing seeds of friendship between Persians and Americans. He also put his secretarial skills to work and tirelessly served in many different areas. Pauline became very involved in teaching children's classes and following the instructions 'Abdu'l-Bahá had given her, even though she felt very unprepared and unworthy to do so. She also went on to teach many others to follow in her footsteps. All four of the returning pilgrims became sought after public speakers because of their clear and well deepened understanding of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. Their lives were by now firmly rooted in this new garden called Bahá'í.

To close this chapter, I include the following Tablet which Joseph received after his return from his trip to Haifa. It must have added joy upon joy and further confirmations to what they had already experienced while in the master's presence:

Through Mírzá Munír Zein

To His Honor Mr. Jos. H. Hannen

H E I S G O D

O thou who art firm in the Covenant!

Thy letter dated July 12th, 1909 was received. Praise be to God that you have traversed the countries of Africa and Europe, visited the Friends of God, delivered to them the messages of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and upon your return to America you associated with all the Beloved and in all the meetings engaged in the commemoration of God. You must thank God for this Bounty and Favor to which you have attained. Any soul who in this day arises to serve the Cause of God, undoubtedly the Confirmations of the Holy Spirit will surround him.

Ye have written that the colored Bahá'ís have gathered in one meeting with the white Believers, destroying the foundations of racial differences and the barriers of color. When a gathering of these two races is brought about that assemblage will become the Magnet of the Supreme Concourse and the Confirmations of the Blessed Perfection will surround it.

I supplicated toward the Kingdom of God and asked forgiveness and pardon for the mother of Mrs. Hannen and Miss Knobloch. Upon thee be Bahá'ul' Abhá!

0 Thou Almighty! 0 Thou Forgiver! Cause Thou the entrance of Thy beloved maidservant, Mrs. Amalie Knobloch, from the world of matter to the World of Spirit. Forgive Thou shortcomings; overlook mistakes; do not look upon errors. Deal according to Thy Generosity and Bounty. Verily, Thou art the Forgiver and the Bestower of Favors.

0 thou Joseph, the speaker of the Word, the firm! Convey the wonderful Abhá Greetings on my behalf to Mary Alexander and exercise toward her the utmost kindness. The article which was published in one of the newspapers was received and read. I ask God to confirm and assist thee under all circumstances.

Upon thee be Bahá'ul'Abhá!

(signed) 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás⁷

Before returning to the United States the Hannens stopped in Stuttgart to visit Alma and their son Carl. While there, they continued to help Alma with her teaching efforts. Pauline wrote in her memoirs that they spent a good deal of their time talking about their work with children. One of the listeners later wrote her for more information and in this way her expertise in teaching children's classes spread all the way to Germany.⁸ This was especially meaningful because 'Abdu'l-Bahá had just sent her off with strong encouragement to continue with her work in teaching children.